



Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

WSLCB Cannabis Social Equity Draft Provisions 2023 Legislative Session

Proposal and Goal

This proposal is intended to further the State's interest in social equity in cannabis. It increases the number of available retail cannabis licenses available and reduce barriers to licensure for social equity licenses. It also updates definitions to align with the work of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force (SECTF), codifies the third party provider to score social equity applications, and requires all cannabis licensees to have a social equity plan at renewal beginning in 2024.

Increase Social Equity allotments based on Population Increases

Beginning in calendar year 2023, the Board may increase the number of cannabis retailer licenses for social equity based on:

- The most recent census data available at the beginning of calendar year 2023; and
- The annual Office of Financial Management (OFM) population estimates;
- Each subsequent year, the Board will evaluate population estimate information from the OFM to determine whether new retailer licenses should be made available.

Social Equity License Locations

All licenses issued under the social equity program in this section may be located in any city, county, or town in the state that permits the cannabis business activity at the proposed location, regardless of:

- Whether a license was originally allocated to or issued in another county, city, or town; and
- The maximum number of retail outlets established by the Board for each county

Third Party Contractor

Consistent with recommendations with the SECTF, this section codifies the requirement for the Board to select a third-party contractor to identify and score social equity applicants, using a scoring rubric developed by the Board.

License Fees Waived

The annual license fee must be waived through calendar year 2029 for social equity licensees.

Limitations on License Transfers/Ownership Changes

Requires that social equity licenses must be transferred or sold only to social equity applicants for a period of at least 5 years.

Expand Social Equity Plan Requirement for all Licensees

Effective January 1 2024, all cannabis licensees are required to submit a social equity plan at license renewal. New cannabis licensees must submit a social equity plan prior to being issued



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a license. This creates an opportunity for all licensees to be part of the solution to promote social equity in their communities and combat the impacts of the war on drugs.

Modified Disproportionately Impacted Area Definition

Modified the definition to reflect the formula recommended by the SECTF and the University of Washington.

Modified Social Equity Applicant Definition

Modified the definition to reflect the draft rules developed by the Board with recommendations of the SETF. Currently statutory language provides the LCB with rulemaking authority.