

2021 Marijuana Legislation

Outreach Report

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This report describes outreach conducted by the Office of Marijuana Policy and Department of Excise and Licenses to inform the development of a package of ordinances that would create a marijuana social equity program, a marijuana delivery program, and a marijuana hospitality program, and make other updates to Denver’s marijuana ordinances.

2018 – 2020: Outreach to Other Jurisdictions

As part of our research, we reached out to other jurisdictions to learn more about their experiences with social equity, delivery, and social consumption programs. These discussions occurred during individual meetings, regular interjurisdictional conference calls, and panels at the 2018 and 2019 Denver Marijuana Management Symposiums.

- Los Angeles, CA
- Oakland, CA
- Sacramento, CA
- San Francisco, CA
- Massachusetts
- Aurora, CO
- Glendale, CO
- Portland, OR
- Alaska
- Seattle, WA

2019: Cannabis Equity Committee

In 2019, the Department organized an informal listening group to learn more about opportunities for social equity in Denver’s cannabis industry. The group met three times in 2019. Attendees included representatives from:

- Cannabis Consumers Coalition
- Colorado Concentrate Manufacturers Association
- Denver Office of Marijuana Policy and Department of Excise and Licenses
- Denver City Attorney’s Office
- Denver Office of Human Rights and Community Partnerships
- Denver Relief Consulting
- Drug Policy Alliance
- Gemini Group
- Kind Colorado
- Kush and Canvasses
- Livwell
- Marijuana Industry Group
- Minority Cannabis Business Association
- NAACP
- Native Roots
- National Cannabis Industry Association
- National Expungement Week
- One Cannabis Group
- Servicios de la Raza
- Simply Pure
- Urban League of Metro Denver
- Vicente Sederberg

2019 – 2020: MED Rulemaking Work Groups

In 2019 and 2020, representatives from the Department of Excise and Licenses (EXL) and the City Attorney’s Office (CAO) served as members of the Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division’s rulemaking work groups that provided input on state rules implementing marijuana social equity, marijuana delivery, and other legislative changes to the state marijuana code.

- July 28, 2020 and August 21, 2020: Legislation Implementation Work Group: House Bill 20-1424 (“Social Equity”) and House Bill 20-1080 (“Residency”)
 - Molly Duplechian, Deputy Director of Policy, EXL
- August 30, 2019: Legislation Implementation Work Group: House Bill 19-1234 (“Regulated Marijuana Delivery”)
 - Ashley Kilroy, Executive Director, EXL
- September 13, 2019: Legislation Implementation Work Group: Senate Bill 19-224 (“Regulated Marijuana Sunset – Accelerator Program”)
 - Erica Rogers, Policy Analyst, EXL
- September 13, 2019 and September 20, 2019: Legislation Implementation Work Group: Senate Bill 19-224 (“Regulated Marijuana Sunset – Other Matters”)
 - Reginald Nubine, Assistant City Attorney, CAO

2019 – 2020: Cannabis Business and Employment Opportunity Study

In 2019, the Department commissioned the Denver Cannabis Business Study. Analytic Insight was selected through a competitive RFP process to conduct the study. In June 2020, was released. The report examined the need for a social equity program to help the Denver cannabis industry achieve equitable ownership and employment opportunities and to decrease disparities for marginalized communities and address the disproportionate impacts of the War on Drugs. Outreach included:

- Key informant interviews with 23 business leaders, industry employees and owners, social justice advocates, city and state staff and related associations;
- Three stakeholder sessions with approximately 35 participants each;
- Two public forums with approximately 100 participants; and
- An online survey with 316 respondents.

2020: Marijuana Licensing Work Group

In February 2020, the Department sent out a call for applications to serve on the Marijuana Licensing Work Group through our Marijuana Informational Bulletin, which had over 1,200 subscribers at the time. The Department also distributed the call for applications through the following groups and platforms:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denver Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation • Colorado Municipal League • Former City Council President Clark’s Office • Short Term Rental Advisory Committee Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Denver • Sam Cary Bar Association • Registered Neighborhood Organization distribution list • City of Denver Twitter feed • Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division distribution list |
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The Department received 92 applications.

The final Marijuana Licensing Work Group roster included:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashley Kilroy, Co-Chair, Denver Excise and Licenses • Molly Duplechian, Co-Chair, Denver Excise and Licenses • Councilwoman Kendra Black, City Council District 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councilwoman Candi CdeBaca, City Council District 9 • Councilman Chris Hinds, City Council District 10 • Kenneth Allison, All About Hemp, LLC |
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- Anshul Bagga, Denver City Attorney’s Office
- John Bailey, Black Cannabis Equity Initiative
- Sarah Belstock, Denver Health and Hospital Authority
- Truman Bradley, Marijuana Industry Group
- Dianne Cooks, Montbello Resident
- Shawn Coleman, 36 Solutions
- Jacqueline Flug, Drizly, LLC
- Michelle Garcia, Mayor’s Office of Social Equity and Innovation
- Michel Holien, Denver Public Schools
- Lt. Andrew Howard, Denver Police Department
- Henny Lasley, Smart Colorado
- Clarissa Kriek, National Cannabis Industry Association
- Dan Pabon, Medicine Man Technologies
- Jessica Scardina, Vicente Sederberg, LLC
- Ean Seeb, Office of Governor Polis
- Ryan Tatum, Cultivated Synergy
- Art Way, Equitable Consulting
- Sarah Woodson, The Color of Cannabis

The Department held five virtual, publicly accessible meetings of the Marijuana Licensing Work Group in 2020. Stakeholders were notified of each meeting through our Marijuana Informational Bulletin. Each meeting lasted 2.5 hours. We posted agendas, presentations, meeting minutes, written public comments, and meeting recordings to our Marijuana Laws, Rules, and Regulations [website](#).

- Thursday, May 14, 2020 – Topic: Marijuana Delivery
- Thursday, May 28, 2020 – Topic: Marijuana Hospitality
- Thursday, June 11, 2020 – Topic: Marijuana Social Equity
- Thursday, June 25, 2020 – Topic: Marijuana Social Equity
- Tuesday, September 29, 2020 – Topic: Discuss Initial Concepts for Proposals

2020: Stakeholder Feedback Sessions on Draft Legislation

Initial draft ordinances were released to the public via our Marijuana Informational Bulletin on December 7, 2020. We held four virtual, publicly accessible feedback sessions to take input on and answer questions about the draft ordinances. Stakeholders were notified of each meeting through our Marijuana Informational Bulletin.

- Tuesday, December 15, 2020 – Community Feedback Session (92 attendees)
- Thursday, December 17, 2020 – Marijuana Industry Feedback Session (62 attendees)
- Wednesday, January 6, 2021 – Community Feedback Session (64 attendees)
- Friday, January 8, 2021 – Marijuana Industry Feedback Session (34 attendees)
- Wednesday, February 17, 2021 – Feedback Session on Updated Bill Drafts (49 attendees)

2020 – 2021: External Events and Forums

Whenever possible, Department representatives participated in events and forums hosted by external groups to discuss social equity and marijuana licensing. These events and forums included the following:

- District 9 Cannabis Equity Committee – March 12, 2020
- Black Cannabis Equity Initiative: “Inside Social Equity in Colorado” – June 8, 2020
- Weed Wonks podcast: “Denver’s Marijuana Stakeholder Process with Molly Duplechian” - August 27, 2020
- Black Cannabis Equity Initiative: “Challenges, Choice & Opportunity” - September 11, 2020
- Cannabis Public Policy Conference: “Social Equity in Denver & Colorado: The New Licenses in Delivery” - September 24, 2020
- Black Cannabis Equity Initiative: “What Do the Cannabis State Rules Mean for the Cannabis Industry?” - November 19, 2020

- Black Cannabis Equity Initiative: “Celebrating Cannabis Social Equity in Colorado?” - December 14, 2020
- Art Way and Michael Diaz Rivera: “Marijuana Equity 101: Real Talk” - December 30, 2020
- The Color of Cannabis social equity business course – January 16, 2021
- Presentation at Downtown Denver Partnership board meeting: January 20, 2021
- Black Cannabis Equity Initiative: “Delivery in Colorado and the Metro Area, Expungement, and More” - January 22, 2021
- Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division: “Understanding Colorado’s Social Equity Program” - January 27, 2021
- Presentation to Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation: February 13, 2021
- Presentation scheduled at Montbello 2020 RNO meeting: March 11, 2021

2020 – 2021: City Council Briefings

Department staff briefed every City Council member on the draft ordinances.

- Councilwoman Sandoval (District 1) – January 14, 2021
- Councilman Flynn (District 2) – December 29, 2020
- Councilwoman Torres (District 3) – January 6, 2021
- Councilwoman Black (District 4) - December 10, 2020
- Councilwoman Sawyer (District 5) – January 12, 2021
- Councilman Kashmann (District 6) - January 12, 2021
- Councilman Clark (District 7) – December 17, 2020
- Councilman Herndon (District 8) – January 5, 2021
- Councilwoman CdeBaca (District 9) – December 15, 2020; January 7, 2021; February 2, 2021
- Councilman Hinds (District 10) – December 16, 2020
- Councilwoman Gilmore (District 11) – January 6, 2021
- Councilwoman Kniech (At-Large) – December 21, 2020
- Councilwoman Ortega (At-Large) - January 6, 2021

2021: Stakeholder Feedback Session

Using feedback gathered after releasing the first drafts of the ordinances in December 2020, the Department and City Attorney’s Office developed second drafts of the ordinances that were released to the public on February 10, 2021. The Department hosted a stakeholder feedback session on February 17, 2021 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Department staff presented the changes to the draft ordinances, answered questions, and took public comment.