

Cannabis Countdown: Legislative Tweaks a Year After Legalization

Kentucky Moves Forward With Medical Marijuana in 2025

The Kentucky legislature recently passed House Bill 829, solidifying the launch of the state's medical marijuana program in January 2025.

Key Points:

- **Qualifying Conditions:** The program will initially target specific conditions, including cancer, chronic pain, epilepsy, and PTSD. While additional conditions were proposed, they were not included at this time.
- **Obtaining a Card:** Patients will need a doctor's recommendation and pass a background check to receive a medical marijuana card.
- **Product Forms:** Edibles, oils, and tinctures will be available. Smoking and vaping the product will be illegal.
- **Dispensaries:** Dispensaries can begin cultivating hemp in July 2024. Localities have the power to opt-out of allowing dispensaries within their jurisdiction.
- **Schools:** Schools can choose to opt-out of administering medical marijuana on their premises.

Points of Contention:

- **Research Requirement:** Governor Beshear's veto of a provision requiring research on medical marijuana's efficacy was overridden by the legislature.
- **Future Expansion:** Lawmakers expressed caution about expanding qualifying conditions or allowing smokable forms of medical marijuana in the future.

This legislation represents a significant step towards implementing medical marijuana in Kentucky. However, some details, such as the research requirement and potential program expansion, remain to be seen.

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