

Equity

Social equity program: The program provides benefits directly to those who have suffered because of the war on cannabis. It removes convictions through expungement, it specifically provides additional points for business applicants, access to financial resources for start-up costs, and resources to communities that were hardest hit from the war on cannabis.

How it works:

A “social equity applicant” is a business whose ownership or staff have been directly impacted by the war on cannabis. These are people who have either been arrested or convicted of a cannabis-related offense, or a person with strong ties to a community that has been disproportionately impacted by both poverty and cannabis drug law enforcement. Such a business must be owned by 51% or more of those who qualify, or for businesses with 10 or more staff, 51% of the workers must qualify.

Social equity applicants qualify for assistance in various ways:

- Applicants for business licenses that qualify as social equity applicants will receive **additional points on applications** in the scoring system.
- A **Cannabis Business Development Fund** will provide financial resources for business start-ups, which can be used to offset licensing fees or used for low-interest loans. The fund will start with \$12 million of funds as soon as possible after July 1, 2019, and additional early fees will be transferred into it. It is anticipated to grow to \$30 million.
- Local colleges can obtain a license for training programs to help residents prepare for cannabis industry-related jobs.
- The **3R Program** (the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew Program) will allow community groups to develop programs to benefit disadvantaged communities.

Training: The Department of Agriculture and Community College board will create up to eight pilot programs to train students to work in the legal cannabis industry. At least five of the eight programs must be for schools in which at least 50% of the students are low income.