



Maryland Pilots CSQ CLEAR Laboratory Assessment Program to Analyze Statewide Testing Accuracy & Weed-Out Lab Shopping

Linthicum, MD (September 28, 2026) — The cannabis industry's widespread issue of 'lab shopping,' potency manipulation, and testing fraud may finally have a solution, pending the results of the CSQ CLEAR Pilot Program that the [Maryland Cannabis Administration \(MCA\)](#) is launching this October.

The Maryland CSQ CLEAR Pilot Program is a proficiency testing pilot study comparing cannabinoid testing of Maryland licensed cannabis products. The pilot will compare cannabinoid testing of Maryland flower products across five laboratories: four MCA registered independent testing laboratories and the MCA Office of Laboratory Services reference laboratory. The pilot will assess inter-laboratory agreement, intra-laboratory repeatability, and differences between current measurements and product label and original Certificate of Analysis (COA) values. All assessment findings will be anonymized, as the pilot will be used for informational purposes only with no punitive consequences.

Developed by [Cannabis Safety & Quality \(CSQ\)](#), the first accredited certification program of its kind, the CSQ CLEAR Program represents a significant step forward in repairing the integrity of cannabis testing as result of 'lab shopping'. The Program uses a modified [P-BAT](#) approach and forensic statistical analysis to identify instances of testing manipulation and fraud.

"We created the CSQ CLEAR Program as a more cost-effective, robust, transparent, and iterative approach to solving the problem of 'lab shopping' than what is currently available," said Darwin Millard, Technical Director at CSQ. "The pilot we are conducting in Maryland with the MCA, will provide a proof of concept the CSQ CLEAR Program is a reliable model that can be replicated in other states."

[Previous studies](#) have shown that THC levels are routinely inflated by as much as 25 percent in several legal markets. The CSQ CLEAR Program aims to analyze this discrepancy, addressing systemic issues impacting data integrity and the trustworthiness of laboratories in the U.S. cannabis industry.

“MCA has always had a strong focus on ensuring cannabis product quality in Maryland. The CSQ CLEAR Pilot program provides us an opportunity to measure our efforts industry-wide and adjust if necessary” Tabatha Robinson, Director of MCA. "This sort of agency and industry transparency is key to helping this market grow responsibly."

The first round of testing will commence in early October 2026, with results expected to be compiled and released in December.

About Cannabis Safety & Quality (CSQ)

CSQ is a safety-driven company setting reliable standards for the cannabis industries (marijuana and hemp) to help companies minimize risk, protect their brand, and provide the best product for their consumers. CSQ is the first ANAB accredited, cGMP/cGACP-conformant, safety and quality management, certification program for cannabinoid products developed by and for the cannabis industries to meet ASTM/ISO standards and market-by-market regulatory requirements from seed to sale. For more information about CSQ's standards visit our website at www.csqcertification.com or follow CSQ on [LinkedIn](#).

About Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA)

The mission of the Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA) is to provide a safe, equitable, and accessible medical and adult-use cannabis industry for qualifying patients and adult consumers. The MCA collaborates with stakeholders in fostering a high-quality and inclusive cannabis industry that serves as a national model. The MCA is the agency responsible for regulating the cultivation, manufacture, testing, and distribution of medical and adult-use cannabis in Maryland.

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