

## **May 2023 Update on Therapeutic Cannabis Program Rules**

Effective May 2023, program rules about patient certification for the Therapeutic Cannabis Program have changed:

1. A medical provider may certify their patients for up to 3 years.
2. A medical provider may extend a current, effective Written Certification that they previously issued for less than 3 years. The total duration of a Written Certification, including any extensions, shall not exceed 3 years.
3. A certifying medical provider must provide additional counseling regarding the risks of cannabis use to two target populations: women of child-bearing age, and adolescents up to 25 years old.

All forms, applications, and information sheets posted on the [Applications and Forms](#) page have been updated to reflect the new program rules.

### **1. Three-Year Certification**

- The standard duration of a medical provider's Written Certification (and a patient's Registry ID Card) is one year.
- A medical provider may now issue a Written Certification for a patient for a shorter duration or a longer duration, up to a maximum of 3 years.
- This duration is chosen at the clinical discretion of the patient's certifying medical provider.
- The [Written Certification](#) (Version 5/23) has been updated to allow a provider to select a duration from 3 months to 3 years.

### **2. Written Certification Extension**

- Any Written Certification that has been issued for a duration of less than 3 years may be *extended* by the same medical provider who issued the original Written Certification.
- This includes: (1) any currently effective Written Certification (for which a patient has an active Registry ID Card); and (2) any new Written Certification that is issued for a duration of less than 3 years.
- A Written Certification may be extended more than once, but the total duration of a Written Certification, including any extensions, shall not exceed 3 years.
- Submission of a [Written Certification Extension](#) form (Version 5/23) means that the patient does not need to submit a new Patient Application, a new Written Certification, and an Application Fee.

#### ***Written Certification Extension Requirements***

- The Written Certification Extension form must be signed by the same certifying medical provider that signed the patient's original Written Certification.
- The Written Certification Extension form must be signed and dated no later than the expiration date of the patient's current Registry ID Card.
- The Therapeutic Cannabis Program allows a limited 30-day grace period after the patient's current Registry ID Card has expired to receive this signed form.

There are no exceptions to these extension requirements. If these requirements are not met, the patient will need to renew their card by submitting a new Written Certification, a new Patient Application, and the Application Fee.

#### ***Extension Information for Designated Caregivers***

- If a patient has a caregiver, and the patient's Registry ID Card is extended, then the caregiver's Registry ID Card will be extended as well, and it will have the same expiration date as the patient's card.
- The maximum duration of a caregiver's Registry ID Card is 3 years, regardless of how many patients the caregiver has.

### **3. Provider Education about the Risks of Cannabis Use**

- A certifying medical provider must provide additional counseling to their patients, as follows:
  1. For each patient who is a woman of child-bearing age (and the patient's custodial parent or legal guardian if the patient is a minor), a provider shall offer counseling about the risks of cannabis use during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.
  2. For each patient who is an adolescent 25 years of age or less (and the patient's custodial parent or legal guardian if the patient is a minor), a provider shall offer counseling about the risks of cannabis use in adolescence.
- The [Written Certification](#) (Version 5/23) has been updated to include a statement certifying that such counseling has been provided to these patients.