

**Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA**

Minister for Health

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Finance

Minister for the Public Service

Member for Kurrajong

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**RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Questions on Notice Paper No 4**

**21 MARCH 2025**

**Question No. 235**

**MR RATTENBURY MLA:** To ask the Minister for Health

Is there any work in progress, or being contemplated, to amend ACT legislation so that people are permitted to grow cannabis inside, which would better align with Canberra's climate; if not, why is the Government currently not considering this as an option.

**RACHEL STEPHEN-SMITH MLA** - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The issue of growing cannabis inside was considered by the then Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services (the Committee) during the Inquiry into the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill in 2019, which informed the passage of the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Act 2019* (the Cannabis Act).

The *Drugs of Dependence Act 1989* prohibits artificial cultivation of cannabis including hydroponic cultivation or using an artificial light or heat source, and the Cannabis Act did not change this prohibition.

The Committee recommended that the draft Bill be amended to allow for soil cultivation in a greenhouse and/or with artificial light. However, this amendment was not agreed on the basis that the ACT Government supports police being able to make a clear distinction between cultivation for personal use and cultivation for large scale or commercial purposes by criminal operators.

The prohibition of artificial cultivation of cannabis was raised by some stakeholders in 2024 as part of the legislated review of the operation of the Cannabis Act. However, interviewees reported that while there were improvements that could be made to the legislation, the issues raised in the review did not necessarily warrant reopening the debate around cannabis policy at the present time, particularly given that the legislation overall was supported and the significant recent drug policy changes in the ACT.



The ACT Government's current priority areas to minimise harms from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are outlined in the ACT's Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022-2026.

**Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.**



**Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA**  
**Minister for Health**

**Date:** ..... 27 / 4 / 25 .....

This response required 3hrs 20mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$318.65.