



# COVID-19 Medical Cannabis Access Letter

March 20, 2020

Honorable governors and legislative leaders:

We are grateful for your public service in this extraordinarily challenging time.

In the face of the novel coronavirus, some jurisdictions are issuing shelter-in-place orders and closing all but essential businesses to slow the spread of the virus. We expect others will be grappling with similar decisions. Nationwide, the public is advised to keep at least six feet from others whenever possible and not to congregate in groups of 10 or more.

As leaders of states with medical cannabis or cannabidiol (CBD) laws, we write to urge you to ensure patients can safely access their treatment option in a way that is consistent with public health. Cannabis is a crucial part of the treatment regimens of hundreds of thousands of individuals, including many who have vulnerable immune systems because of their advanced age or a serious medical condition. Some patients use cannabis to quell chemotherapy-induced nausea and appetite loss; others use it to reduce the number and frequency of seizures; and still others administer cannabis to alleviate agonizing pain or PTSD. For these individuals, the uncertainty created by the crisis we face is compounded by the prospect of losing access to a treatment option that is essential to their wellbeing.

During this very trying time, we urge each medical cannabis state to take the following actions to maintain safe access for those who benefit from cannabis medicinally, while also promoting safe social distancing. Some states have already taken some of these important actions, and we are grateful for those of you who have done so.

- Declaring medical cannabis businesses “essential” and ensuring they do not have to shut down operations in the event of a shelter-in-place order.
- Allowing and encouraging medical cannabis delivery, including allowing for it to be contactless.
- Allowing and encouraging online ordering and curbside delivery.
- Providing standard operating procedures to medical cannabis businesses so they can implement best practices to protect public health in the face of the pandemic.
- Ensuring businesses can continue operations during the pandemic, including in the event some personnel are ill and there is a need for quick hires, such as by waiving requirements that employees first receive or renew identification cards.
- Ensuring patients are allowed to consult with physicians by telemedicine.
- Extending the expiration date of medical cannabis cards until after the crisis has abated.

We would also appreciate any other action your state can take to lessen the burden on individuals who benefit from medical cannabis. Please consider any ideas or suggestions you receive from your

state's regulators, patient advocacy organizations, and medical cannabis businesses, and please do all you can to protect patients from being impacted by the pandemic.

We wish you Godspeed as you navigate your state through these uncertain times.

Sincerely,

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*\* Organization signed on after the initial letters were sent to governors and legislative leaders.*