

# Kentucky Opens Applications for Medical Cannabis Business License

In a significant development for Kentucky's medical cannabis program, Governor Andy Beshear announced on Thursday that the state is expediting the timeline for access to medical cannabis for those with qualifying conditions.

## Accelerated Timeline for Access

"This administration has been working hard to expedite the timeline for making medical cannabis available to Kentuckians with serious medical conditions," Governor Beshear stated. "I am pleased to report that Team Kentucky will begin accepting applications from prospective medical cannabis businesses beginning next Monday, July 1 – a full six months ahead of schedule."

The initial licensing application period will end on August 31. This early start aims to fast-track the availability of medical cannabis in the state, offering relief to patients sooner than originally planned.

## Support for Applicants

To assist applicants through the licensing process, the program has issued a series of YouTube webinars and a comprehensive Business Licensing Application Guide, among other helpful materials. These resources are available on the program's website.

Sam Flynn, the executive director of the Kentucky Office of Medical Cannabis, emphasized the program's commitment to fairness and transparency. "The program is focused on ensuring cannabis business licensing is fair, transparent and customer-service oriented," Flynn said.

## Medical Certifications and Licensing

Starting Monday, Kentucky's Board of Medical Licensure and Board of Nursing will begin accepting applications from physicians and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) who wish to be authorized to write medical cannabis certifications. This move is part of a broader effort to ensure that patients can easily find authorized healthcare providers near them.

Despite the accelerated business licensing, patients will not be able to apply for a medical cannabis card until January 1, 2025. This phased approach aims to ensure a robust regulatory framework and adequate preparation time for both businesses and healthcare providers.

## Commitment to Safe Access

"The Beshear administration is committed to ensuring Kentuckians with qualifying medical conditions have safe, affordable access to medical cannabis," said Eric Friedlander, Secretary of the Cabinet for Health and

Family Services.

## **Legislative Background**

The acceleration follows the signing of [House Bill 829 into law in April](#), which moved up the timeline for cannabis business licensing from January 1, 2025, to July 2024. Earlier, in March, five regulations were filed to outline how Kentuckians with qualifying medical conditions can become cardholders. Additionally, in January, ten regulations were filed to guide the operations of medical cannabis businesses, including cultivators, processors, producers, dispensaries, and safety compliance facilities.

## **Legalization Milestone**

In March 2023, Governor Beshear joined lawmakers and advocates to sign Senate Bill 47, legalizing medical cannabis in Kentucky. This legislation marked a pivotal moment in the state's approach to medical cannabis, setting the stage for the accelerated timeline announced today.

Kentucky's move to expedite its medical cannabis program is a significant step towards providing relief to patients with serious medical conditions. The early start for business licensing and the coordinated efforts with medical boards demonstrate the state's commitment to ensuring safe and timely access to medical cannabis. As the program progresses, Kentuckians can look forward to a well-regulated and accessible medical cannabis system.

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