

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Adult-use cannabis sales set to begin in New Jersey

04/13/2022

NJ-CRC to give ATCs approval to begin recreational sales on April 21

TRENTON – The New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission will be issuing licenses to seven alternative treatment centers (ATCs) to begin adult-use cannabis operations, including at 13 retail dispensaries, starting on Thursday, April 21. Individuals 21 years and older will be able to purchase cannabis and cannabis products legally without a medical card.

“This is an exciting time for New Jersey,” said New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission executive director Jeff Brown. “New Jerseyans voted overwhelmingly to have access to adult-use cannabis and it is now here. I am very proud of the work the Commission has done over the past year to open the market. We have been intentional and deliberate to do everything in our power to set the market on good footing to start.”

The Alternative Treatment Centers will be required to meet social equity standards, which include providing technical knowledge to new cannabis businesses, particularly social equity applicants.

“We remain committed to social equity,” said Commission Chair Dianna Houenou. “We promised to build this market on the pillars of social equity and safety. Ultimately, we hope to see businesses and a workforce that reflect the diversity of the state, and local communities that are positively impacted by this new and growing industry.”

Medicinal cannabis companies that have been approved to open the recreational market will be assessed on diversity in hiring and management, support for community programs, the number of new and local businesses to which they provide technical support, and the percentage of minority-owned vendors or suppliers with which they contract, among other things. Dispensary scores will be posted and updated regularly on the NJ-CRC’s website.

“We know that drug prohibition laws have through history disproportionately impacted Black and Brown communities – and continue to do so,” said Wesley McWhite III, NJ-CRC’s director of Diversity and Inclusion, who will be responsible for ensuring that the ATCs licensed for recreational use comply with the Act. “A socially equitable cannabis market will have substantial representation of those communities in employment and in ownership and these companies that have been benefitting from the market for the past 12 years – and are now expanding into the lucrative recreational space – have a role in helping to accomplish that. Making the standards and the grades public ensures customers, stakeholders, advocates, and the general public have a clear picture of the equity and diversity efforts in the New Jersey market.”

Pursuant to the CREAMM Act, medicinal cannabis companies are the first to open the recreational market and the NJ-CRC has committed to assessing them on diversity in hiring and management, support for community programs, the number of new and local businesses to which they provide technical support, and the percentage of minority-owned vendors or suppliers with which they contract, among other things.

A list of locations that will open on April 21 will be posted on the Commission’s website as soon as ATCs confirm the date on which they will begin operations.

The New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission establishes and enforces the rules and regulations governing the licensing, cultivation, testing, selling, and purchasing of cannabis in the state.

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