

# OFFICE OF CANNABIS MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCES THE CANNABIS COMPLIANCE TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

*The Adult-Use Cannabis Cultivators and Processors (AUCC/AUCP) Cannabis Compliance Training and Mentorship Program Will Provide a Path Forward for Experienced Cultivators and Processors*

*Applications Open October 20, 2022*

Today, the Office of Cannabis Management announced the Cannabis Compliance Training and Mentorship (CCTM) Program. The ten-week program is based on existing farmer apprenticeship and fellowship programs, with an explicit goal of growing and diversifying the pipeline of farmers and processors preparing to participate in New York's adult-use cannabis industry.

The inaugural CCTM program will consist of a series of structured webinars covering a range of topics on cannabis cultivation and processing, agribusiness management and regulatory compliance. The program will be made available to individuals with horticultural experience who are interested in cultivating cannabis in a regulated market. Members of communities traditionally underrepresented in farming are encouraged to apply.

The application window for this program will open on October 20 and close on November 3. Holders of Adult-Use Conditional Cultivator (AUCC) and Adult-Use Conditional Processor (AUCP) licenses will be supporting program participants as part of the requirements for their license while helping to create a pathway to the industry.

"The New York cannabis industry promises ample opportunities, and we are helping New Yorkers to prepare themselves so they can take advantage of them," said **Tremaine Wright, Chair of the Cannabis Control Board**. "We know that many New Yorkers have experience growing and processing plants. Now we're offering the compliance skills training necessary to thrive in our regulated industry."

"This mentorship program will help make sure we have a diverse pipeline of growers and processors ready to step up and deliver on the promises of the MRTA, our governing legislation," said **Chris Alexander, Executive Director of the Office of Cannabis Management**. "Cultivating the next wave of licensed growers and processors is essential in creating a cannabis ecosystem that benefits everybody. This is one of many programs we will launch to set up New Yorkers to benefit from the opportunities of a legal marketplace, and I'm incredibly excited to announce this effort."

“Advocates across New York fought to make sure we passed the best and strongest Cannabis Law in the nation, prioritizing equity, justice and diversity. Today’s announcement shows the fruit of that labor,” said **Damian Fagon, Chief Equity Officer at the Office of Cannabis Management**. “From urban and commercial farms to professional horticulturalists, New York is full of talented entrepreneurs who have been itching for the opportunity to flex their skills in New York’s legal cannabis marketplace. This program will prepare those who already have green thumbs to succeed within a well-regulated environment.”

The program will consist of 15-20 virtual webinars and take place between November 2022 and February 2023. Service delivery and technical training will be supported by:

- Adult-Use Conditional Cultivators
- Adult-Use Conditional Processors
- SUNY Morrisville
- Cornell University
- Office of Cannabis Management (compliance and legal personnel)
- Business and accounting professionals with cannabis expertise

SUNY Morrisville will host the virtual webinars through the Blackboard system, manage the on-boarding of all participants on to the platform and provide written summaries of the key take-aways from each lesson. Live webinars will be recorded and made available to all participants to view at any time to ensure access for those participants with limited availability. In addition, participants will have the option to attend “Office Hour” mentoring sessions to review training material with those AUCCs and AUCPs with real-world operational experience in compliant cannabis production.

“SUNY Morrisville is excited to host and assist with this program,” said **Tony Contento, Ph.D, Dean for the School of Agriculture, Business and Technology, SUNY Morrisville**. “With our specialty crops and cannabis production certificate program, and a cannabis industry minor, SUNY Morrisville is leading the way in cannabis education to prepare students to join one of the fastest-growing sectors of the horticulture/agriculture industry in New York State and nationwide. These programs give students the opportunity to focus on specific areas of interest, including cannabis botany, production and processing techniques, and marketing capabilities and evaluations.”

Cornell University will round out the program contributing a unique a range of webinars to the CCTM that focus on both integrative plant science as well as labor and employment law in the cannabis industry.

“In New York State, we have the opportunity to develop a fair, equitable and diverse cannabis industry which creates generational wealth in communities impacted by the

criminalization of cannabis,” said **Esta R. Bigler, Director, Labor and Employment Law Program at Cornell University**. “This means the growth of small business that provide good well-paying jobs for workers who are able to provide for their families.”

Specific lesson plans in these curricula include: MRTA Background / Introduction; Legal Considerations and Business Formation; Labor Laws and Worker Safety and Training; Recall Plans and Safety; Root Zone Management and Nutrient Deficiencies; Lab Testing and the COA/THC tax; Compliant Packaging & Marketing Legal Cannabis 101; Environmental Controls, Lighting and Temperature; Inventory Tracking & Paperwork Management Strategies; Supply Chain Management; and Managing Risk in Your Extraction Business.

Candidates for the Compliance Training Program must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have a valid, government issued photo ID
- Have historical experience in agriculture and cultivating traditional crops, and processing food and beverage products in regulated markets

Eligible applicants must also demonstrate a sincere interest in cultivation or processing as a career as well as in applying for adult-use cannabis licenses within those fields.

Eligible prior cultivation experience may include or be a combination of (but is not limited to) the following:

- Ownership, participation, management of, or employment in a commercial farm business, urban farm or community-supported agricultural organization.
- Farming internship or apprenticeship.
- Participation in a farm training or farm incubator program.
- A two- or four-year degree in a relevant field of study.

Eligible prior processing and manufacturing experience may include or be a combination of (but is not limited to) the following:

- Ownership, management of, or employment in, a food and beverage processing establishment (20-C, 17-B, etc.).
- Ownership, management of, or employment in, a New York non-profit corporation with one or more NYS G&C producers, food processing establishments or distributors.
- A two- or four-year degree in a relevant field of study.

Applications will be considered on a variety of factors related to these work experiences and how well the skills demonstrated therein translate to the adult-use cannabis industry.

The size of the selected applicants will range from 200-250 participants, subject to the quality and quantity of applications submitted. Applicants will first be screened for the minimum of requirements, and then scored based on a range of objective criteria. Highest scoring applicants who meet the minimum requirements may qualify for interviews. All applications will be anonymized upon receipt, retained in a password protected file and will be permanently deleted after applicant selection and program launch.