



## Frequently Asked Questions

### FOR THOSE LOOKING TO OPEN A CANNABIS BUSINESS

#### How can I get a license to operate a cannabis business in unincorporated LA County?

- A legal cannabis business must obtain a license from BOTH the State and local jurisdiction, such as a city or county.
- Currently, all commercial cannabis business activity is prohibited in unincorporated LA County.
- LA County is not issuing or accepting any applications for cannabis business licenses.
- The State of California will not issue a license to a cannabis business located in unincorporated LA County at this time.
- [Sign up for the OCM's email listserv](#) to receive updates on cannabis policy for unincorporated areas of LA County.

#### What are LA County's regulations and laws on commercial cannabis activity?

- If you are located in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County all cannabis businesses and activities are prohibited.
- This includes cultivation, manufacturing, distribution, testing, and retail sale of both medical and adult-use cannabis.
- The State of California will not issue a license to cannabis businesses within the unincorporated areas of the County at this time.

**For information on state cannabis licenses, please click [here](#).**

#### Can I open a business now and get a license later?

- No. It is illegal to operate a cannabis business or engage in commercial cannabis activity without first obtaining both the required state and local licenses. Operating an unlicensed commercial cannabis business may impact your ability to receive a commercial cannabis license in the future.

## FOR CANNABIS CONSUMERS

### Where can I buy cannabis legally?

- You can only buy cannabis at retail outlets licensed by the California Bureau of Cannabis Control and the local licensing authority, such as a city or county.
- Keep in mind that the cultivation, possession, sale, and use of cannabis may remain unlawful under federal law, and therefore may affect immigration status.
- Employers have the right to prohibit the use of cannabis by their employees, so check your workplace policies.

### How can I determine which businesses are licensed?

- All cannabis businesses must have both a state and local license to operate.
- You can verify the status of a business's state license on these webpages:
  - [Retailers, testing labs, distributors and microbusinesses](#)
  - [Manufacturers](#)

### Are cannabis products required to be tested for potency and quality?

- Not yet. Until July 1, 2018, retailers can legally sell cannabis products that were produced before the testing requirements took effect. However, any cannabis that has not been tested will need to be clearly labeled as such.
- Testing will be required for all cannabis products cultivated or manufactured after January 1, 2018.
- Requirements for testing will be phased in over the next year, starting with contaminants that pose the greatest health risks.

### Where can I consume cannabis?

- You can ONLY consume cannabis on private property.
- It is illegal to smoke cannabis in public places or anywhere that tobacco smoking is prohibited.
- If you rent, keep in mind that landlords have the right to limit or prohibit cannabis use on their privately-owned properties.
- Under state law, cannabis consumption may be permitted on the premises of a cannabis retailer (i.e. a cannabis lounge), but only if the local jurisdiction allows it.

- Please check with your local licensing body to find out if businesses licensed for commercial cannabis consumption are permitted and where they are located.

### **Can I grow cannabis in my home?**

- Under state law, adults 21 or older can cultivate up to six cannabis plants in or on the grounds of their private residence.
- The plants must be in a locked space and not visible to the public.
- Many cities and counties limit or prohibit outdoor cannabis cultivation, and some may require growers to obtain a permit. Check with your local jurisdiction to find out their rules.
- If you live in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, [click here](#) for a summary of the rules and requirements for personal cannabis cultivation.
- Remember that it is illegal to sell any amount of cannabis without obtaining state and local licenses. It is also illegal and extremely dangerous, having caused damage to property and even loss of life, to use volatile solvents such as butane for manufacturing concentrated cannabis at home.

### **Can I use cannabis while driving?**

- It is illegal to use cannabis while driving under state law.
- Do not drive after consuming cannabis. If you operate a vehicle while under the influence of cannabis, you may be subject to arrest.
- Police departments will continue to treat driving under the influence of cannabis the same as any other controlled substance, such as alcohol.

### **Is my medical marijuana identification card or doctor's recommendation still valid?**

- Yes, it is still valid. It is legal to purchase medical cannabis if you are 18 years of age or older and you have a current physician's recommendation. Possession, cultivation, transport and administration of medicinal cannabis is also legal for persons 18 years of age and older who have been designated as a Primary Caregiver of a patient with a valid physician's recommendation. For more information on obtaining a Los Angeles County-issued medical marijuana identification card, please visit the Department of Public Health's [webpage](#).

## FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

### Can I lease space to a cannabis business?

- ***If your property is located in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County***, note that all cannabis businesses and activities are currently prohibited. This includes cultivation, manufacturing, distribution, testing, and retail sale of both medical and adult-use cannabis. In the unincorporated areas, those who rent property to cannabis businesses may be subject to significant civil and criminal penalties.
- ***If your property is located within an incorporated city***, check with that city to find out whether they permit cannabis businesses.
- If you are unsure which jurisdiction you are in, you can find out by entering your address in the Registrar Recorder's [address lookup site](#).

### Can I prevent my tenants from growing or using cannabis in my units?

- Yes. Under state law, property owners have the right to limit or prohibit the cultivation and/or use of cannabis on their properties.

## Nonsmoker's Rights

### What are my rights as someone who does not consume cannabis?

- If you do not consume cannabis and do not wish to be exposed, the law provides a level of protection to you from contact. Smoking in public places or any place where tobacco smoking is not permitted is forbidden under state law, and cannabis businesses are restricted from operating near schools and other sensitive use locations.

### What if I can smell smoke in my apartment from my neighbor?

- Your landlord may choose to permit or forbid recreational cannabis use in their buildings. Please contact your landlord to report issues and resolve any conflicts.

### What if I see someone smoking cannabis in public?

- If you have concerns about a person or people regularly consuming cannabis in a public place, please contact your city or local police department.

### **Are there different laws for medical and recreational cannabis?**

- Many of the same laws that apply to adult-use cannabis also apply to the medicinal use of cannabis by qualified patients. However, there are certain differences between recreational and medical cannabis laws, which are summarized in [this handout](#).

## **ILLEGAL CANNABIS BUSINESSES**

### **How can I report an illegal cannabis business?**

- To report cannabis businesses operating illegally in the County's unincorporated areas, please contact the Department of Regional Planning's Zoning Enforcement section at (213) 974-6453, email [ZoningEnforcement@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:ZoningEnforcement@planning.lacounty.gov), or call 211.
- To submit a complaint to the State's cannabis licensing agencies, or to search for open enforcement cases, please click [here](#).