

# **City of Brockton Cannabis Social Equity Policies**

## **Purpose and Scope**

On August 11, 2022, Governor Charlie Baker signed S. 3096, An Act Relative to Equity in the Cannabis Industry, into law. The new law requires host municipalities to establish initial policies to promote Equity in the cannabis industry. On June 29, 2023, the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission (“CCC”) issued guidance on how to create a model Social Equity policy that encourages cities and towns in Massachusetts to consider incentives for increased participation by Social Equity applicants in their local cannabis ecosystem.

Based on cannabis Social Equity best practices, guidance from the CCC, and lessons learned from the City of Brockton’s current cannabis business licensing program, the City of Brockton adopts a set of policies to further promote Equity for new Social Equity applicants seeking to establish businesses in Brockton.

## **Applicability**

The [CCC’s Social Equity programs](#) provide training and technical assistance to applicants who have been disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs, marijuana prohibition, arrests, and incarceration and who meet certain income and residency requirements. The City of Brockton defines qualifying Social Equity applicants under Brockton’s Cannabis Social Equity Policies as those that have been certified as eligible to participate in the CCC Social Equity Program or are Certified Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants according to the CCC.

## **The City of Brockton Cannabis Social Equity Policies:**

To encourage greater participation by Social Equity applicants in Brockton’s cannabis industry, when a Host Community Agreement (HCA) becomes available for new businesses, there will be an exclusive period of six months limiting the availability of the HCA to qualifying Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants. After the six-month period, 50% of the newly available licenses, but no less than 1, shall be reserved for social equity applicants. An evaluation form will be made available that scores components of an application. The evaluation form will include consideration of equity in the overall evaluation score, which will comprise not less than twenty-five (25) percent of the total evaluation score. This equity component will include: (i) whether a License Applicant is pre-verified as a Social Equity Business by the Commission; (ii) whether the License Applicant is a Social Equity Program Participant; (iii) whether the License Applicant is an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant; (iv) whether the License Applicant has a prior Marijuana related criminal conviction; (v) whether the License Applicant is part of an Area of Disproportionate Impact, as identified by the Commission; or (vi) a majority of the License Applicant entity is comprised of individuals from Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino, or Native American or indigenous descent.

Further, pursuant to 935 CMR §§500.181(3)(a) and 501.181(3)(a), the City has adopted a Local Approval Process for equity applicants that is administered on a 1:1 basis, where a General Applicant may be approved only after a Social Equity Business has commenced operations. Under the Regulations, Host Communities may choose to administer a 1:1 Local Approval Process until such time as 50% of the Licensees operating in the Host Community are Social Equity Businesses.

1. The City of Brockton will enhance marketing and outreach to potential Social Equity applicants by promoting available HCAs to the Cannabis Control Commissions' Social Equity program, promoting on the City's website and Social media, and enhanced business outreach as part of the City's Economic Development program.
2. The City of Brockton will provide permitting technical assistance for Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants navigating the City of Brockton's cannabis permitting process. The City's Planning and Economic Development Department will designate a municipal contact who will work closely with Social Equity applicants in the permitting process from initial inquiry through the special permit and building permit process.
3. Under the state program, Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants are eligible for exclusive access to Delivery Licenses, including Marijuana Courier Marijuana and Delivery Operator licenses, until at least April 1, 2026.
4. Wherever possible, the City of Brockton will reduce financial barriers and expedite the licensing for Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants. Throughout the City of Brockton's licensing process, the City will endeavor to streamline licensing for these applicants.
5. The City of Brockton has updated its municipal website pages regarding its adult retail and medical cannabis approval process and centralized all information on one page, including a list of all documentation required by a Host Community's local approval process in downloadable form, in order to be user friendly and transparent.