



Clinical Director Requirements

April 2025

The following guidance is provided to assist medical cannabis businesses to comply with state laws and regulations governing the clinical director requirements.

This document is not legal advice. It is meant to assist licensed medical cannabis businesses with understanding the clinical director requirements, and to comply with state laws and regulations. Please consult an attorney if you have any questions regarding the legal requirements that apply.

OVERVIEW

A clinical director for a licensed dispensary may not provide a written certification for medical cannabis to any qualifying patient, pursuant to COMAR 14.17.04.08 (D).

- All standard licensed dispensaries shall appoint at least one individual in the function of clinical director after the licensee has been licensed and operational for at least a period of twenty-four months, pursuant to COMAR 14.17.04.08. This does not apply to a micro dispensary licensee.
- To be eligible to serve as a clinical director, an individual must:
 - Is eligible to serve as a certifying provider, as defined in Health – General Article, §13-3301, Annotated Code of Maryland, or
 - Is a licensed pharmacist in good standing with the State Board of Pharmacy, or
 - Have substantial education, training, and experience in the medical use of cannabis, as determined by the Administration and is a:
 - Registered nurse in good standing with the State Board of Nursing; or
 - Licensed naturopathic doctor in good standing with the State Board of Physicians.

Eligibility to Serve as a Clinical Director

An individual may be eligible to serve as a clinical director if they meet the following criteria:

- Eligible to serve as a certifying provider, as defined in Health – General Article, §13-3301, Annotated Code of Maryland. This means an individual who:
 - Is a physician, nurse practitioner or certified nurse midwife, dentist, podiatrist, or a physician assistant who has an active delegation agreement with a primary supervising physician who is a certifying provider;
 - Has an active, unrestricted license to practice in Maryland; and
 - Has a State controlled dangerous substances registration; or
- Is a licensed pharmacist in good standing with the State Board of Pharmacy; or
- A registered nurse in good standing with the State Board of Nursing; or
- Licensed naturopathic doctor in good standing with the State Board of Physicians; and

- Cannabis related education or experience by:
 - Have a degree or certificate related to the medical use of cannabis; or
 - Have completed substantial coursework related to the medical use of cannabis; or
 - Have substantial work experience treating individuals with medical cannabis or educating individuals about the medical use of cannabis.

In order to demonstrate substantial education, training or experience, and individual should submit:

- Transcripts and any other relevant information relating to academic courses, including course descriptions etc.;
- Academic or professional references;
- Relevant certificates or degrees demonstrating completion of course work;
- Curriculum vitae demonstrating professional experience;
- Any additional information requested by the Administration.

Responsibilities of a Clinical Director

Clinical directors are responsible for educating qualifying patients and caregivers in the following areas:

- Potential drug-to-drug interactions, including interactions with alcohol, prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs, and supplements;
- Possible side effects or contraindications of medical cannabis use;
- The potential for differing strengths and effects of medical cannabis strains; and
- Different methods, forms, and routes of medical cannabis administration.

Clinical directors are responsible for training dispensary agents on the following:

- Guidelines for providing information to qualifying patients related to risks, benefits, and side effects associated with medical cannabis;
- Recognizing signs and symptoms of substance abuse; and
- Guidelines for refusing to provide medical cannabis to an individual who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

A clinical director must be available during hours of operation, and may provide services:

- On-site at the licensed dispensary, or
- Be available via electronic communication.

A clinical director may serve at multiple dispensaries as long as they are able to provide the required services.

Training Requirements

Clinical directors must complete at least one MCA-approved training course each year. Clinical directors must email mca.labs@maryland.gov for MCA approval of their selected annual training program *prior* to submitting a certificate of completion. Training may be virtual or in-person. An MCA-approved course must include the following:

- 2.5 CME credit hours;
- Have an assessment quiz;
- Contain the following information:
 - The endocannabinoid system and pharmacology of cannabis;
 - Qualifying conditions and administration methods;
 - Medical cannabis contraindications;
 - Identifying adverse effects of cannabis use.

Once the training has been approved by MCA, the clinical director may complete the training and upload the certificate of completion in their OneStop account. Each licensed dispensary should retain supporting documentation demonstrating the clinical director has completed an MCA-approved training.

Annual clinical director training due dates are based on the last training certificate date submitted. MCA will send out a 30-day notice for annual training expiration. Training must be completed each year. Questions may be sent to: mca.labs@maryland.gov.

Clinical Director Registration

Clinical director registration is an online process. The application form must be completed and submitted in one session. You will not be able to save and complete the application at a later time.

1. Complete and submit an online application.

You will need:

- A valid, accessible email account;
- One of the following accepted forms of eligibility to serve as a clinical director:
 - Maryland Board of Physicians license number and your Controlled Dangerous Substances registration number; or
 - Maryland Board of Pharmacy license number; or
 - Any Maryland Board license number required for your healthcare profession.
- Documentation of cannabis education or experience;
- A government issued identification.

2. Verify your email address.

After submitting your application, a verification email will be sent. You must click the verification link in the email message to verify your account. You will receive a follow-up email advising whether your application has been approved by the Administration. Be sure to retain your approval email as it contains your Username and MCA Clinical Director ID Number.

Renewal and Annual Training Requirement

Your initial registration is valid as long as your healthcare professional license. Prior to that expiration, you will be notified via email by MCA that your expiration date is approaching. You will need to ensure any relevant state licensure is in good standing, and then log into the Clinical Director Registry to renew your MCA license. Please provide the same documentation as the initial registration.

Clinical directors must also complete at least one MCA-approved training course each year. Please see Training Requirements for more details.