



Age Verification Requirements for Websites and Social Media

Linthicum, MD - The Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA) is issuing this bulletin as a reminder to all licensees that cannabis-related websites must employ an effective, neutral age-screening mechanism that verifies each user is at least 21 years of age.¹ It is the responsibility of each licensee to implement proper age verification methods that comply with relevant State laws and regulations governing the cannabis industry.

The MCA will begin auditing the cannabis-related websites of all licensees for compliance within **30 days** of this bulletin being released. Failure to comply will result in the Administration issuing violations and potentially issuing fines without further notice.

Age-Screening

A neutral age-gate mechanism is one that confirms a user's age by requiring the entry of their date of birth **before** granting access to website content not suitable for children.²

Minimum Age Requirements

The age-gate mechanism must verify that each user is at least 21 years old before (1) the user is allowed to access or view any content, and (2) the website collects the user's address, email address, phone number, or other contact information for advertising.³

To be in compliance, the age-gate must require each user to enter their date of birth prior to gaining access to the website. It is not acceptable for the user to confirm their age by only selecting 'Yes' or 'No' in response to whether they are at least 21 years of age.

Underage Patient

A cannabis-related website that is appropriate for a qualifying patient who is under the age of 21 years may implement an alternative age-screening mechanism that directs the patient exclusively to a section of the website for qualifying patients. All other content on the website should remain restricted.

Social Media

All advertisements placed on social media are required to include a notice stating that individuals must be at least 21 years old to view the content.

If you have any questions, please contact MCA by email at reporting.mca@maryland.gov.

¹ COMAR 14.17.12.08C

² COMAR 14.17.01.01B(34)

³ Md. Code, Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis §36-903(b)(1)

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