

WAC 314-55-020 Marijuana license qualifications and application process—Licensing change requests. Each marijuana license application is unique and investigated individually. The WSLCB may inquire and request documents regarding all matters in connection with the marijuana license application. The application requirements for a marijuana license include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Consistent with RCW 69.50.331 (7) and (10), the WSLCB shall send a notice to cities and counties, tribal governments, and port authorities regarding the marijuana license application within said jurisdiction. The local authority, tribal government, or port authority has twenty days to respond with a recommendation to approve the application or an objection to the applicant, location, or both.

(2) Consistent with RCW 69.50.331 (8)(f), the WSLCB shall send a notice to tribal governments when an applicant or licensee is proposed to be located within the exterior boundaries of the reservation of a federally recognized Indian tribe. The tribal government will have twenty days to respond with an approval to the application. If written approval is not received within thirty days, the WSLCB will assume the tribe does not consent to the applicant's location and the applicant must find a new location.

(3) Applicants for a new marijuana producer, processor, retailer, transportation, or research license and those who apply to change their location must display a sign provided by the WSLCB on the outside of the premises to be licensed notifying the public that the premises are subject to an application for a marijuana license. Posting notices must occur within seven days of submitting the location confirmation form for new licenses or the change of location application for existing licensees. The WSLCB may check for compliance with this requirement at its discretion. The sign must:

(a) Not be altered. The licensee must post the sign sent by the WSLCB without changing, adding, or subtracting from the text;

(b) Be conspicuously displayed on, or immediately adjacent to, the premises subject to the application and in the location that is most likely to be seen by the public;

(c) Be of a size sufficient to ensure that it will be readily seen by the public, at a minimum these signs must be eight and one-half by eleven inches;

(d) Be posted within seven business days of the date the notice is sent to the applicant by the WSLCB; and

(e) The notice must be posted for fourteen consecutive days.

(4) All marijuana license applicants must meet the qualifications required by the WSLCB before they will be granted a license.

(5) The WSLCB will verify that the proposed business meets the minimum requirements for the type of marijuana license requested.

(6) Consistent with RCW 69.50.331 (8)(e), the WSLCB will issue a certificate of compliance if the proposed business premises meets the minimum distance requirements as of the date the application was received by the WSLCB. If the physical location changes during the application process, the certificate of compliance will be issued for the date that the premises change was received by the WSLCB. Applicants who were granted licenses prior to adoption of this rule are allowed to operate the business at the location notwithstanding a later occurring, otherwise disqualifying minimum distance factor.

(7) The WSLCB will conduct an investigation of the applicants' criminal history and administrative violation history, per WAC 314-55-040 and 314-55-045.

(a) The criminal history background check will consist of completion of a personal/criminal history form provided by the WSLCB and submission of fingerprints to a vendor approved by the WSLCB. The applicant will be responsible for paying all fees required by the vendor for fingerprinting. These fingerprints will be submitted to the Washington state patrol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for comparison to their criminal records. The applicant will be responsible for paying all fees required by the Washington state patrol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(b) Financiers will also be subject to criminal history investigations equivalent to that of the license applicant. Financiers will also be responsible for paying all fees required for the criminal history check.

(8) The WSLCB will conduct a financial investigation in order to verify the source of funds used for the acquisition and startup of the business, the applicants' right to the real and personal property, and to verify the true party(ies) of interest.

(9) The WSLCB may require a demonstration by the applicant that they are familiar with marijuana laws and rules.

(10) The WSLCB may conduct an inspection of the proposed or currently licensed business location, to determine if the applicant has complied with all the requirements of the license or change to the license or premises requested.

(11) Under RCW 69.50.331 (1)(c), all applicants applying for a marijuana license must have resided in the state of Washington for at least six months prior to application for a marijuana license. All business entities including, but not limited to, partnerships, employee cooperatives, associations, nonprofit corporations, corporations and limited liability companies, applying for a marijuana license must be formed in Washington. All members, governors, or agents of business entities must also meet the six month residency requirement. Managers or agents who manage a licensee's place of business must also meet the six month residency requirement.

(12)(a) As part of the application process, each applicant must submit an operating plan outlining required elements for the location as provided in this chapter pertaining to the license type being sought. The operating plan must be submitted using an operating plan format supplied by the WSLCB. This operating plan must also include a floor plan or site plan drawn to scale which illustrates the entire operation being proposed.

(b) After obtaining a license, the license holder must notify the WSLCB in advance of any change in their operating plan. Prior approval is required before the change may be implemented.

(13) The WSLCB may place licensing change applications made by a licensee on hold if the change application is reasonably related to an ongoing investigation.

(a) The WSLCB may withdraw licensing change applications pending the results of an adjudicative proceeding regarding a violation of chapter 314-55 WAC. Depending on the outcome of the adjudicative proceeding, the licensee may reapply for the withdrawn licensing change application(s).

(b) Examples of licensing change applications that may be affected under this subsection include:

- (i) Application for additional funding;
- (ii) Application for added medical marijuana endorsement;
- (iii) Assumption of a license;

- (iv) Change in governing people, percentage owned, or stock/unit ownership;
- (v) Change of location;
- (vi) Expanding plant canopy to maximum allotted;
- (vii) Request to alter marijuana site or operating plan;
- (viii) Request to add a processor license; and
- (ix) Splitting a producer and processor license.

(14) (a) To aid the WSLCB in monitoring the industry as it develops, the WSLCB requests that all applicants and licensees seeking renewal provide the following information:

(b) **Employees compensation and benefits data.**

(i) Will the applicant/licensee provide a living wage (at least one hundred fifty percent of the state minimum wage) to eighty-five percent or more of its hourly employees?

(ii) Will the applicant/licensee provide health insurance to at least eighty-five percent of its hourly employees?

(iii) Will the applicant/licensee provide a defined benefit pension plan to at least eighty-five percent of its hourly employees?

(iv) Will the applicant/licensee provide five or more paid sick days annually to at least eighty-five percent of its hourly employees?

(v) Is there a signed labor peace agreement or collective bargaining agreement with a labor organization in place?

(15) Applicants applying for a marijuana license must be current in any tax obligations to the Washington state department of revenue and other state agencies, as an individual or as part of any entity in which they have an ownership interest. Applicants must sign an attestation that, under penalty of denial or loss of licensure, that representation is correct.

(16) The issuance or approval of a license shall not be construed as a license for, or an approval of, any violations of local rules or ordinances including, but not limited to: Building and fire codes, zoning ordinances, and business licensing requirements.

(17) Upon failure to respond to the WSLCB licensing and regulation division's requests for information and/or documentation within the timeline provided, the application may be administratively closed or denial of the application will be sought.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 69.50.342 and 69.50.345. WSR 21-02-096, § 314-55-020, filed 1/6/21, effective 2/6/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 69.50.325, 69.50.342, 69.50.345, and 69.50.369. WSR 18-22-055, § 314-55-020, filed 10/31/18, effective 12/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 69.50.342 and 69.50.345. WSR 16-11-110, § 314-55-020, filed 5/18/16, effective 6/18/16; WSR 15-11-107, § 314-55-020, filed 5/20/15, effective 6/20/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 69.50.325, 69.50.331, 69.50.342, 69.50.345. WSR 13-21-104, § 314-55-020, filed 10/21/13, effective 11/21/13.]