

Changing Course, Arkansas Medical Marijuana Commission Will Award Dispensary Licenses Based on Merit

04/10/2017

The Arkansas Medical Marijuana Commission (the “Commission”) announced two refinements to the application process for medical marijuana dispensary licenses at a public hearing on Friday, April 7, 2017:

- Applications will be evaluated based on merit criteria. This is a change from the application process set forth in the draft rules and regulations issued by the Commission in February 2017, which called for dispensary application evaluation through a combination of a lottery and merit criteria.
- The Commission also consolidated the proposed two-tier application structure for dispensary applications into a single tier, eliminating the distinction between those dispensaries that would also cultivate medical marijuana and those that would not. The old system set different application and license fees based on whether the dispensary would also cultivate. Under the revised rule, all dispensary applicants will pay a \$7,500 application fee, a one-time \$15,000 licensing fee, and a yearly \$22,500 license renewal fee.

The Commission made these changes following public comments at the April 7, 2017, hearing.

The Commission’s next meeting will be Tuesday, April 11, 2017, at 4:30 pm, at 1515 W. 7th St, Suite 503, in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The members of the Mitchell Williams Medical Marijuana Practice Group are Harry Hamlin, Morril Harriman, Jr., Martha Hill, Melissa Bandy, Benjamin Brenner, Courtney Crouch, Meg Johnston, Alan Lewis, Bethany Marshall, Nicole Lovell, Scott Schallhorn, and Mary Catherine Way.