



## Town of Burlington Cannabis Social Equity Policies

### **Purpose and Scope**

On August 11, 2022, Governor Charlie Baker signed S. 3096, An Act Relative to Equity in the Cannabis Industry, into law. The new law requires host municipalities to establish initial policies to promote Equity in the cannabis industry no later than July 1, 2023, or be subject to monetary penalties. On June 29, 2023, the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission (“CCC”) issued guidance on how to create a model a Social Equity policy that encourages cities and towns in Massachusetts to consider incentives for increased participation by Social Equity applicants in their local cannabis ecosystem.

Based on cannabis Social Equity best practices, guidance from the CCC, and lessons learned from the Town of Burlington’s current cannabis business permitting program, the Town of Burlington adopts a set of policies to further promote Equity for new Social Equity applicants seeking to establish businesses in Burlington.

### **Applicability**

The [CCC’s Social Equity programs](#) provide training and technical assistance to applicants who have been disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs, marijuana prohibition, arrests, and incarceration and who meet certain income and residency requirements. The Town of Burlington defines qualifying Social Equity applicants under Burlington’s Cannabis Social Equity Policies as those that have been certified as eligible to participate in the CCC Social Equity Program or are Certified Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants according to the CCC.

### **The Town of Burlington Cannabis Social Equity Policies:**

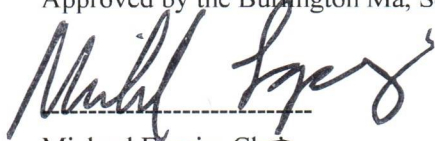
To encourage greater participation by Social Equity applicants in Burlington’s cannabis industry, when reviewing an application for a Host Community Agreement (HCA), an evaluation form will be made available that scores components of an application. The evaluation form will include consideration of equity in the overall evaluation score, which will comprise not less than 25 percent of the total evaluation score. This equity component will include: (i) whether a License Applicant is pre-verified as a Social Equity Business by the Commission; (ii) whether the License Applicant is a Social Equity Program Participant; (iii) whether the License Applicant is an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant; (iv) whether the License Applicant has a prior Marijuana related criminal conviction; (v) whether the License Applicant is part of an Area of Disproportionate Impact, as identified by the Commission; or (vi) a majority of the License Applicant entity is comprised of individuals from Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino, or Native American or indigenous descent.

Further, pursuant to 935 CMR §§500.181(3)(a) and 501.181(3)(a), the Town has adopted a Local Approval Process for equity applicants that is administered on a 1:1 basis, where a General Applicant may be approved only after a Social Equity Business has commenced operations. Under the Regulations,

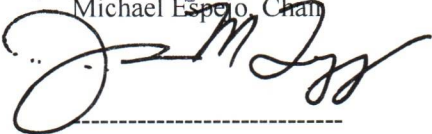
Host Communities may choose to administer a 1:1 Local Approval Process until such time as 50% of the Licensees operating in the Host Community are Social Equity Businesses.

1. The Town of Burlington will enhance marketing and outreach to potential Social Equity applicants by promoting available HCAs to the Cannabis Control Commissions' Social Equity program, promoting on the Town's website and social media, and enhanced business outreach as part of the Town's Economic Development program.
2. The Town of Burlington will provide permitting technical assistance for Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants navigating the Town of Burlington's cannabis permitting process. The Economic Development Office will create a website with guidance and resources for applicants and a list of all required permits, including necessary forms. A municipal contact will be listed on the Town website and will work closely with Social Equity applicants in the permitting process from initial inquiry through the special permit and building permit process.
3. Wherever possible, the Town of Burlington will reduce financial barriers and expedite the permitting for Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants. Throughout the Town of Burlington's special permit process, the Planning Department will endeavor to streamline permitting for these applicants.
4. The Town of Burlington will update its municipal website pages regarding its approval process for cultivation facilities and centralize all information on one page, including a list of all documentation required by a Host Community's local approval process in downloadable form, in order to be user friendly and transparent.

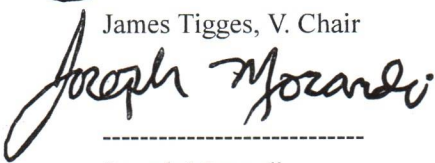
Approved by the Burlington Ma, Select Board in regular session on May 5, 2025



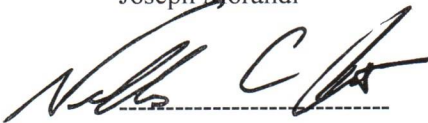
Michael Espino, Chair



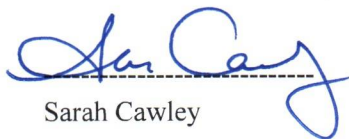
James Tigges, V. Chair



Joseph Morandi



Nicholas Priest



Sarah Cawley