

Massachusetts Lifts Two-Driver Rule for Cannabis Delivery

Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission Approves New Regulations for Delivery Operators

In a significant move to support cannabis delivery businesses, the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission approved a draft regulation on Friday that will remove the widely criticized two-driver rule. This change aims to ease operational burdens and improve profitability for cannabis delivery operators.

Commission's Decision and Rationale

“This is a long time in the making,” said Commissioner Kimberly Roy. “I know there are folks in the room who have patiently been waiting and now they are here with us today. This just moves the ball forward to get to where we need to be—removing some unnecessary barriers that don’t need to be there.”

The changes are expected to take effect in October or November, following a public comment period and the release of final regulations.

Background on the Two-Driver Rule

The two-driver rule, which required every delivery to be carried out by two drivers for security purposes, was voted for removal by the commission in December 2023. Delivery operators argued that this rule doubled their delivery costs and hindered their ability to make a profit.

Industry Reactions

Devin Alexander, the CEO and co-founder of Rolling Releaf, expressed his relief over the long-awaited changes. “It’s about damn time to get these changes fixed that were voted on in December,” said Alexander. “[I feel] relief because the excitement [about these changes] was back in December and the excitement wears off after several months. You just want to get it done.”

Extended Delivery Hours

In addition to removing the two-driver requirement, the commission has extended the delivery window. Cannabis deliveries can now take place between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m., compared to the previous 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. limit.

“I did not expect them to allow us to stay open until 11,” said Alexander. “That’s huge. I’m very grateful for that.”

Adjusted Delivery Limits

The draft regulations also include changes to the amount of cannabis that can be carried by delivery vehicles with a single driver. Vehicles with one driver can now carry up to \$5,000 worth of cannabis and cannabis products, while the limit remains \$10,000 for deliveries conducted by two drivers.

Impact on Social Equity Businesses

Currently, only social equity businesses are permitted to hold delivery licenses. The proposed changes are intended to make these businesses more profitable. The exclusivity period for social equity businesses is set to expire on April 1, but the commission will decide whether to extend it in winter 2024, after receiving feedback from a working group expected to launch soon.

Commission's Approach and Future Plans

“Low hanging fruit shouldn't take this long, so I think it was mischaracterized,” said Alexander. “Everything takes time. Especially when you're changing regulations. It's unfortunate it took so long, but I'm just grateful it's actually happening.”

Commissioner Nurys Camargo emphasized the commission's thoroughness in drafting the new regulations. “It's another historical day at the commission and for the commissioners,” said Camargo. “Policy takes time, especially if you want to do it right, and all of us have been so mindful about every single word.”

Camargo also engaged in some light-hearted banter with Alexander and other delivery operators, highlighting the commission's commitment to getting the details right.

The Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission's decision to remove the two-driver rule and extend delivery hours marks a significant step forward for the cannabis delivery industry. These changes aim to alleviate operational challenges and enhance profitability for delivery operators, particularly social equity businesses. As the commission finalizes these regulations, the cannabis community anticipates smoother operations and better business outcomes.

Email: info@cannabisriskmanager.com | Phone: +855-507-2622

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