

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## DEA poised to reclassify marijuana

### Illinois pot businesses could gain tax benefits, easier access for loans

By Robert McCoppin  
Chicago Tribune

Cannabis company owners in Illinois welcomed the news Tuesday that the federal government is expected to reclassify marijuana as a drug with medicinal value and lower potential for abuse.

Associated Press reported that the Drug Enforcement Administration will move to reclassify marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule III. Rather than continuing to classify cannabis with much stronger drugs such as heroin and LSD, the move would put pot in the same

class with certain prescription drugs such as codeine, ketamine, steroids and testosterone.

The change will not be immediately noticeable to most consumers in Illinois, where medical and recreational use already are legal under state law. But it may have a huge impact on weed businesses, allowing them greater ability to take tax deductions for business expenses and making it easier to get loans.

"I'm hopeful it will open the door for financial institutions

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Owner Michelle Ringold inspects marijuana plants Nov. 17 at the Galaxy Labs craft cannabis facility in Richton Park. ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

### Garland signs off on drug policy move seen as a historic US shift

By Zeke Miller, Joshua Goodman, Jim Mustian and Lindsay Whitehurst  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration will move to reclassify marijuana as a less dangerous drug, a historic shift to generations of American drug policy that could have wide ripple effects across the country.

The DEA's proposal, which still must be reviewed by the White House Office of Management and Budget, would recognize the medicinal uses of cannabis and acknowl-

edge it has less potential for abuse than some of the nation's most dangerous drugs.

However, it would not legalize marijuana outright for recreational use.

The agency's move, confirmed Tuesday by five people familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity, clears the last significant regulatory hurdle before the agency's biggest policy change in more than 50 years can take effect.

Once OMB signs off, the DEA

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Annette Prince, director of Chicago Bird Collision Monitors, retrieves a dead blue jay on a South Dearborn Street sidewalk in Chicago as she patrols the downtown area Monday. ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

## Policy doesn't do enough to protect birds, advocates say

### City update offers sustainable design safety options, but they aren't mandatory

By Nara Schoenberg  
Chicago Tribune

Annette Prince peered between glossy downtown buildings: "There's a bird in that grate."

Sure enough, sitting very still in the rain was a tiny white-throated sparrow, so drenched you could barely make out its canary-yellow face markings. The bird was too dazed to move — an easy target for the hungry seagulls that were patrolling the area.

Prince looked up at the nearest skyscraper, with its rows of dark windows.

"He probably hit the glass up there and fell down," she said.

A long-awaited policy update from the city of Chicago is supposed to help prevent such injuries and deaths, which occur by the thousands each year when migrating birds crash into local buildings.

But Chicago bird safety advocates say they are disappointed that the city's policy update, now in draft form, does not make bird safety measures mandatory.

Instead, anti-collision measures, which can include installing glass with tiny markings, are included in a menu of sustainable design options from which developers working on

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Prince holds a sora rail found by another volunteer as they patrol the downtown area collecting dead and injured birds Monday. Bird safety advocates are disappointed with the city's policy update.

## For serial scammer, judgment day arrives

### Feds say Cipolla — 'like a Talented Mr. Ripley' — has lived life of fraud

By Jason Meisner  
Chicago Tribune

By outside appearances, Joey Cipolla was living large.

The 30-something Chicago businessman had seemingly made a small fortune buying and selling luxury cars and leasing private airplanes. He was living in a 12,000 square-foot mansion in west suburban Bloomingdale with a Lamborghini and Bentley in the driveway. He piloted his own Cessna, spent money like water and gambled thousands of dollars at a time in Las Vegas and at local casinos.



Cipolla

But the luxurious lifestyle was just a mirage, federal prosecutors say. Instead, the real truth about Cipolla was inked on his forearm in a small tattoo with the Latin phrase "Caveat Emptor."

Buyer Beware. Cipolla, it turns out, has been a fraud his entire adult life, federal prosecutors say. By the time he was in his early 30s, the Northwest Side native had amassed 17 convictions in various schemes across four states, according to prosecutors.

He'd spent significant prison time in Michigan and Minnesota, but prosecutors said instead of being scared straight, Cipolla doubled down, launching a series of more sophisticated schemes that led to his indictment in U.S. District Court in 2022.

On Wednesday, Cipolla is facing his most significant prison sentence yet, after pleading guilty in November to a multipronged scheme: stiffing people on luxury auto sales over eBay, rip-offs in the leasing of aircraft out of DuPage County Airport, and using more than \$1 million in fraudulently obtained COVID-19 relief funds to fund his over-the-top lifestyle.

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### Trump fined \$9,000, warned of jail

The former president was held in contempt of court Tuesday for repeatedly violating a gag order. After the ruling, lawyer for porn star testifies. **Nation & World**

### A fresh take on tradition

Umaga Bakehouse, a re-imagined Filipino bakery in Mayfair that celebrated its grand opening with lines out the door, is one of nine openings in the city. **Food & Health**

### A pitching puzzle

The White Sox rotation is the team's only hope of avoiding a historically bad season. But it's in flux as fans tune out after a horrific April. **Paul Sullivan in Chicago Sports**

TODAY'S WEATHER



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Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 16

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