



## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

**VIRGINIA PRESSLER, MD**  
DIRECTOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 31, 2017

17-065

### **Hawaii Department of Health certifies Steep Hill Hawaii to begin testing medical cannabis**

HONOLULU – Steep Hill Hawaii, a private independent laboratory on Oahu, can now begin testing medical cannabis from Hawaii’s licensed medical cannabis dispensaries and registered patients and caregivers. The Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) granted Steep Hill a provisional certification today after the laboratory successfully passed its final onsite inspection and met requirements that demonstrate it has the capacity and proficiency to test cannabis and manufactured cannabis in compliance with state law.

“We realize that registered patients and caregivers and some of the licensed dispensaries have been waiting for a laboratory to become operational to test medical cannabis prior to consumption and sale. This is a major step forward as it allows the dispensaries to now begin testing their products to sell to qualified patients,” said Keith Ridley, Chief of DOH’s Office of Health Care Assurance, who oversees the medical cannabis dispensary program.

A laboratory is restricted from handling, testing, or analyzing cannabis or manufactured cannabis products until it is certified by the state. Under the interim administrative rules governing the medical cannabis dispensary program, certification allows a laboratory to conduct specific tests required to ensure the safety of products sold to registered patients in Hawaii.

“Certification follows a rigorous scientific process that requires meticulous attention to detail and constant refining to ensure product and patient safety,” said Chris Whelen, chief of DOH’s State Laboratories Division. “Our State Laboratories Division team is

currently working closely with two other private independent labs to help them obtain certification. They are continuing to submit or resubmit their validation studies for certification.”

To receive certification, a laboratory must submit validation studies to demonstrate it is capable of conducting testing with consistent and accurate results for the following areas: cannabinoid profile (including THC), compound that are considered “active ingredients,” heavy metals such as arsenic, pesticides, solvents, moisture content, microbial contaminants, intestinal bacteria and pathogens, dangerous molds that can cause infection and disease, and toxins produced by molds. In addition, a laboratory must also meet the accreditation standards of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Licensed medical marijuana dispensaries in Hawaii are required to have their products tested for safety by a state-certified independent laboratory prior to sale. Laboratories interested in providing testing for medical cannabis on Kauai, Hawaii Island, Maui, or Oahu may apply for state certification at <http://health.hawaii.gov/statelab>.

# # #