



# News Release

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## **Marijuana product guidelines: emergency rule filed under new state laws**

*Emergency rule aims to ensure quality compliant product access by July 2016 deadline*

**OLYMPIA** — State health officials took a major step today toward ensuring access to safe and reliable marijuana products that may be helpful to medical patients. Emergency rules filed today are intended to provide initial guidelines while the standard rulemaking process is underway to adopt permanent rules under state legislation that brings recreational and medical laws together.

Two state laws passed by the 2015 legislature require state health officials to establish rules that set standards for active ingredients, testing, labeling, and safe handling of marijuana products.

The rules must also include marijuana business employee education standards.

The deadline to have marijuana products available to qualifying medical patients that comply with the standards is July 1, 2016. The usual rulemaking process wouldn't leave enough time for growers and processors to adopt procedures ensuring their products are compliant. Because the rules cover marijuana production from the earliest stage of plant growth, they must be in place at least six months before anticipated sales begin July 1. So emergency rules were filed today at the same time as the standard rules process, enabling growers to get started sooner while state health officials progress through the process for permanent rules.

The state Liquor and Cannabis Board's enforcement role also relies on the state health rules being in place by the 2016 deadline. These product guideline rules meet the goals of SB 5052 and HB 2136 to bring medical marijuana use under the current regulatory system for legal adult use to ensure a safe, adequate, consistent supply to better protect qualifying patients. The bills also direct state health to adopt rules that establish a medical marijuana consultant certificate and create an authorization database — and the rulemaking process is underway on both issues.

Public comment will be taken under the standard rulemaking process, in writing and at public meetings in Tumwater (10/08), Kent (10/23), Ellensburg (10/26), and Spokane (10/30).

— More —

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The Department of Health is coordinating with other state agencies involved in this work, including the Liquor and Cannabis Board, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Revenue. Information on this and other developing [state health marijuana rules](#) is available on the agency website.

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