



Massachusetts Social Equity Program's Second Cohort Accepting Applications Until May 1

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Expanded criteria will increase access to program benefits for participants from areas of disproportionate impact

WORCESTER—In preparation for the launch of the second cohort of Massachusetts' Social Equity Program, the Cannabis Control Commission (Commission) has announced it will continue accepting applications from interested individuals until 5 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2020. Applicants who have

previously applied to the program have received next steps and directions by email.

The nation's first free, statewide technical assistance and training program provides eligible participants skills, education, mentorship, and other program benefits to enter the Commonwealth's regulated cannabis industry. Applicants who meet at least one of the following criteria may qualify for the second cohort:

- They have resided in a Commission-designated area of disproportionate impact for at least five of the past 10 years and their income does not exceed 400% of the area median income in their city or town of residence; or
- They have a past drug conviction and have resided in Massachusetts for at least the preceding 12 months; or
- They are married to, or are the child of, a person with a drug conviction and have resided in Massachusetts for at least the preceding 12 months.

As part of its 2019 regulatory review process, the Commission expanded upon the Social Equity Program's original criterion of Massachusetts residents whose income did not exceed 400% of the federal poverty level. The updated income threshold will enable more individuals from areas of disproportionate impact to qualify for the program.

Additionally, the Commission now authorizes participants to immediately access benefits upon being approved for the Social Equity Program, including:

- Waived or reduced fees pertaining to certain application, licensing, and seed-to-sale tracking requirements;
- Commission pre-certification for new social consumption and delivery licenses and exclusive access to both license types for at least two years;
- Expedited review of all license applications submitted to the Commission; and

- Training and technical assistance provided by Commission-approved vendors.

A streamlined Social Equity Program application is now available through the [Massachusetts Cannabis Industry Portal](#) and tutorial videos are available at [MassCannabisControl.com/MassCIP-Tutorials](#) to help applicants get started. This spring, the Commission plans to convene clinics to provide computer access and hands-on guidance to individuals interested in applying for the program. These clinics are dependent upon the current Coronavirus state of emergency and social distancing requirements. Future updates, including the start of training for the second cohort, will be announced in the coming months.

Currently, participants in Massachusetts' inaugural Social Equity Program cohort are completing training across four teaching tracks:

- **Entrepreneur:** Those seeking licensure and ownership
- **Core:** Those interested in cannabis careers at Marijuana Establishments at the managerial and executive level
- **Entry:** Those interested in entry-level positions within Marijuana Establishments
- **Ancillary:** Those with existing skills that are directly transferable to working with or supporting cannabis businesses, but who do not seek licensure or agent registration

Coursework within the first cohort is expected to conclude in April. To date, the Commission has approved seven licenses for Social Equity Program participants.

For more information about Massachusetts' Social Equity Program, visit [MassCannabisControl.com/EquityPrograms](#), contact the Commission by phone (774-415-0200) or email (Equity@CCCMass.com), or follow the agency on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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