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NEW YORK STATE CANNABIS CONTROL BOARD APPROVES 20 NEW ADULT USE LICENSES, ADVANCES RENEWALS, MEDICAL CANNABIS PROPOSED REGULATIONS AND EQUITY INITIATIVES

Board Advances License Approvals, Regulatory Oversight, and Equity Business Development Efforts

ALBANY, NY — [The New York State Cannabis Control Board](#) today approved 20 new adult use cannabis licenses, considered license amendment and renewal requests, approved adoption of medical cannabis regulations, and received updates on market performance, which included an in-depth analysis of cannabis production and a review of the equity initiatives shaping the next phase of New York’s regulated cannabis industry.

The meeting included remarks from **newly appointed Acting Executive Director of the New York State Office of Cannabis Management John Kagia**, who emphasized that the market is entering a more disciplined and durable stage of growth.

“New York’s cannabis market is not just expanding, it is strengthening,” **said Kagia**. “Today’s approvals and oversight actions demonstrate that we are building a system rooted in compliance, accountability, and real opportunity. Our focus is on long term stability — ensuring that businesses operating within the law can grow with confidence and that equity commitments translate into meaningful participation across the supply chain.”

Adult Use License Approvals

The Board approved **20** adult use cannabis licenses, bringing the total number of adult use licenses issued statewide to **2,161**.

New approvals include:

Adult Use Cultivator Licenses: 2

Adult Use Distributor Licenses: 3

Adult Use Microbusiness Licenses: 2

Adult Use Processor Licenses: 5
Adult Use Retail Dispensary Licenses: 4
Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary License: 4

The Office continues to review applications on a rolling basis and remains engaged with applicants to resolve deficiencies and advance qualified businesses through the licensing process. “These approvals represent more than numbers,” **said Jessica Garcia, Chair of the Cannabis Control Board.** “They showcase entrepreneurs investing in their communities, workers building careers, and a supply chain becoming more complete. Our responsibility is to ensure growth happens responsibly, equitably, and in alignment with the values embedded in New York’s Cannabis Law.”

CUNY Law Pro Bono Legal Services

The Board received an update on the CUNY Law Pro Bono Legal Services initiative, which will expand access to independent, no-cost legal assistance for cannabis applicants and licensees, with a focus on SEE and CAURD businesses.

The program will provide:

- One-on-one legal assistance
- Application support and technical guidance
- Virtual workshops and consultations

A full launch is expected in the second quarter of 2026.

Equity Business Development Grant (EBDG)

The Office shared progress on the Equity Business Development Grant Program (EBDG), which builds on the 2025 CAURD Grant pilot program.

Key components include:

- A \$6 million program anticipated to reach approximately 190 licensees
- Individual awards of up to \$30,000
- Eligible recipients tentatively include CAURD licensees denied funding due to exhaustion and supply-side SEE licensees, including CDI microbusinesses, distressed farmers, and service-disabled veteran
- Procurement for a third-party grant administrator anticipated in Q2 2026
- Application portal anticipated to open Fall 2026

The program is designed to become an annually administered grant structure supporting capital access across the supply chain.

Market Supply Expansion

Additionally, The Office detailed a strategic plan to bolster the state’s supply chain. Central to this effort is a commitment to review all remaining December cultivation applications, clearing the path for new operators to enter the market. Moreover, the Office is expanding allowable canopy tiers for qualifying cultivators that are operational.

These dual actions, licensing new cultivators and allowing some current cultivators to scale, are designed to meet immediate consumer demand while ensuring the long-term resilience and stability of New York’s legal cannabis ecosystem.

Market and Social and Economic Equity Update

New York’s legal cannabis market continues to gain momentum in early 2026, reaching \$2.97 billion in total reported retail sales. With nearly \$250 million generated through the first three weeks of February alone, the state is seeing sustained retail growth, continued dispensary expansion across regions, and steady progress in advancing adult-use applications.

At the March 5 Board meeting, the CCB considered 20 adult-use applications for licensure, 79 adult-use renewals, 38 license amendments, 4 CAURD applications for licensure, and 26 CAURD renewals.

To date, New York has issued 2,161 adult-use licenses total licenses:

- 245 cultivators
- 232 distributors
- 321 microbusinesses
- 532 processors
- 506 retail dispensaries.

Of all adult-use licenses issued statewide, 56 percent have been awarded to SEE applicants. In addition, the state has 325 active CAURD licensees.

“These figures demonstrate that equity participation remains foundational to the structure of New York’s cannabis market,” said **Simone Washington, Chief Equity Officer of the Office of Cannabis Management**. “As the industry continues to evolve, our focus is on ensuring that equity is sustained across every license type and that businesses from disproportionately impacted communities have the support and regulatory clarity needed to operate successfully and competitively.”

Among the 16 adult-use applications recommended for approval at today’s meeting, eight — representing 44 percent — are SEE applicants. This cohort includes Community Disproportionately Impacted, distressed farmer, minority-owned, and women-owned, with equity representation across cultivation, distribution, microbusiness, processing, and retail categories.

To date there are [599 legal dispensaries](#) open for business across the Empire State. A full list of New York’s licensed, operational adult-use cannabis retailers is available [here](#).

Next Cannabis Control Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Cannabis Control Board is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2026, in Buffalo, New York. Agenda details and livestream information will be posted in advance at: <https://cannabis.ny.gov>

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[The New York State Office of Cannabis Management \(OCM\)](#) oversees the State's medical, adult-use, and cannabinoid hemp programs. Guided by its **core pillars — public health and safety, social and economic equity, community reinvestment, environmental sustainability, and consumer education** — the Office works to advance a regulated cannabis marketplace rooted in transparency, accountability, and opportunity. Through licensing, enforcement, education, and industry support, OCM is committed to building a fair, sustainable, and responsible cannabis industry that benefits all New Yorkers.