

# **Santa Cruz County Cultivation Registration FAQs**

## **(Updated 9.15.2106)**

### **What is the Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act?**

In 2015, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law three bills (Assembly Bills 243 and 266, and Senate Bill 643) that create a licensing and regulatory framework for medical cannabis.

### **When does MCRSA take effect?**

MCRSA became law on January 1, 2016, but the implementing regulations are currently being developed by the State. State licenses for commercial cannabis activity are expected to be available in 2018. A local license will be necessary prior to applying for a State license.

### **How do I get a local license?**

The Board of Supervisors is currently considering a proposed ordinance for commercial cannabis cultivation in Santa Cruz County. Information on that draft proposed ordinance is available in Exhibit A located here:

[http://santacruzcountyca.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail\\_LegiFile.aspx?Frame=&MeetingID=1024&MediaPosition=11686.701&ID=2399&CssClass](http://santacruzcountyca.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?Frame=&MeetingID=1024&MediaPosition=11686.701&ID=2399&CssClass)

To be considered for a local license you must first register your cultivation site.

### **What is the purpose of registration?**

The goal of the Cannabis Registration process is to accomplish the following:

- Establish data regarding past, current and planned cannabis cultivation in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County.
- Meet the needs of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process.
- Establish a pool of registrants that will be authorized to submit an application for the commercial cultivation of cannabis in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County once the County adopts a final local cultivation ordinance consistent with the State Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA).

### **When does registration open and close?**

Registration opens on Monday, August 8, 2016 and closes at midnight Sunday, November 6, 2016.

### **Who is eligible to register?**

Anyone can register their cultivation site. However, to qualify for a license you must have been 1) cultivating cannabis in Santa Cruz County since January 2013; or 2) have been engaged in commercial farming or agricultural production unrelated to cannabis production for over 3 years in the Commercial Agriculture (CA) zone district.

### **Do I need to register my site if I am growing medicine for my own needs or for a group of patients?**

Except for limited exceptions for patients and caregivers, as outlined in MCRSA, all cannabis activity, included that conducted by medical cannabis cooperatives, will require a local license and a state license. You do not have to register your site if you are cultivating in a 10x10 plot for your own medical needs.

### **How do I register?**

Go to the account sign-up page at: <https://scccannabis.co.santa-cruz.ca.us> to begin the process. Once you have signed up for an account with your email, user name and password you will be able to access all the registration forms. You can upload completed forms to your account by logging in with your user name and password.

### **I currently lease a property, should I still register?**

Yes, leased sites are eligible for registration.

**I cultivate at multiple sites, do I need multiple accounts?**

Yes, you are registering as an applicant for a specific site. If you are cultivating at multiple sites, each site will require a separate account, with a unique email, user name and password.

**My current cultivation site will likely not be eligible for licensing under the proposed County legislation, do I still register?**

Yes, you should register even if your current cultivation may not qualify for a license. You will have an opportunity to change locations and amend your information prior to applying for a license.

**Can I register without setting up an account?**

No, you must set-up an account to register.

**What if I do not have access to a computer?**

You can access the site from a computer at a library. A computer is also available outside the Cannabis Licensing Office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the County building at 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz.

**What is the fee for registration?**

The registration fee is \$500 per registration site.

**Where and how do I pay my fee(s)?**

Fees can be paid via mail to or at the Cannabis Licensing Office, 701 Ocean Street, Room 520, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. A certified check, cashier's check or money order for the application fee made payable to the County of Santa Cruz should be used to pay your fee.

**What forms do I need to fill out for registration?**

Everyone should fill out the Cannabis Cultivation Registration Form (REV.1). For those of you who wish to remain anonymous, please check the appropriate boxes on the form (noted in red) for specific sections or questions, as identified, for anonymity. Please register one way or the other through the whole form. If you checked anonymous, please be sure it is checked in all areas on the form.

Registrants who have an applicant registering on behalf of a business or multiple owners should also complete the Cannabis Cultivation Registration Applicant Certification Form (REVISED).

**Is my registration form confidential?**

Any information your supply may be released as required by law, juridical order, or subpoena. The County will strive to protect information to the greatest extent provided by law.

**How do I find my parcel APN?**

You can enter your address on this site: <http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/ASR/> and click "search." Your APN number will then be displayed.

**How do I check my zoning or General Plan designation?**

You can use the public GIS system <http://gis.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/PublicGISWeb/>. Enter your parcel number and click "find it." Your parcel will be displayed. In the lower left hand corner there is an arrow. Click on that to display a series of tabs if they are not already displayed. Click on the tab called "land use." Under attributes in the left-hand column you will see your zoning description and general plan designation.

**How do I determine if my parcel is in the coastal zone plus one mile buffer?**

You can use the public GIS system <http://gis.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/PublicGISWeb/>. Enter your parcel number and click "find it." Your parcel will be displayed. In the upper left hand corner there is an arrow. Click on that to display a series of layers. Click on the plus sign under land use to expand that section. Click the check box for "one mile buffer of coastal zone" to display the area in green on the map. If your parcel is in the green zone you must be zoned CA to cultivate in this area.

**How do I prove I have I have been a cultivator since 2013?**

Examples of proof will not be required until licensing begins and can include a letter from a dispensary you have been supplying, a letter from your landlord, if you are leasing your land, receipts for cannabis seed plants or other similar items.

**When is my registration packet complete? (UPDATED 8/15)**

Your registration packet is complete once you have paid all your fees and uploaded your form(s) to your account.

**What happens after my registration packet complete?**

The licensing manager and/or staff will complete a review of your registration packet. Registered sites who have provided address and APN numbers will receive a registration certificate for posting at your cultivation site. Those who registered anonymously will not receive such a certificate since we do not know who you are or where your site is located.

**What if I want feedback from the County on my registration site prior to the licensing process?**

Once the registration process closes a feedback/consultation form will be posted to the registration site for those who wish to determine their readiness for licensing at their current site. After you complete this form and pay an additional \$2,500 fee, County staff will conduct a site visit to your location. Feedback will be categorized as follows:

- In compliance with existing cultivation ordinances
- In compliance with proposed cultivation ordinances
- Not in compliance with existing ordinance (including outline of corrections needed)
- Not in compliance with proposed ordinance (including outline of corrections needed)

Sites not in compliance with the current or proposed ordinance will have an opportunity to discuss their deficiencies with the licensing manager and/or staff and must come into compliance before they can apply for a license, once they become available.

**Will there be limited immunity for me if I register?**

Sites that are registered may still see enforcement activities if they are out of compliance with the current ordinance, if there are complaints filed and/or if they are not following the appropriate County codes and procedures for environmental protection.

**Can I start cultivation operations based on the type of local license I will be seeking?**

No. The current ordinance and 99 plant limit remains in effect until the County starts issuing cultivation licenses.

**When will commercial cultivation applications be available?**

Before the licensing process can begin the County must first allow the ordinance to go through an environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Once this process is complete the Board of Supervisors may have to make some adjustments to the ordinance, based on the XCEQA findings. The Board must also conduct a public hearing on the final draft proposed ordinance. Licensing can begin 30 days after the final ordinance has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors. It is anticipated licensing will likely not occur until summer of 2017.

**How much will a license cost?**

The Board of Supervisors have not yet determined the cost for a license. Such a fee is likely to be considered during the 2017-18 budget process.