

CANNABIS CONTROL BOARD VOTES ON SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT TO ALLOW DISPENSARY OPENINGS TO RESUME STATEWIDE

Pending Court Approval, Agreement Between OCM & Plaintiffs Will Allow Licensees Currently On Hold to Proceed With Their Applications

NEW YORK, NY - Today, the New York State Cannabis Control Board (CCB) voted to approve an agreement to be presented to the New York State Supreme Court to allow for the continuation of New York's Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary Program (CAURD). If the Court approves the settlement agreement, the State's 436 provisional CAURD licensees would be allowed to open storefronts once the remaining portions of their applications is confirmed; the Office of Cannabis Management had been legally prevented from further processing or issuing these licenses since August 7. The CAURD program is the first in the nation to allow those who were directly harmed by cannabis prohibition to make the State's first cannabis sales.

“We launched the CAURD program squarely focused on realizing the commitment made by the MRTA, that those most impacted by prohibition would have a meaningful opportunity to participate in New York's cannabis market. Today, we are one step closer to resolving litigation brought forth by equity entrepreneurs and our medical operators who felt that they were being left behind. Now that we have opened up licensing to all equity entrepreneurs and provided a clear pathway to participation in the adult-use market for our medical operators, we are able to continue to move this program forward together,” **said Chris Alexander, Executive Director of the Office of Cannabis Management.** “New York's cannabis market was designed to be the most equitable market in the world. We remain undeterred by the challenges of standing up that new market, and believe that the expansion of licensing opportunities and the inclusion of our medical operators will collectively ensure the success of the adult-use program and the expansion of the medical program. I have been deeply inspired by the grit and tenacity of our CAURD license holders. I want to thank Governor Hochul for her steadfast commitment to this effort, and we look forward to working together with licensees and partners across the industry to shape this new chapter in New York's cannabis story.”

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“Today's approval of the settlement agreement by the New York State Cannabis Control Board marks a momentous step forward in our mission to cultivate a diverse and inclusive cannabis market,” said **Tremaine Wright, Chair of New York's Cannabis Control Board**. “Once this settlement is approved, we are hopeful those impacted by the injunction will be empowered to open their storefronts and embark on their entrepreneurial journeys, bringing us closer to our goals. I extend my sincere gratitude to Governor Kathy Hochul, the Office of Cannabis Management team, and our esteemed Board members for their unwavering support. Together, we will forge an exhilarating new chapter in New York's cannabis narrative.”

Since August 7, the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) has been enjoined from further processing or issuing CAURD licenses. If the assigned judge approves the terms of the settlement agreements, the injunction will be lifted. The settlement terms are outlined in agreements that must be approved by the judge before they can be effective. The plaintiffs will submit the agreements to the Court immediately after they are signed by all the parties.

The Social and Economic Equity groups listed in the MRTA include: Individuals from a Community Disproportionately Impacted; Distressed farmers; Service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, and minority-owned businesses; and women-owned businesses.

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