

Guidance for Law Enforcement Regarding the Medical Use of Marijuana Program Online System

Updated by the Commission: July 26, 2019

This document was issued originally by the Department of Public Health (DPH). As part of the transfer of the Medical Use of Marijuana Program on December 23, 2018, the Cannabis Control Commission adopted this document. We suggest that before you rely on the contents of this document, you check the applicable medical-use marijuana laws, which include M.G.L. c. 94I and 935 CMR 501.000, as they may provide or clarify the legal requirements related to this document. We also suggest that you periodically check for revisions to this document. Questions with regards to this document may be directed to Commission@CCCMass.com.

What is the Medical Use of Marijuana Program Online System (Online System)?

The Online System allows:

- Law enforcement officers to verify patient, caregiver, and Medical Marijuana Treatment Center (MTC) – formerly referred to as Registered Marijuana Dispensaries (RMDs) – agent registrations;
- Clinicians/healthcare providers to provide certifications to qualifying patients for the medical use of marijuana;
- Clinicians/healthcare providers, patients, caregivers, and MTC agents to register with the Medical Use of Marijuana Program (Program); and
- MTCs to track dispensing activity and verify patient and caregiver registrations.

How does law enforcement access the Online System?

- Law enforcement officers can access the Online System through their existing accounts with the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS).



How can law enforcement verify whether someone can legally possess marijuana for medical use?

- There are two ways a law enforcement officer can look up a registrant, including patients, caregivers, and MTC agents.
 - If a registrant presents their Program ID Card, the law enforcement officer may enter the registration number printed on the card and the registrant’s last name into the system to verify registration status.
 - If a registrant does not present an official Program ID Card, a law enforcement officer may enter the registrant’s full name, date of birth, mother’s maiden name, and registration type (caregiver, patient, or MTC agent) into the system to verify registration status.
- If the individual is listed as “ACTIVE” next to “Status” or “Registration Status,” the registrant may possess marijuana for medical purposes. If the individual is listed as “INACTIVE,” the registrant may not possess marijuana for medical purposes.

What information on patients and caregivers can law enforcement access through the system?

- Name, registration number, registration type (patient or caregiver), and photo of the registrant.
- Whether the registration is currently “ACTIVE.” If listed as “ACTIVE,” the registrant may possess marijuana for medical purposes. If listed as “INACTIVE,” the registrant may not possess marijuana for medical purposes.
- The maximum amount of marijuana the registrant is allowed to possess.

- Registrations must be renewed annually and new Program ID Cards are issued every year. To find out whether an individual has an active registration with the Program, sign in to CJIS and observe whether the individual has an “ACTIVE” or “INACTIVE” registration status next to “Status” or “Registration Status.”
- Patients, caregivers, and MTC agents must carry their Program ID Card at all times while in possession of marijuana for medical use



- A temporary, paper Program ID Card can be printed by the patient, caregiver, or dispensary agent at the time of registration for use until their plastic Program ID Card is mailed to them (see below for image of sample temporary, paper Program ID Card). This temporary, paper Program ID Card expires four (4) weeks from the date the registration is approved by the Program, at which time the registrant should have received a plastic Program ID Card.
- If the patient is using a temporary, paper Program ID Card more than four (4) weeks from the date of registration, it does not affect their status as an “active registrant” in CJIS, but the registrant should contact the Program at 833-869-6820 to report that they have not received their plastic Program ID Card.

- While patients and caregivers are waiting for their registrations to be processed and approved, they may be qualified to obtain Initial Access Certification (Initial Access) from their certifying clinician. Initial Access allows patients and caregivers to immediately enter an MTC and purchase medical-use marijuana. See below for image of Initial Access Certification.
- Initial Access allows patients to receive a limited, 14-day supply of medical-use marijuana, which the Commission has determined is 2.5 ounces, for two weeks. The patient’s certifying clinician may determine and certify a patient requires a different amount.
- Initial Access expires either 14 days after issuance or when the recipient is approved for a Program ID Card by the Commission. If the recipient has been approved for the Program but has not received their Program ID Card by the time Initial Access expires, they may print a temporary, paper Program ID Card (details above) through the Online Portal.



Are paper registrations issued by medical providers still valid?

- Effective February 1, 2015, paper certifications from physicians are no longer sufficient for compliance with registration requirements under Program regulations. All patients, including those currently holding a paper certification, must obtain an electronic certification from their physician and be registered with the Program to possess marijuana for medical use.
- Patients, caregivers, and MTC agents must carry their Program ID Card at all times while in possession of marijuana for medical use.

How can law enforcement access information that is not provided in the Online System?

- To initiate a request for information on a registered patient, caregiver, MTC agent, or MTC that is not provided by CJIS, law enforcement officers may call the Program at 833-869-6820. When calling, please have the following information prepared:
 - Name of the law enforcement officer;
 - Title of the law enforcement officer;
 - Name of the law enforcement agency at which the law enforcement officer works;
 - Phone number to contact the law enforcement officer;
 - Description of what the law enforcement officer is calling about;
 - The name of the individual the law enforcement officer is inquiring about; and
 - The Program registration number of the individual the law enforcement officer is inquiring about (if available).

- No information will be provided to the law enforcement officer until the Commission has verified that the request is made pursuant to a legitimate law enforcement inquiry and that information requested may be appropriately disclosed.
- IMPORTANT: Please do not send confidential information to the Commission over email, such as any individually identifiable information that reveals the identity of the data subject or is readily identified with the data subject, such as name, address, telephone number, social security number, health identification number, or date of birth; or provides a reasonable basis to believe that the information could be used, either alone or in combination with other information, to identify a data subject.