



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH COMPLETES TRANSFER AND UPGRADE OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA REGISTRATION PROGRAM *Public Hearings on New Administrative Rules to Begin Jan. 28*

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health has completed the transfer of the medical marijuana registration program from the Department of Public Safety. The program officially became part of the Department of Health on Jan. 1, 2015. Hawaii is one of 23 states along with the District of Columbia that allows medical marijuana use. Possession of a valid medical marijuana registration card issued by the Department of Health and based on the written certification of a physician permits the lawful cultivation, possession, and use of marijuana for medical purposes.

Act 177 was signed into law in June 2013 and authorized the transfer of the 14-year-old program to the Department of Health. As a health initiative, the medical marijuana program is better aligned with the Department of Health's mission and the department's experience in working with patients and health programs that involve public outreach, education and safeguarding patient privacy.

Act 178, which was also signed into law in June 2013, amends sections of the existing law. The Department of Health has made the following changes to comply with the law:

- **Law Enforcement 24/7 Online Verification**
In accordance with Act 178, the Department of Health will provide 24/7 subject verification to designated law enforcement officers. Although no confidential information will be released, designated law enforcement officers will be able to verify if an individual has a valid medical marijuana registration card should the need arise for official law enforcement purposes. Designated officers are being trained by the department.
- **Registration Fee Increase**

The patient medical marijuana registration fee has increased from \$25 to \$35 effective Jan. 1, 2015. A new, convenient online application and payment system makes the application process easier and faster. A portal administration fee of \$3.50 will be charged for the required online services.

“We’re working to make the medical marijuana program more accessible to Hawaii residents who may have a qualifying debilitating medical condition and could benefit from medicinal use of marijuana,” said Scottina “Scotty” Malia Ruis, medical marijuana program coordinator with the Department of Health.

The Hawaii Department of Health has also initiated a number of upgrades to the medical marijuana program:

- **New Medical Marijuana Website**

The Department of Health has established a website with information on the medical marijuana program at www.health.hawaii.gov/medicalmarijuana.

This is the most complete and up-to-date source of information for patients, physicians, law enforcement officials and the public. The site’s home page features a sign-up box for automatic medical marijuana program updates. This is the best way to keep abreast of all improvements and changes as the Department of Health’s medical marijuana program develops.

- **Phone Information Hotline**

The Department of Health has established a phone hotline with recorded messages on different aspects of the medical marijuana program. The phone number is 733-2177. Toll free numbers have also been established for neighbor island residents: Hawaii Island residents may call 974-4000, ext. 32177; Maui residents may call 984-2400, ext. 32177; and Kauai residents may call 274-3141, ext. 32177.

- **New DOH Medical Marijuana Registration Card**

This month, the Department of Health began issuing its new medical marijuana registration card, which includes the location of the where the marijuana is grown and the name of the primary care physician.

The new card is thin and wallet-sized like an insurance card making it easier for patients and caregivers to keep with them whenever they are in possession of medical marijuana. The new white card with a colored Department of Health logo will replace the long familiar Department of Public Safety “blue card.”

- **Physician Education**

Physician outreach and information sharing through planned conference calls has been ongoing to ensure healthcare providers have accurate information about the program. Physicians who are currently certifying patients for the program are emailed information about conference calls and other updates.

Beginning Jan. 28, DOH will hold public hearings for the proposed adoption of Chapter 11-160, Hawaii Administrative Rules for Medical Use of Marijuana. This proposed new chapter will include the process for DOH to consider approval of additional debilitating medical conditions for medical use of marijuana; physician requirements to participate in the program; registration of qualifying patients and primary caregivers; monitoring and corrective action; administrative procedure; and confidentiality of information. The proposed rules are posted at

<http://co.doh.hawaii.gov/sites/har/admrulechange/default.aspx>

Public hearings are scheduled in each county as follows.

- Jan. 28 (10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) in Hilo, Hawaii at the State Office Building conference rooms A, B and C located at 75 Aupuni St.
- Feb. 2 (10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) in Honolulu, Oahu at the Diamond Head Health Center room 418 located at 3627 Kilauea Ave.
- Feb. 3 (10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) in Wailuku, Maui at the State Office Building third floor conference room located at 54 South High St.
- Feb. 5 (10:30 a.m.-12 noon) in Lihue, Kauai at the State Office Building basement room located at 3060 Eiwa St.

Requests or questions related to the upcoming public hearings may be sent to

medicalmarijuana@doh.hawaii.gov

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