

Humboldt County Extends Deadline for Cannabis Tax Payments

Humboldt County Supervisors Grant Final Extension for Cannabis Growers to Pay Off Measure S Cultivation Taxes

Humboldt County supervisors have officially extended the deadline for hundreds of marijuana farmers to settle outstanding cultivation taxes, originally enacted years ago, under Measure S. This marks the final opportunity for growers to pay their debts and retain their licenses.

County Supervisors Push Back Deadline for Hundreds of Cultivation Permit Holders Facing Suspension

Cannabis growers in Humboldt County were previously facing a March 31 deadline to eliminate all outstanding tax debts related to Measure S, a ballot referendum that voters approved in 2016—more than a year before California’s adult-use market officially launched.

However, supervisors voted to extend the payment deadline to April 4 for 210 license holders who have yet to make any payments. These growers now have only days to fulfill their obligations or risk immediate suspension of their permits, according to the Standard Times of Eureka.

For hundreds of other growers who have already made partial payments, the county supervisors granted a more extended deadline—moving it to December 31, 2025.

No More Relief: County Officials Make Clear That No Additional Extensions Will Be Given

Despite the latest extensions, Humboldt County officials made it clear during their March 25 meeting that this will be the final opportunity for cannabis farmers to get current on their tax obligations.

Failure to comply means that hundreds of local growers remain at risk of losing their business licenses. More than 75% of the county’s estimated 1,000 cannabis cultivation permit holders are currently carrying some level of tax debt, according to recent reporting.

Citing information obtained through a Public Records Act request from the Humboldt County Growers Alliance (HCGA), MJBizDaily reported that the average outstanding tax debt per permit holder is approximately \$12,000, with some debts exceeding \$150,000. In total, cannabis cultivators owe more than \$17 million in unpaid taxes, primarily accrued between 2017 and 2021.

Majority of Growers Have Agreed to Payment Plans, But Concerns Over Clerical Errors Persist

Of the 765 cannabis cultivation account holders currently on record in Humboldt County, public records indicate that 415, or approximately 54%, have agreed to a structured payment plan.

“Cultivators must now take immediate steps to address their tax obligations or risk losing their permits,” HCGA Executive Director Natalynne DeLapp cautioned in a memo sent to members.

DeLapp urged HCGA members to verify their tax records with both the county treasurer and planning department, citing concerns over potential discrepancies between agency records. Reports of clerical errors and missing payment records have also surfaced, adding further complications to the process.

Suspension of Measure S Excise Tax and Deferred Payments Have Provided Some Relief, But Challenges Persist

Recognizing the challenges facing small cannabis farmers, Humboldt County supervisors previously took steps to ease the financial burden on cultivators. In November 2022, they suspended the Measure S excise tax for two years and deferred related payments and penalties for two years prior.

Over the past year, the excise tax rates have been set at 10 cents per square foot for outdoor cultivation, 20 cents per square foot for mixed-light cultivation, and 30 cents per square foot for indoor cultivation.

However, with no further relief in sight, cannabis growers must act swiftly to comply with the county’s final extension. “Waiting for the county to notify you is not a solution—and ignorance is not a defense,” DeLapp warned HCGA members. “Be proactive. Know your standing. Address it now.”

Cannabis Growers and Local Residents Voice Frustrations Amid Ongoing Market Challenges

The March 25 board meeting saw intense discussions and emotional testimonies from cannabis farmers and residents. More than two dozen individuals shared personal stories detailing the economic hardships of operating within a struggling cannabis market.

The Humboldt County cannabis industry continues to face significant hurdles, including a decline in active cultivation licenses, reduced total sales, shrinking wholesale prices, and limited retail access for growers. As a result, many farmers are grappling with financial distress while navigating a rapidly shifting regulatory landscape.

As the final tax payment deadlines approach, industry stakeholders remain concerned about the potential consequences for Humboldt County’s cannabis economy. With the county making it clear that no further extensions will be granted, the fate of hundreds of cultivation permits now hinges on growers’ ability to meet their tax obligations within the prescribed timeline.

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