

Another California Pot Lab Shut Down by Regulators

California Cannabis Testing Lab Crackdown Intensifies with Fourth License Revoked

Regulators Revoke Verity Analytics' License as Enforcement Action Expands

California's cannabis regulatory agency has revoked the testing license of Verity Analytics, a San Diego County-based laboratory, marking the fourth such revocation since December 2023. This development is part of an ongoing crackdown by the California Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) targeting marijuana testing labs accused of inflating THC levels and disregarding safety protocols.

Verity's license revocation was recently added to the DCC's public permit database. Efforts to reach Verity's listed principal, Eric Aguilera, for comment were unsuccessful, as emails went unreturned.

Verity Joins a Growing List of Shut Down Cannabis Testing Facilities

With Verity's exit, four labs have now lost their licenses under increasing regulatory scrutiny. According to David Hafner, spokesperson for the DCC, the other three labs whose licenses have been revoked are:

- NCALC (dba THC Analytical) – License revoked on December 20, 2023.
- ProForma Labs (Salinas) – License revoked on February 16, 2024.
- California Cannabis Testing Labs (Northridge) – License canceled on July 24, 2024.

These enforcement actions were largely prompted by lab misconduct such as inflating THC percentages and employing unsafe, unscientific testing methods. ProForma Labs, in particular, faced revocation after a banned pesticide, chlorfenapyr, was found in a product the lab had cleared for retail — a serious violation of California's health and safety regulations.

Verity Analytics Accused of Inflating THC Results by More Than 30%

Public records show Verity Analytics was cited and fined in January 2024 before its license was officially suspended in April for 12 violations. A suspension notice dated April 19, 2024, alleges the lab inflated THC potency readings by as much as 32% — a major concern in a market where THC content directly influences product pricing and consumer choice.

The DCC also accused Parinaz Rostamzadeh, the lab's director, of clearing products for pesticide contamination using visual inspection of test data rather than scientific standards. This kind of unvalidated methodology, the agency said, poses serious risks by allowing potentially contaminated cannabis into the legal market.

Additionally, the lab was found to have employed at least one analyst who lacked the minimum qualifications, including appropriate education and experience, for working in a licensed laboratory.

Pesticide Contamination Highlights Gaps in Testing Oversight

While THC inflation is troubling, pesticide contamination raises even more urgent health concerns. The DCC found that ProForma Labs had approved batches of cannabis that actually contained chlorfenapyr — a banned pesticide known to be dangerous even at low levels.

According to the DCC's investigation, ProForma claimed two flower samples were free of chlorfenapyr, while a state reference lab later detected levels of 0.37 and 0.4 ppm in those same samples. While these levels fall below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) threshold for expected adverse effects, the presence of the chemical at all is a violation of California's zero-tolerance rule for banned pesticides.

Dwindling Number of Licensed Labs Signals Stricter Environment

The state's enforcement actions appear to be having a measurable impact on the cannabis testing sector. In January 2024, California had 37 licensed labs, according to DCC data. As of May 2025, only 27 labs remain active, reflecting a 27% decline in just five months.

This drop suggests many operators may have chosen to voluntarily exit the industry rather than face investigation or fines under stricter state regulations. The DCC's increased vigilance sends a clear message: compliance is no longer optional in California's maturing marijuana market.

California Ag Labs Temporarily Suspended but Now Reinstated

In a separate case, California Ag Labs, based in Yuba County, had its license suspended for two months in February 2024. The DCC cited the lab for operating with an incomplete accreditation certificate and failing to prove it had validated methods for testing heavy metals, mold, pesticides, and solvents.

The lab's principal, Robert Myers, later claimed that a bureaucratic issue caused the suspension, which he said lasted "less than 12 hours" before the DCC reinstated the license. However, the DCC did not confirm his statement, and discrepancies about internal communication remain unresolved.

Industry Insiders Applaud Crackdown But Demand More Action

Many legitimate cannabis lab operators view the crackdown as a necessary — albeit overdue — effort to clean up an industry plagued by potency manipulation and inadequate safety testing. Lab executives interviewed by MJBizDaily noted that unethical practices have undercut labs that follow regulations, forcing some out of business entirely.

Zachary Eisenberg, vice president of Anresco Laboratories in San Francisco, emphasized that even though revocations are a step forward, the damage to lab credibility and public trust has already been done.

He noted that some labs which refused to inflate THC results — often at the expense of lucrative client relationships — have already shuttered due to an unlevel playing field.

Whistleblower Lawsuit Casts Shadow on Regulatory Oversight

The issue of internal accountability within the DCC also surfaced recently. A former high-ranking official, Tanisha Bogans, filed a whistleblower lawsuit alleging that she was fired for repeatedly warning superiors —

including DCC Director Nicole Elliott — about dangerous testing oversights.

Bogans' lawsuit claims she raised concerns about Category 1 pesticides, which are among the most dangerous and are banned in California's legal cannabis market. According to the suit, both DCC officials and state law enforcement ignored her warnings, which raises fresh doubts about the regulator's internal processes and responsiveness.

Unknown Volume of Potentially Tainted Cannabis Already Sold

One of the major concerns arising from these laboratory closures is the unknown quantity of cannabis products that may have passed through these faulty labs and ended up in the hands of consumers.

Unfortunately, California's track-and-trace system — while robust — is not available for public analysis, leaving the exact scope of affected products uncertain. Nevertheless, insiders say it is almost certain that tainted or misrepresented products have reached the market.

Recent product recalls are a sign that enforcement is ramping up, but experts agree that most contaminated products sold months ago will not be traced back or removed from circulation in time to protect consumers.

National Implications as Other States Struggle with Oversight

California's lab crisis has also drawn attention to similar problems in other states. In Florida, which operates the largest medical-only marijuana market in the country, regulators have reportedly failed to implement a lab verification system despite having the necessary equipment.

Roger Brown, president of ACS Laboratories in Florida, said state regulators have been sitting on unopened testing equipment for years. This, he warned, allows widespread THC manipulation and endangers patients who rely on accurate safety testing.

Trust in Cannabis Lab Testing Hinges on Strong Enforcement

The revocation of four cannabis testing lab licenses in California within a year is a stark indication that state regulators are no longer turning a blind eye to industry misconduct. With public health and consumer confidence on the line, the DCC's actions mark an important shift in priorities from market growth to market integrity.

However, lasting reform will require not only more enforcement but also increased transparency, whistleblower protections, and internal accountability at the regulatory level. Without these safeguards, even well-meaning enforcement risks being too little, too late.

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