

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Department of Health

Health Regulation and Licensing Administration



Medical Marijuana Program Physician Frequently Asked Questions

When will the Medical Marijuana Program be ready for patients?

The Department has approved 6 Cultivation Centers for registration at this time. These Cultivation Centers must meet all requirements for building, safety and health before they can begin to cultivate. Cultivation Centers will deliver medical marijuana to Dispensaries that are currently being selected.

For what Medical Conditions and Treatments may I recommend Medical Marijuana?

At this time, legislation and regulations allow for the recommendation of medical marijuana for the following :

Qualifying medical conditions: Any of the following:

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

Qualifying medical treatments: Any of the following:

- Chemotherapy
- Use of azidothymidine or protease inhibitors
- Radiotherapy

Who may recommend Medical Marijuana?

A licensed physician in good standing to practice medicine or osteopathy in the District of Columbia, may recommend the use of medical marijuana to a qualifying patient if the physician:

- Is in a bona fide physician-patient relationship with the qualifying patient;
- Has completed a full assessment of the patient's 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 the ongoing care and treatment of the patient, provided that such ongoing treatment shall not be limited to or for the primary purpose of the provision of medical marijuana use or consultation;
- Makes the recommendation based upon the physician's assessment of the qualifying patient's:
 - Medical history;
 - Current medical condition; and

- A review of other approved medications and treatments that might provide the qualifying patient with relief from a qualifying medical condition or the side effects of a qualifying medical treatment; and
- Is not the owner, director, officer, member, incorporator, agent, or employee of a Dispensary or Cultivation Center.

Am I required to keep special records?

A physician recommending the use of medical marijuana to a qualifying patient shall maintain a record for each qualifying patient which shall:

- Accurately reflect the evaluation and treatment of the patient and include the following as applicable:
 - Patient's name and the date(s) of treatment;
 - Patient's medical history and updated health history;
 - Documented results of a full assessment of the patient's medical history and current medical condition;
 - Documented results of the physician's physical examination of the patient;
 - Treatment plan;
 - Informed consent document(s);
 - Diagnosis and treatment rendered;
 - List of drugs prescribed, administered, dispensed and the quantity;
 - Radiographs;
 - Patient financial/billing records;
 - Name of the physician or assistive personnel providing service(s);
 - Laboratory work orders; and
- Be kept for three (3) years after last seeing the patient or three (3) years after a minor patient reaches eighteen (18) years of age.

How do I obtain the recommendation form?

The recommendation form will be provided by the Department of Health. Forms will become available more closely to the program implementation date.

How do my patients qualify for a Medical Marijuana recommendation?

To qualify for a patient registration identification card, an applicant shall:

- Be a bona fide resident of the District of Columbia at the time of application and remain a bona fide resident during treatment with medical marijuana;
- Have a "qualifying medical condition" or be undergoing a "qualifying medical treatment" listed on page 1;
- Have a signed, written physician's recommendation for the use of medical marijuana meeting the regulatory requirements; and
- If the qualifying patient is a minor, the signed written consent of his or her parent or legal guardian.

What if my patient no longer qualifies for a Medical Marijuana recommendation?

A physician shall notify the Department in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days after advising a qualifying patient that he or she no longer suffers from a qualifying medical condition or is undergoing a qualifying medical treatment.

Are there regulatory requirements regarding my relationship with dispensaries or cultivation centers?

A physician recommending the use of medical marijuana to a qualifying patient shall not have a professional office located at or adjacent to a dispensary or cultivation center or receive financial compensation from a dispensary or cultivation center.

Do physicians need to obtain a special registration to recommend Medical Marijuana?

No. A physician who is licensed and in good standing to practice medicine or osteopathy in the District of Columbia may recommend the use of medical marijuana to a qualifying patient if the physician meets the requirements specified in the regulations.

How often do I need to write a recommendation for my patient?

The recommendation that is written is valid for one year for the patient, provided that he/she obtains a registration card from the Department of Health within 90 days from the date when the recommendation was written.