

Ohio Regulators Fine \$212K for Cannabis Ad Violations

Ohio Cannabis Regulators Impose \$212,500 in Fines for Advertising Violations

The Ohio Division of Cannabis Control (DCC) last week issued fines totaling \$212,500 against five licensed cannabis companies for allegedly violating the state's strict advertising regulations, according to a report from Cleveland.com. The violations include improper signage at dispensary locations, inappropriate social media posts, and, notably, the offering of free food and beverages from an ice cream truck.

Strict Advertising Rules Lead to Penalties

In July, the DCC implemented stringent advertising rules as part of the state's launch of its legal cannabis market. These regulations were designed to maintain a controlled and compliant industry atmosphere. Among the rules, dispensaries are prohibited from using celebratory décor, hosting ribbon-cutting events, or displaying products outside their premises. On-site consumption, product samples, and the presence of food trucks or live music at dispensary locations are also banned.

Despite these clear guidelines, five companies were found in violation, leading to substantial fines. The penalties highlight the DCC's commitment to enforcing the regulations and ensuring that [all cannabis-related activities](#) in the state adhere to the law.

Greenleaf Apothecaries Receives Largest Fine

Greenleaf Apothecaries, which operates several retail locations across Ohio in cities including Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Columbus, and Wickliffe, received the most significant fines. The company was hit with separate penalties totaling \$162,500—\$150,000 for one infraction and an additional \$12,500 for another.

Greenleaf Apothecaries responded to the fines by stating that they take the advertising restrictions seriously and are committed to working with the state to resolve the issue. The company emphasized its dedication to compliance as Ohio's cannabis industry continues to grow.

Ohio's Cannabis Industry Under Scrutiny

The fines come just months after Ohio voters approved the legalization of adult-use cannabis in November. Many of the state's dispensaries began offering adult-use products last month under the newly established rules by the DCC. These developments have placed Ohio's cannabis industry under increased scrutiny as it transitions from medical-only to a broader adult-use market.

The DCC's enforcement actions reflect the state's determination to ensure that the industry operates within the boundaries set by law, safeguarding public health and maintaining the integrity of the cannabis market.

Governor DeWine's Stance on Cannabis Offenses

Amid the regulatory actions, Governor Mike DeWine's administration remains firm on its stance regarding past cannabis offenses. Despite the recent voter-approved reforms, a spokesperson for the governor confirmed that there are no immediate plans to grant mass pardons for Ohioans with low-level cannabis offenses. This position underscores the ongoing tension between past cannabis-related legal issues and the evolving legal landscape in Ohio.

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