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March 1 , 2006

Lawrence City Commission Passes Ordinance Moving Marijuana Possession Prosecutions to Municipal Court

Individuals found in possession of marijuana will be sent to municipal court in Lawrence, rather than state court starting in about three weeks.

This past Tuesday, February 28, the Lawrence City Commission compromised on the two versions of the ordinance before them, and in a 3-2 vote amended city law to direct first-time marijuana possession charges to municipal court. Those found guilty will receive a minimum sentence of a mandatory [SAMHSA](#) evaluation and \$200 fine.

The court will also inform persons convicted, in writing, that the second offense is a FELONY.

It is therefore important for people charged under the new ordinance to SEEK THE ADVICE OF AN ATTORNEY before accepting a diversion or other plea agreement from the city prosecutor's office.

It is our hope that this ordinance will keep Lawrence's large student populations at Haskell Indian Nations University and the University of Kansas from losing financial aid for minor marijuana offenses.

If you, or someone you know, are convicted under the new ordinance, [tell us your story!](#)

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The Drug Policy Forum of Kansas promotes debate on innovative policies and approaches to reduce the harms of both drug use and drug prohibition, and education and support for effective public health alternatives to the costly war-on-drugs.

