

## Guidance for Equity Provisions

Under St. 2017, c.55, the Cannabis Control Commission is required to ensure that people from communities that have been disproportionately harmed by marijuana law enforcement are included in the new legal marijuana industry. This handout summarizes the Economic Empowerment Priority Review and Social Equity Program.

### Areas of Disproportionate Impact

Based primarily on arrest rates, the Commission has designated 29 cities as *areas of disproportionate impact*. Cities with a population of more than 100,000 people (Boston, Lowell, Springfield, and Worcester) will be subdivided to reflect that only certain neighborhoods qualify as *areas of disproportionate impact*. Please visit [MassCannabisControl.com](https://www.masscannabiscontrol.com) for the full list of *areas of disproportionate impact*.

### Economic Empowerment Priority Review for Applicants

Priority Review will be granted to Economic Empowerment Applicants who demonstrate three of the following criteria:

- Majority of ownership belongs to people who have lived in *areas of disproportionate impact* for 5 of the last 10 years;
- Majority of ownership has held one or more previous positions where the primary population served were disproportionately impacted, or where primary responsibilities included economic education, resource provision or empowerment to disproportionately impacted individuals or communities;
- At least 51% of current employees/sub-contractors reside in *areas of disproportionate impact* and will increase to 75% by first day of business;
- At least 51% of employees or sub-contractors have drug-related CORI, but are otherwise legally employable in a cannabis-related enterprise;
- A majority of the ownership is made up of individuals from Black, African American, Hispanic, or Latino descent;
- Owners can demonstrate significant past experience in or business practices that promote economic empowerment in *areas of disproportionate impact*.

### Social Equity Program for Applicants

The Social Equity Program goals are to decrease the disparities in life outcomes for these individuals and improve the quality of life in *areas of disproportionate impact*: reduce barriers to entry in the commercial marijuana industry; provide professional and technical services and mentoring for businesses facing systemic barriers; and promote sustainable, socially and economically reparative practices in the commercial marijuana industry in Massachusetts.

### Eligibility:

Applicants or licensees are eligible for the social equity program if they demonstrate at least one of the following criteria:

- They have resided in an *area of disproportionate impact* for at least 5 of the past 10 years;
- They have a past drug conviction and they have been residents of Mass. for at least the preceding 12 months; or
- They have been married to or are the child of a person with a drug conviction and they have been residents of Massachusetts for at least the preceding 12 months.

### Benefits:

Qualifying applicants and licensees can receive training and technical assistance in the following areas:

- Mgmt., recruitment, and employee trainings;
- Accounting and sales forecasting;
- Tax prediction and legal compliance;
- Business plan creation and operational devel.;
- Marijuana industry best practices; and
- Asst. identifying/raising funds or capital.