

WAC 314-55-509 Penalty structure. (1) The board determines if a penalty will be imposed. Penalties are based on the severity of the violation in the following categories:

(a) Category I: Violations of a severity that would make a license eligible for cancellation on a first offense;

(b) Category II: Violations that create a direct or immediate threat to public health, safety, or both;

(c) Category III: Violations that create a potential threat to public health, safety, or both;

(d) Category IV: Significant regulatory violations;

(e) Category V: Procedural and operational violations;

(f) Category VI: Statutory violations.

(2) For purposes of assessing penalties, only violations occurring in the two-year time period immediately preceding the date of the violation will be considered unless otherwise provided in this chapter.

(3) The board may, at its discretion, deviate from the prescribed penalties herein. Such deviations will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering mitigating and aggravating factors.

(a) Mitigating factors may result in a waiving or lowering of fines, civil penalties, imposition of a fine in lieu of suspension, or fewer days of suspension. Mitigating factors may include demonstrated business policies and practices that may reduce risk to public health and safety.

(b) Aggravating factors may result in increased days of suspension, increased monetary penalties, cancellation, or nonrenewal of a cannabis license. Aggravating factors may include obstructing an investigation, business operations, behaviors, or both, that increase risk to public health and safety.

(4) For violations that occurred before the effective date of these rules, enforcement action will be based on the rules that were in effect on the date the violation occurred. Subsection (2) of this section shall apply to all enforcement actions regardless of the date the violation occurred.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 69.50.342 and 2022 c 16 § 168. WSR 22-14-111, § 314-55-509, filed 7/6/22, effective 8/6/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 69.50.342, 69.50.345, and 2019 c 394. WSR 20-03-177, § 314-55-509, filed 1/22/20, effective 2/22/20.]