



Medical Cannabis UPDATE

Ensuring Hawaii's qualified patients have access to safe medical cannabis products through an efficient system of responsible, licensed dispensaries

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Hawaii Department of Health Protects Medical Cannabis Patient Information

The Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) continues to make protecting patient confidentiality a high priority for certified medical cannabis patients in its registry.

To safeguard patient privacy, DOH only verifies if a patient is a registered medical cannabis patient when requests are made by law enforcement officials.

All patients and caregivers must have a 329 registration card from DOH, and must keep both their valid ID and valid 329 card on them whenever they are in possession of medical cannabis.

Law enforcement officials may make a request to validate this information to find out if individuals are in fact certified patients and able to legally possess or grow medical cannabis.

It is important to note that law enforcement officials are not able to access any other information from the registry. Information on whether individuals are licensed to own firearms is not available from the medical cannabis registry; that information is only available from county police departments.

Only federal, state and local law enforcement officials who are

registered to use the medical cannabis patient registry program can make verification requests. These law enforcement officials can find out if an individual is "valid" or "not valid" or if there is "no match" by searching for individuals by their last name, date of birth or 329 patient card number.

DOH is required by statute to have a medical cannabis patient registry system that can provide 24/7 verification for law enforcement purposes. For more information on the registry verification process go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/medicalcannabisregistry/law-enforcement/> 

Dispensary and Registry Now Recruiting Staff; Continue to Operate without Major Disruption

The Hawaii Department of Health's medical cannabis dispensary program and certified patient registry program are both filling vacant positions, but this is not having a major impact on either program, according to **Keith Ridley**, DOH Chief, Office of Health Care Assurance. In the interim, Ridley has assumed the supervisory responsibilities previously fulfilled by **Margaret Leong**.

Updating the Interim Administrative Rules for dispensary licensing to be consistent with legislative changes have been delayed; however, all scheduled and unannounced inspections have been proceeding as usual.

No dispensary operation, production or retail facility has been negatively affected by the reduced staffing.

The opening of any production or retail facility has not been delayed or affected.

There has been a slight increase in the turnaround time to process 329 cards from seven days to 10 days; however, there has been no impact on the issuance of 329 cards to cancer patients, children, and those in hospice care. Turnaround time for these individuals is within two working days.

Searches are being conducted to fill the vacant positions, including four positions for the medical cannabis dispensary program and three in the patient registry program.

For information on state positions and applications, check <http://dhrd.hawaii.gov/job-seekers/civil-service-hawaii-state-government-jobs/> 