



Codebook for Drug Decriminalization Laws

Prepared by the Center for Public Health Law Research

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DRUG DECRIMINALIZATION LAWS

July 2023

Codebook

This codebook describes the variables in a dataset that examines variation in state drug decriminalization laws. This dataset is cross-sectional and is valid through July 1, 2023. The jurisdictions selected for measurements are the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

There are three standard variables in every PDAPS dataset. They are:

JURISDICTION:

This is a dropdown selection in each coding form. It includes the jurisdictions coded in the dataset.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

This date (MM/DD/YYYY) is the most recent effective date of the legal text captured for this place. The effective date represents the date the policy coded was put into effect.

VALID THROUGH DATE:

This date (MM/DD/YYYY) is the last date the policy was in effect as reflected by the legal text captured to code this policy.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE EFFECTIVE DATE:

This dataset captures only those laws in the included jurisdictions in effect on July 1, 2023. The effective date represents the date on which the most recent amendment among the laws contained within that record as of July 1, 2023 (the data collection date), came into effect as the law of the jurisdiction. For example, a law included in this dataset may have gone into effect on July 1, 2022, and since it was the most recent law in effect as of July 1, 2023, it would be included in these data. That does not make this dataset longitudinal. This dataset does not purport to measure the law as it existed prior to the data collection date (in this case, July 1, 2023) or provide the original date the law was signed by the executive.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE STATISTICAL DATA PAGE:

This codebook should be used in conjunction with the statistical data extract that can be downloaded from the dataset homepage by clicking on the Data button. The value labels defined below will correspond with the coded responses you will see on the Statistical data page. Coding questions that are not answered will show as a period (".") in the Excel cell. Coding questions can be intentionally not answered, such as when a state does not have a law and the coder therefore leaves the remaining coding answers as unanswered.

Questions

Question 1:	Is there a state law in effect that decriminalizes personal possession of controlled substances?
Question Type:	Binary - mutually exclusive
Variable Name 1:	Decrim_Law
Variable Values:	0, 1
Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Question 2:	Does the law impose a civil penalty for personal possession of a controlled substance?
Question Type:	Binary - mutually exclusive
Variable Name 2:	Decrim_Penalty
Variable Values:	0, 1
Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Question 2.1:	Under what circumstances may a civil penalty for personal possession of controlled substances be waived?
Question Type:	Categorical - check all that apply
Variable Name 2.1(A):	Decrim_Waiver_Completion of health assessment
Variable Values:	0, 1
Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Variable Name 2.1(B):	Decrim_Waiver_Waiver not specified
Variable Values:	0, 1

Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Variable Name 2.1(C):	Decrim_Waiver_No civil penalty authorized
Variable Values:	0, 1
Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Question 2.2:	Does failure to pay the civil penalty result in further penalties?
Question Type:	Binary - mutually exclusive
Variable Name 2.2:	Decrim_Further penalties
Variable Values:	0, 1
Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Question 3:	Does the law authorize vacating prior convictions for offenses that the law decriminalizes?
Question Type:	Binary - mutually exclusive
Variable Name 3:	Decrim_Vacate
Variable Values:	0, 1
Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes
Question 4:	Does the law fund new health services?
Question Type:	Binary - mutually exclusive
Variable Name 4:	Decrim_Fund
Variable Values:	0, 1



Value Label:	0 = No
Value Label:	1 = Yes