Medical marijuana laws and rules

The Cannabis Patient Protection Act was signed into law April 2015 and went into full effect on July 1, 2016.

This law aligns licensing and regulation of all marijuana producers, processors, retail stores and patient cooperatives under the oversight of the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (WSLC).

The Washington State Department of Health manages the medical marijuana database system and credentialing of medical marijuana consultants who work in medically endorsed marijuana stores.

Read the specific laws and rules on the Washington State Legislature web site:

- RCW 69.51A.230
- Chapter 246-71 WAC

Other requirements ...

In addition to the medical marijuana authorization database, the law required:

Standard Authorization Form

All medical marijuana forms and cards created before July 1, 2016 are no longer accepted at the licensed and medically endorsed marijuana stores. All medical marijuana authorizations must be written on the Department of Health form dated June 2015 (or later).

Medical Marijuana Consultants

All licensed and medically endorsed marijuana stores must have a certified medical marijuana consultant on staff.

Recognition Card Fee

A $1 fee is required from the cardholder when their card is created. This fee is collected by the medically endorsed store and paid to the Department of Health.

Changed your mind?

If you choose to no longer have an active Medical Marijuana Recognition card or would like to revoke your designated provider, you may complete the Revocation Request Form available on the department’s web site.

Be sure to notify any designated provider you revoke from the database.
Join database, get recognition card

Database benefits

The medical marijuana recognition card generated by the database gives the cardholder many benefits:

- May buy up to three times the current limit at any licensed and medically endorsed marijuana store.
- May buy products at a licensed and medically endorsed marijuana store without paying sales and use tax.
- May buy high-THC compliant products, where available.
- May have six plants and eight ounces of usable marijuana in their home.

A healthcare practitioner may authorize more plants to a maximum of 15. Patients so authorized may have up to 16 ounces of usable marijuana produced from their plants.

- May participate in a registered medical marijuana cooperative.
- If the cardholder follows all laws, they are protected from arrest.

Voluntary for patients

Medical marijuana patients are not required to be in the authorization database unless the patient is under the age of 18 years.

- Patients and designated providers who hold valid authorizations but choose not to be in the database may buy only what the laws allow for non-patients.
- Patients and designated providers will still have an affirmative defense to criminal prosecution if they have no more than four plants and six ounces of usable marijuana in their home.

Find a store

Licensed and medically endorsed marijuana stores should have the logo at right on their door or window.

A list of all medically endorsed stores is on the Washington State Department of Health website at www.doh.wa.gov/medicalmarijuana.

How to get entered in the database

1. Bring your medical marijuana authorization form to any licensed and medically endorsed marijuana store.
2. Ask to see the medical marijuana consultant on staff who can enter your information into the database and create your medical marijuana recognition card.

Who can access the database

The medical marijuana authorization database is a secure system. State law strictly limits who can view database information and how information can be used.

The database is not linked to any other state or private systems. Only the following people can see information from the database to:

- Access their patients’ healthcare information from the database:
  - Authorizing healthcare practitioners
  - Non-authorizing practitioners who are allowed to prescribe or dispense controlled substances
- Add patient information from the authorization form:
  - Certified medical marijuana consultant working in a medically endorsed marijuana store
- Provide administration or get reports:
  - Database administrator
  - Washington State Department of Health
  - Washington State Department of Revenue
  - Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board
- Verify that a card is valid:
  - Law enforcement
  - Employee working in a medically endorsed marijuana store

In addition, cardholders may learn who has accessed their healthcare information through written request.