



Government of the District of Columbia  
Department of Health



Health Regulation and Licensing  
Administration

MEDICAL MARIJUANA PROGRAM  
PATIENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Question: What are the qualifying medical conditions to become a medical marijuana patient?**

Answer: At this time, medical marijuana can be recommended for the following conditions:

- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
- Cancer
- Glaucoma
- Conditions characterized by severe and persistent muscle spasms, such as multiple sclerosis

**Question: What are the qualifying medical treatments to become a medical marijuana patient?**

Answer: Qualifying medical treatments include any of the following:

- Chemotherapy
- Use of azidothymidine or protease inhibitors
- Radiotherapy

**Question: Who can recommend that I use medical marijuana?**

Answer: A licensed physician in good standing to practice medicine or osteopathy in the District of Columbia may recommend medical marijuana to you if he or she:

- Is in a bona fide physician-patient relationship with you;
- Has completed a full assessment of your medical history and current medical condition, including an in-person physical examination, performed not more than ninety (90) days prior to making the recommendation;
- Has responsibility for your ongoing care and treatment, provided that such ongoing treatment is not limited to or for the primary purpose of the provision of medical marijuana use or consultation;
- Makes the recommendation based upon his or her assessment of your: (a) medical history and (b) current medical condition;
- Completed a review of other approved medications and treatments that might provide you with relief from your medical condition or the side effects of your medical treatment

**Question: How do I become a registered medical marijuana patient?**

Answer: To become a medical marijuana patient:

- You must be a D.C. resident and show proof of residence
- You must have a qualifying illness or be undergoing a qualifying treatment
- Your physician must believe that medical marijuana is a reasonable drug to treat your symptoms and only after trying other known medications
- Your physician must provide a formal recommendation to obtain medical marijuana
- You must complete an application provided by the Department of Health and submit it along with your physician's recommendation

**Question: What is a medical marijuana dispensary?**

Answer: A dispensary is a facility operated by an organization or business registered with the Department of Health. A dispensary may possess and dispense medical marijuana and paraphernalia to patients and caregivers registered with the Department of Health. This is done in a secure retail setting. All medical marijuana sold in dispensaries will be provided by approved cultivators located within the District of Columbia.

**Question: What is a cultivation center?**

Answer: A cultivation center is a facility operated by an organization or business registered with the Department of Health. Cultivation centers cultivate, possess, and manufacture medical marijuana which is distributed to dispensaries registered with the Department of Health.

**Question: Can I visit multiple dispensaries?**

Answer: No. Patients are required to choose a single dispensary to register with. Patients are not permitted to visit or enter multiple dispensaries.

**Question: Can I change which dispensary I wish to be registered with?**

Answer: Yes- patients must use the "Change of Information Form" posted on the Department's Medical Marijuana webpage: <http://doh.dc.gov/mmp>. There is a \$90 fee to replace the patient registration card.

**Question: Is there a fee to withdrawal from the Medical Marijuana Program?**

Answer: There is no fee to withdrawal from the Medical Marijuana Program.

**Question: Can a caregiver purchase medical marijuana on my behalf?**

Answer: Yes. Caregivers are permitted to purchase medical marijuana on behalf of patients.

**Question: What is the difference between a patient and a caregiver?**

Answer: The registration process is very similar for patients and caregivers. The primary difference is that a caregiver is not permitted to use medical marijuana for themselves. Caregivers have the same rights to enter dispensaries and purchase medical marijuana as patients.

**Question: How much medical marijuana can I purchase?**

Answer: Patients are permitted to purchase up to two (2) ounces of dried medical marijuana per month or the equivalent of two ounces of dried medical marijuana when sold in any other form.

**Question: Where can I use medical marijuana?**

Answer: Medical marijuana cannot be administered by or to a patient anywhere other than: (a) your residence, if permitted; or (b) at a medical treatment facility when receiving medical care for a qualifying medical condition, if permitted by the medical facility.

**Question: Do I have any risk or liability for using medical marijuana?**

Answer: As part of the registration process, you must sign a written statement certifying that you assume any and all risk or liability that may result under District of Columbia and federal laws from the possession, use, administration, or dispensing of medical marijuana. You must further acknowledge understanding that the medical marijuana laws and enforcement thereof of the District of Columbia and the Federal government are subject to change at any time.

**Question: How should I transport medical marijuana?**

Answer: You or your caregiver may only transport medical marijuana in a container or sealed package bearing the label received from the dispensary.

**Question: What if I lose my registration card or it is stolen?**

Answer: In the event that you experience the theft, loss, or destruction of your registration card, you should:

- Contact the Department of Health within twenty-four (24) hours of discovery
- Pay the required replacement fee of \$90.00
- Submit a “Registration Card Replacement Form” within seventy-two (72) hours after the initial discovery. This form can be found on the program’s webpage: <http://doh.dc.gov/mmp>
- Be issued a new registration identification card

**Question: Is there an age requirement to be a caregiver?**

Answer: Caregivers must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

**Question: Is there an age requirement to be a patient?**

Answer: No, there is no minimum age to be a registered medical marijuana patient.

**Question: Where can I acquire medical marijuana?**

Answer: You and/or your caregiver may only obtain medical marijuana from the dispensary designated on your registration identification card and may not: (a) grow or cultivate medical marijuana; (b) purchase medical marijuana through street vendors; or (c) obtain medical marijuana from other patients and caregivers. Patients shall only possess or administer medical marijuana, or possess or use paraphernalia, obtained from the registered dispensary designated on the patient’s registration identification card.

**Question: Is my patient registration information kept confidential?**

Answer: Applications and supporting information submitted by patients and caregivers will be confidential and subject to the protections of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, as amended, and other applicable privacy laws and privileges.

**Question: What forms of medical marijuana can I purchase?**

Answer: Dispensaries and cultivation centers may dispense or distribute medical marijuana in any form deemed safe which allows patients to eat, inhale, or otherwise use medical marijuana for medical purposes. Medical marijuana will be subject to testing for quality assurance and safety purposes.

**Question: I have selected the person I want to be my caregiver- how does he or she become registered as my caregiver?**

Answer: To qualify for a caregiver registration identification card, your caregiver must:

- Be designated by you to serve as the person authorized, on your behalf, to possess, obtain from a dispensary, dispense, and assist in the administration of medical marijuana;
- Be registered with the Department as your caregiver;
- Not be currently serving as the caregiver for another patient;
- Be at least eighteen (18) years of age; and
- Have never been convicted of possession or sale of a controlled substance, unless such conviction occurred after 1999 and was related to the possession of medical marijuana

**Question: Are medical marijuana cards transferable to other states?**

Answer: No; your registration as a DC Medical Marijuana patient is not transferable to other states. Registration cards are the property of the District of Columbia and shall be surrendered upon demand of the Director of the Department of Health.

**Question: How do I dispose of excess medical marijuana?**

Answer: You should return any unused medical marijuana to the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department.

**Question: What do I do if I need to change any of my information?**

Answer: You must notify the Department of Health in writing within 14 calendar days of any changes to your name, address, caregiver, recommending physician, or designated dispensary. You shall submit the change of information form provided by the Department; surrender your current registration identification card; notify your caregiver; pay the required fee; and will be issued a new card that reflects the changes.

**Question: What do I do if my physician declares that I no longer qualify for medical marijuana?**

Answer: Within 14 calendar days of your recommending physician declaring that you no longer suffer from a qualifying medical condition or treatment, you shall surrender your registration card to the Department of Health; notify your caregiver of the change; and return any unused medical marijuana to the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department.

**Question: Can I grow my own medical marijuana?**

Answer: No; patients and caregivers shall not grow or cultivate medical marijuana.

**Question: Can I purchase medical marijuana from street vendors?**

Answer: No; patients shall not purchase medical marijuana through street vendors.

**Question: Can I use medical marijuana from other registered medical marijuana patients?**

Answer: No; patients shall not obtain medical marijuana from other registered qualifying patients or caregivers.

**Question: Are there any limitations on what I can do while using medical marijuana?**

Answer: The Medical Marijuana Program shall not be construed as permitting patients to undertake any task under the influence of medical marijuana when doing so would constitute negligence or professional malpractice; or operate, navigate, or be in actual physical control of any motor vehicle, aircraft or motorboat while under the influence of medical marijuana.

**Question: Can I use my medical marijuana around minors?**

Answer: Patients shall not use medical marijuana at a time or in a location within their residence when such use would result, or is likely to result, in exposure to the medical marijuana smoke that may adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of a minor.

**Question: Can the Department of Health deny my patient application?**

Answer: The Department of Health may deny patient applications if the application is incomplete and the applicant fails to provide the missing information or documentation within 60 days of notification by the Department or if the Department of Health determines after further inquiry or investigation that the information provided was false, misleading, forged, or altered.

**Question: How should I act in the dispensaries?**

Answer: Patients and caregivers shall not engage in abusive, intimidating, threatening, or disruptive conduct while on the premises of a dispensary.

**Question: Can I share my medical marijuana with other registered medical marijuana patients?**

Answer: No; patients shall not transfer, share, give, or deliver any unused medical marijuana in their possession to another qualifying patient or caregiver for medical use or destruction whether or not the person is registered with the District's Medical Marijuana Program.