

Cannabis Shirt Battle Costs Iowa State Almost \$1M

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by Sarah Robertson



We previously [posted](#) about a four year legal battle that arose from a refusal by Iowa State University to let its school logos be used on t-shirts by an on-campus pro-cannabis group, and the free speech implications of this refusal. In that case, ISU was

found at both the district court and appellate levels to run afoul of the First Amendment because its refusal violated free speech rights of the students involved.

By way of update, the State of Iowa has now been ordered by a federal district judge in the Southern District of Iowa to pay nearly \$1 million in damages based on ISU's actions regarding its school logos. The state had already agreed to pay \$150,000 to the individual plaintiffs in that case, as well as \$193,000 for the plaintiffs' legal fees on appeal. The recent order addresses the award of the plaintiffs' legal fees at the district court level, setting these at \$598,00. The high financial penalty faced by the State of Iowa reflects the special considerations surrounding cannabis branding as well as state agency trademarks. The decision on appeal can be found [here](#).

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