

Q: Who will operate the Medical Marihuana Program?

A: The Bureau of Health Professions (BHP) within the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) will run the Medical Marihuana Program.

Q: What is the Medical Marihuana Program?

A: The program provides for the issuance of a registry identification card for patients qualified to use marihuana for medical purposes and for individuals qualified to serve as a caregiver on behalf of a designated patient.

Q: Who can apply for an identification card?

A: A qualifying patient is a person who has been diagnosed by a physician as having a debilitating medical condition. A primary caregiver means a person who is at least 21 years old and who has agreed to assist with a patient's medical use of marihuana and who has never been convicted of a felony involving illegal drugs. The caregiver can assist no more than five patients.

Q: What does Proposal 1 allow?

A: Proposal 1 allows for patients with a debilitating medical condition such as cancer, HIV, AIDS, or nail patella to utilize medical marihuana after obtaining a registry identification card from MDCH. In order to obtain a registry identification card, patients must obtain a written certification from a physician verifying that they have one of the qualifying debilitating medical conditions. Patients in need of medical assistance in using the medical marihuana may designate a primary caregiver.

Registered patients or caregivers will be allowed to grow limited amounts of marihuana for qualifying patients in an enclosed, locked facility. MDCH cannot advise registered patients on the growing process and does not have information to give to patients. The law states the following:

A qualifying patient who has been issued and possesses a registry identification card shall not be subject to arrest, prosecution, or penalty in any manner, or denied any right or privilege, including but not limited to civil penalty or disciplinary action by a business or occupational or professional licensing board or bureau, for the medical use of marihuana in accordance with this act, provided that the qualifying patient possesses an amount of marihuana that does not exceed 2.5 ounces of usable marihuana, and, if the qualifying patient has not specified that a primary caregiver will be allowed under state law to cultivate marihuana for the qualifying patient, 12 marihuana plants kept in an enclosed, locked facility. Any incidental amount of seeds, stalks, and unusable roots shall also be allowed under state law and shall not be included in this amount.

(b) A primary caregiver who has been issued and possesses a registry identification card shall not be subject to arrest, prosecution, or penalty in any manner, or denied any right or privilege, including but not limited to civil penalty or disciplinary action by a business or occupational or professional licensing board or bureau, for assisting an qualifying patient to whom he or she is connected through the department's registration process with the medical use of marihuana in accordance with this act, provided that the primary caregiver possesses an amount of marihuana that does not exceed:

(1) 2.5 ounces of usable marihuana for each qualifying patient to whom he or she is connected through the department's registration process; and

(2) for each registered qualifying patient who has specified that the primary caregiver will be allowed under state law to cultivate marihuana for the qualifying patient, 12 marihuana plants kept in an enclosed, locked facility; and

(3) any incidental amount of seeds, stalks, and unusable roots.

Q: When can patients and caregivers begin to apply for the program?

A: DCH must promulgate administrative rules by April 4, which is 120 days after the effective date of the act, which is Dec. 4. No one can register for the program until after April 4.

Q: Upon approval, when are identification cards issued?

A: The department must verify applicant's information or renewal information within 15 days of receiving application. The identification card must be issued within five days of approving application or renewal.

Q: How can I acquire marihuana for medicinal reasons?

A: The new law does not provide a legal means of acquiring marihuana or marihuana seeds. MDCH cannot provide advice on how to acquire marihuana legally.

Q: Who can grow medicinal marihuana?

A: Only patients and caregivers who qualify in the Medical Marihuana Program can grow marihuana.

More information will be available on the Web site in December.