

Alabama Awards Long Delayed Medical Cannabis Dispensary Permits

After Years of Court Battles and Regulatory Delays, Alabama Finally Moves Toward Launching Medical Marijuana Sales

More than three years after legalizing medical marijuana, Alabama is finally taking concrete steps toward launching patient access to cannabis products.

The Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission (AMCC) on Thursday unanimously approved dispensary licenses for three companies—GP6 Wellness, RJK and CCS of Alabama—marking a critical breakthrough in a program long stalled by lawsuits and administrative setbacks, according to local broadcaster WVTM 13.

The vote brings Alabama closer to opening its first legal medical marijuana dispensaries and allowing doctors to begin recommending cannabis to qualifying patients.

Fourth Dispensary License Remains on Hold but Could Be Awarded Early Next Year

While state law allows for four dispensary licenses, the AMCC placed the fourth permit on hold for 46 days, a delay tied to ongoing legal and procedural considerations.

According to AL.com, the remaining license could still be awarded as early as January, depending on how the commission resolves outstanding issues.

Despite that uncertainty, regulators said the approval of three dispensaries represents meaningful progress toward operational sales.

First Dispensaries Could Be Licensed in January, Opening the Door to Patient Recommendations

The AMCC indicated the first three dispensaries could receive full licenses by January 8, clearing the way for physicians to begin recommending medical marijuana to patients shortly thereafter.

That milestone would come more than two years after the state awarded licenses to cultivators and transporters—many of whom have already harvested multiple cannabis crops while waiting for dispensaries to open.

Once physician recommendations begin, the state could see its first legal medical marijuana sale by spring, AMCC Chair Rex Vaughn told the *Alabama Reporter*.

Alabama's Medical Marijuana Program Has Been Hampered by Lawsuits Since 2021

Alabama legalized medical cannabis in 2021, but nearly every step of the licensing process has been challenged in court, freezing the rollout of dispensaries and vertically integrated operations.

Those delays have kept patients waiting and left licensed businesses unable to generate revenue, even as they complied with state rules and paid significant licensing fees.

Despite the setbacks, industry analysts project Alabama's medical marijuana market could reach \$270 million in annual sales by 2026, according to an MJBiz Factbook forecast.

Dispensary License Structure Allows Multiple Locations Across the State

Under Alabama law, each dispensary license holder is allowed to operate up to three retail locations.

In addition to the standalone dispensary permits, the state has authorized five vertically integrated licenses, each of which would allow up to five dispensary locations.

However, those vertically integrated permits remain on hold, AL.com reported, meaning expansion beyond the initial dispensaries could take additional time.

Applicants for all licenses were required to meet strict eligibility standards, including demonstrating that majority owners had lived in Alabama for at least 15 years, a rule that narrowed the pool of qualified applicants.

Approved Dispensaries Outline Initial Locations and Target Spring Openings

GP6 Wellness plans to open dispensaries in Birmingham, Attalla and Athens, while CCS of Alabama intends to establish locations in Montgomery, Talladega and Cullman.

Representatives from both companies said they aim to be operational by spring, assuming final licenses are issued on schedule.

Evani Patel of GP6 Wellness said the company prioritized areas where patient access is expected to be greatest.

"We really focused on regions where the most patients would need access," Patel said.

Vince Schilleci of CCS of Alabama described the licensing journey as arduous but ultimately worthwhile.

"The process has been frustrating," Schilleci said, "but we kept an eye on the prize."

Cultivators Relieved After Spending Years Growing Cannabis Without a Market

The delays have been particularly painful for cultivators, who have been legally growing cannabis without any dispensaries available to sell their products.

Antonie Mordican, a licensed cultivator, said he has spent more than \$100,000 in licensing fees while waiting for the retail market to open.

“It’s been quite frustrating to still be operating and growing and producing product and biomass and not generating any revenue,” Mordican said. “But I’m happy we’re here.”

With dispensary licenses finally moving forward, Alabama’s long-delayed medical marijuana program appears closer than ever to becoming a reality for patients and businesses alike.

For more information contact at info@cannabisriskmanager.com

Email: info@cannabisriskmanager.com | Phone: +415-226-4060

© Copyright 2025 Cannabis Risk Manager. All Rights Reserved