



News Release

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MMCC Announces Rankings

Minority/Women-owned businesses submit more than 90 Percent of all Applications

Linthicum, Md., Sept. 18, 2019 – The Natalie M. LaPrade Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission (MMCC) announced the rankings for new grower and processor licenses. The MMCC may award a Stage One Pre-Approval license for up to four grower-applicants and 10 processor-applicants.

The new licenses are the result of emergency legislation to increase participation among small, minority, and women-owned businesses. The MMCC took immediate steps to implement procedures to address diversity as well as increase minority and women participation in the medical cannabis industry, including:

- Diversity-related provisions into the grower and processor applications.
- Grant funding to educational and business development organizations to provide free training to individuals interested in learning how to participate and become licensed in the medical cannabis industry in Maryland.
- Public workshops with the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland on the requirements for completing and submitting a grower or processor application.
- In-depth guidance materials to explain the license application and process.

The efforts proved successful, as more than 90 percent of medical cannabis grower and processor license applications were submitted by Disadvantaged Equity Applicants. Those applicants must provide supporting documentation that at least 51 percent of the ownership interest in the business is held by a member of a qualifying minority group.

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“With today’s announcement, we move a step closer to fulfilling the General Assembly’s mandate to address the needs of minority and women-owned businesses seeking to participate in the medical cannabis industry,” said MMCC Chair Brian Lopez. “We are thrilled with the level of interest in these new applications, particularly among small-, minority- and women-owned businesses.”

MMCC collaborated with Morgan State University to evaluate the applications in a blinded review. Any identifying information such as applicant name, the name(s) of any owner(s), investors, employees, or contractors associated with the applicant were redacted.

The vote to approve rankings does not automatically award a Stage One Pre-Approval to an applicant. Furthermore, the MMCC will now conduct a review of the highest ranking applicants to confirm the truthfulness of material contained in the applications. The top ranking applications may be eligible for award of Stage One Pre-Approval through a later vote of the Commission.

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The Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission develops policies, procedures and regulations to promote medical cannabis as a safe and effective product available to qualifying patients.
