

Qualified Vendors Identified for Cannabis Control Commission's Social Equity Program

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BOSTON—The Cannabis Control Commission (Commission) on Thursday announced an approved list of qualified vendors to provide training materials and services as part of the nation's first statewide [Social Equity Program](#).

The Commission's program is designed to create sustainable pathways into the legal, adult-use industry for Massachusetts residents who have been disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and face barriers to entering the market. Eligible applicants will receive professional instruction, technical services, and mentoring from vendors that will be chosen from the list below:

- **Cannabis Community Care and Research Network (C3RN)**: a provider of advocacy, research, and education services related to cannabis;
- **Earthwise Outreach**: a Boston-based cannabis training and education group specializing in entry level and entrepreneurial training;
- **Greenlight**: a provider of client services for navigating the cannabis industry landscape;
- **Marketing Edge Consulting Group**: a certified, woman-owned business that collaborates with public and private organizations to help entrepreneurs achieve their business goals;
- **Massachusetts Recreational Consumer Council (MRCC)**: a nonprofit that seeks to ensure the safety of recreational marijuana consumers by bridging the gaps between communities, local legislators, and Massachusetts businesses;
- **Point7**: a Women's Business Enterprise National Council-certified organization supporting cannabis businesses throughout the United States and abroad;
- **QIC**: a team of professionals with multistate managerial experience in medical and recreational consumer-facing cannabis markets.

To identify these businesses and organizations, the Commission published a [Request for Qualifications](#) seeking responses from those capable of developing courses and providing training focused on the skills needed to start, own, manage, or work in a licensed marijuana establishment. Through four teaching tracks based on trainees' diverse needs and career goals, participants will be able to develop competency in areas such as accounting and sales forecasting, business plan creation, farming best practices, identifying funds and raising capital, navigating municipal processes, tax prediction and legal compliance, and more.

The tracks are categorized as follows:

- **Entrepreneurs**: those who seek marijuana establishment licensure and ownership;
- **Core**: those who have existing industry experience (either two to six years, or seven or more years) and are interested in managerial and executive level careers;

- **Re-Entry and Entry Level**: those reentering society after serving sentences for drug convictions and those with entry level industry experience (up to two years); and
- **Ancillary**: those with existing skills that are directly transferable to supporting cannabis businesses.

The next steps toward implementing the Social Equity Program include the development of courses and procurement of vendors from the approved list. An online application will be made available through the Commission's website for interested participants who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Residency in a Massachusetts area of [disproportionate impact](#) for at least five of the past 10 years (income may not exceed [400% of federal poverty level](#));
- A past drug conviction and residency in Massachusetts for at least the preceding 12 months; or
- Marriage to or child of a person with a drug conviction, and residency in Massachusetts for at least the preceding 12 months.

State law requires the Commission to adopt procedures and policies to encourage full participation by disproportionately impacted individuals and to positively affect their communities. Additionally, a legislative mandate requires a study of minorities, women, and veteran business enterprises in the cannabis industry. If obstacles are identified, the Commission is instructed to create training programs designed to achieve their meaningful involvement.

To learn more about the Social Equity Program, visit [MassCannabisControl.com](https://www.masscannabiscontrol.com), contact Director of Community Outreach [Shekia Scott](#) at 617-701-8400, or follow [@MA_Cannabis](#) on Twitter.

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