



Washington State  
**Liquor and Cannabis Board**

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**Date:** January 6, 2021

**To:** Jane Rushford, Board Chair  
Ollie Garrett, Board Member  
Russ Hauge, Board Member

**From:** Casey Schaufler, Policy and Rules Coordinator

**Copy:** Rick Garza, Agency Director  
Megan Duffy, Deputy Director  
Justin Nordhorn, Chief of Enforcement  
Becky Smith, Licensing Director  
Kathy Hoffman, Policy and Rules Manager

**Subject:** Request for approval of final rules (CR 103) regarding amendment to WAC 314-55-020 Marijuana license qualifications and application process—Licensing change requests.

The Policy and Rules Coordinator requests that the Board adopt the final rules, and approve the CR 103 to implement the law as established by Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6206 (Chapter 154, Laws of 2020) and amend language in WAC 314-55-020.

The Board has been briefed on the rule development background and public comment received for this rule making project. A CR 103 memorandum, CR 103 form, and rule text are attached.

If approved, the Policy and Rules Coordinator will send the concise explanatory statement concerning this rulemaking to all persons who provided comments. The Policy and Rules Coordinator will file the rules with the Office of the Code Reviser. The effective date of the rules will be 31 days after filing, or February 6, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove      \_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Rushford, Chair      \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove      \_\_\_\_\_  
Ollie Garrett, Board Member      \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove      \_\_\_\_\_  
Russ Hauge, Board Member      \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attachment:      CR 103 Memorandum  
                         Concise Explanatory Statement



## CR103 Memorandum

**Regarding WAC 314-55-020 – Marijuana license qualifications and application process—Licensing change requests.**

Date: January 6, 2020  
Presented by: Casey Schaufler, Policy and Rules Coordinator

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### Background

The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (Board) is generally prohibited from issuing a marijuana license for any premises within 1000 feet of an elementary or secondary school, playground, recreation center, child care center, public park, public transit center, library, or game arcade admission that is not restricted to a person age 21 or older.

A local government may adopt an ordinance that reduces the 1000-foot buffer zone to not less than 100 feet of a recreation center, child care center, public park, public transit center, library, or game arcade admission that is not restricted to a person age 21 or older. The Board may issue a license to marijuana producers, processors, transporters, and retailers in compliance with a local distance-reduction ordinance, so long as the distance reduction will not negatively impact the jurisdiction's civil regulatory enforcement, criminal law enforcement interests, public safety, or public health.

A local government may adopt an ordinance that reduces the 1000-foot buffer zone to not less than 100 feet of all of the above listed entities/facilities for the purpose of licensing a marijuana research facility. However, the distance reduction must not negatively impact the jurisdiction's civil regulatory enforcement, criminal law enforcement interests, public safety, or public health. Before issuing or renewing a marijuana research license for a premises located within 1000 feet, but not less than 100 feet of an elementary school, secondary school, or playground in compliance with a local distance-reduction ordinance, the Board must ensure the facility meets the following requirements:

- The facility must meet a security standard exceeding the standard applicable to marijuana producer, processor, or retailer licensees;
- The facility must be inaccessible to the public and no part of the operation of the facility may be in view of the general public; and
- The facility may bear no advertising or signage indicating it is a marijuana research facility.

Substitute Senate Bill 6206 (Chapter 154, Laws of 2020) amended RCW 69.50.331, now codified as RCW 69.50.331(8)(e), by adding a subsection (e) to create a certificate of compliance for marijuana business premises. The amendment became effective June 11, 2020, and requires that the Board must issue a certificate of compliance for a marijuana business applicant's premises, if the premises meets the statutory buffer zone requirements at the time the application was filed. The certificate allows the licensee to operate the business at the proposed location notwithstanding a later occurring, otherwise disqualifying factor. This certificate is not a license to produce, process, research, or sell marijuana at the location. All other marijuana licensing requirements must be met in order to receive a license or to continue operating under an existing license.

The legislation was designed to prevent a competitor from opening a business that would disqualify another marijuana entity's license application. During legislative testimony, it was noted that this situation has occurred with some frequency, after an applicant had spent the money to secure a lease, and a competitor moved a business (such as an arcade business) next door, violating the zoning restrictions for the new applicant. The legislation provides certainty for applicants with considerable investment in their businesses who are waiting for completion of the Board's license approval process.

### **Rule Necessity**

Amendment to existing rule is necessary to allow the WSLCB to issue a certificate of compliance consistent with the mandates of SSB 6206, now codified as RCW 69.50.331(8).

### **Description of Rule Changes**

**Amended Subsection. WAC 314-55-020(6)** – The adopted amendment allows the WSLCB to issue a certificate of compliance to an applicant if proposed business premises meets the minimum distance requirement as of the date the application was received by the WSLCB. The adopted amendment also allows applicants granted licenses prior to the future adoption of this rule to operate their business without being affected by a future disqualifying distance factor.

Additionally, existing subsections were renumbered to accommodate this amendment. The statutory reference in subsection (2) was corrected to reflect the codification of SSB 6026 in RCW 69.50.331(8).

### **Variance between proposed rule (CR102) and final rule:**

There is no variance between the proposed rule and the final rule.

## **Rule Implementation**

### Informing and Educating Persons Impacted by the Rule

To help inform and educate persons impacted by the rule, the WSLCB will:

- Email notice with the adoption materials to persons who commented on the rules, the rule making and licensee distribution lists, and the general WSLCB GovDelivery list;
- Post rule adoption materials, including final rule language, response to comments, final analysis (Concise Explanatory Statement), and any other relevant documents on the rulemaking webpage for public access.
- Provide information and training on request.

### Promoting and Assisting Voluntary Compliance

WSLCB will promote and assist voluntary compliance through technical assistance.

- WSLCB staff are available to respond to phone and email inquiries about the rules.
- Licensing and Enforcement/Education leadership and staff have participated in rule revisions, and are familiar with the final product. Internal and external education efforts to share knowledge and assure consistent application of rule have will be supported.
- Rule and guidance documents will be available on the WSLCB website.
- WSLCB will use available and customary resources to disseminate materials and information to all persons impacted by the rules.

These actions are designed to inform and educate all persons impacted by the rules to support and promote voluntary compliance.

### Training and Informing WSLCB Staff

Several WSLCB staff responsible for implementing these adopted rules work directly with impacted parties and are already familiar with the nuances of the rule changes. Additional internal guidance documents may be prepared as necessary. The WSLCB will also consider:

- Provision of internal and external training and education, as needed, potentially including webinars, training, and videos if appropriate;
- Coordinating and centrally locating decisions to assure consistency between agency, staff, and industry.

## **Rule Effectiveness Evaluation**

The WSLCB will evaluate the effectiveness of these rules in the following ways, including but not limited to:

- Monitoring questions received after the effective date of these rules, and adjusting training and guidance accordingly;
- Monitoring the number of enforcement actions, including type, resolution, and final outcome;
- Monitoring the number of requests for rule language revisions or changes;
- Monitoring the number of requests for rule interpretation;
- Monitoring licensee feedback including, but not limited to, the number of requests for assistance.

**Attachments:**

Attachment A. (Final Rules)

Attachment B. (Concise Explanatory Statement).



# RULE-MAKING ORDER

## PERMANENT RULE ONLY

### CR-103P (December 2017) (Implements RCW 34.05.360)

**Agency:** Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

**Effective date of rule:**

**Permanent Rules**

- 31 days after filing.  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ (If less than 31 days after filing, a specific finding under RCW 34.05.380(3) is required and should be stated below)

**Any other findings required by other provisions of law as precondition to adoption or effectiveness of rule?**

- Yes  No If Yes, explain:

**Purpose:** WAC 314-55-020 – Marijuana license qualifications and application process—Licensing change requests. The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (Board) has adopted a rule amendment to establish a certificate of compliance for marijuana business premises consistent with Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6206, (Chapter 154, Laws of 2020), now codified as RCW 69.50.331(8)(e).

**Citation of rules affected by this order:**

New: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Repealed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amended: WAC 314-55-020  
 Suspended: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statutory authority for adoption:** RCW 69.50.342; RCW 69.50.345.

**Other authority:**

**PERMANENT RULE (Including Expedited Rule Making)**

Adopted under notice filed as WSR 20-22-042 on October 28, 2020 (date).

Describe any changes other than editing from proposed to adopted version: There were no changes from the proposed rules to the adopted rules.

If a preliminary cost-benefit analysis was prepared under RCW 34.05.328, a final cost-benefit analysis is available by contacting:

Name: Casey Schaufler  
 Address: 1025 Union Avenue SE, Olympia WA 98501  
 Phone: 360-664-1760  
 Fax: 360-664-3208  
 TTY:  
 Email: rules@lcb.wa.gov  
 Web site: www.lcb.wa.gov  
 Other:

**Note: If any category is left blank, it will be calculated as zero.  
No descriptive text.**

**Count by whole WAC sections only, from the WAC number through the history note.  
A section may be counted in more than one category.**

**The number of sections adopted in order to comply with:**

Federal statute:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Federal rules or standards:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Recently enacted state statutes:	New	___	Amended	1	Repealed	___

**The number of sections adopted at the request of a nongovernmental entity:**

New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
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**The number of sections adopted on the agency's own initiative:**

New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
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**The number of sections adopted in order to clarify, streamline, or reform agency procedures:**

New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
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**The number of sections adopted using:**

Negotiated rule making:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Pilot rule making:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Other alternative rule making:	New	___	Amended	1	Repealed	___

**Date Adopted:** January 6, 2021

**Name:** Jane Rushford

**Title:** Chair

**Signature:**

Place signature here



**WAC 314-55-020 Marijuana license qualifications and application process—Licensing change requests.** Each marijuana license application is unique and investigated individually. The WSLCB may inquire and request documents regarding all matters in connection with the marijuana license application. The application requirements for a marijuana license include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Consistent with RCW 69.50.331 (7) and (10), the WSLCB shall send a notice to cities and counties, tribal governments, and port authorities regarding the marijuana license application within said jurisdiction. The local authority, tribal government, or port authority has twenty days to respond with a recommendation to approve the application or an objection to the applicant, location, or both.

(2) Consistent with RCW 69.50.331 (8) ~~((e))~~ (f), the WSLCB shall send a notice to tribal governments when an applicant or licensee is proposed to be located within the exterior boundaries of the reservation of a federally recognized Indian tribe. The tribal government will have twenty days to respond with an approval to the application. If written approval is not received within thirty days, the WSLCB will assume the tribe does not consent to the applicant's location and the applicant must find a new location.

(3) Applicants for a new marijuana producer, processor, retailer, transportation, or research license and those who apply to change their location must display a sign provided by the WSLCB on the outside of the premises to be licensed notifying the public that the premises are subject to an application for a marijuana license. Posting notices must occur within seven days of submitting the location confirmation form for new licenses or the change of location application for existing licensees. The WSLCB may check for compliance with this requirement at its discretion. The sign must:

(a) Not be altered. The licensee must post the sign sent by the WSLCB without changing, adding, or subtracting from the text;

(b) Be conspicuously displayed on, or immediately adjacent to, the premises subject to the application and in the location that is most likely to be seen by the public;

(c) Be of a size sufficient to ensure that it will be readily seen by the public, at a minimum these signs must be eight and one-half by eleven inches;

(d) Be posted within seven business days of the date the notice is sent to the applicant by the WSLCB; and

(e) The notice must be posted for fourteen consecutive days.

(4) All marijuana license applicants must meet the qualifications required by the WSLCB before they will be granted a license.

(5) The WSLCB will verify that the proposed business meets the minimum requirements for the type of marijuana license requested.

(6) Consistent with RCW 69.50.331 (8) (e), the WSLCB will issue a certificate of compliance if the proposed business premises meets the minimum distance requirements as of the date the application was received by the WSLCB. If the physical location changes during the application process, the certificate of compliance will be issued for the date that the premises change was received by the WSLCB. Applicants who were granted licenses prior to adoption of this rule are al-

lowed to operate the business at the location notwithstanding a later occurring, otherwise disqualifying minimum distance factor.

(7) The WSLCB will conduct an investigation of the applicants' criminal history and administrative violation history, per WAC 314-55-040 and 314-55-045.

(a) The criminal history background check will consist of completion of a personal/criminal history form provided by the WSLCB and submission of fingerprints to a vendor approved by the WSLCB. The applicant will be responsible for paying all fees required by the vendor for fingerprinting. These fingerprints will be submitted to the Washington state patrol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for comparison to their criminal records. The applicant will be responsible for paying all fees required by the Washington state patrol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(b) Financiers will also be subject to criminal history investigations equivalent to that of the license applicant. Financiers will also be responsible for paying all fees required for the criminal history check.

~~((7))~~ (8) The WSLCB will conduct a financial investigation in order to verify the source of funds used for the acquisition and startup of the business, the applicants' right to the real and personal property, and to verify the true party(ies) of interest.

~~((8))~~ (9) The WSLCB may require a demonstration by the applicant that they are familiar with marijuana laws and rules.

~~((9))~~ (10) The WSLCB may conduct an inspection of the proposed or currently licensed business location, to determine if the applicant has complied with all the requirements of the license or change to the license or premises requested.

~~((10))~~ (11) Under RCW 69.50.331 (1)(c), all applicants applying for a marijuana license must have resided in the state of Washington for at least six months prior to application for a marijuana license. All business entities including, but not limited to, partnerships, employee cooperatives, associations, nonprofit corporations, corporations and limited liability companies, applying for a marijuana license must be formed in Washington. All members, governors, or agents of business entities must also meet the six month residency requirement. Managers or agents who manage a licensee's place of business must also meet the six month residency requirement.

~~((11))~~ (12)(a) As part of the application process, each applicant must submit an operating plan outlining required elements for the location as provided in this chapter pertaining to the license type being sought. The operating plan must be submitted using an operating plan format supplied by the WSLCB. This operating plan must also include a floor plan or site plan drawn to scale which illustrates the entire operation being proposed.

(b) After obtaining a license, the license holder must notify the WSLCB in advance of any change in their operating plan. Prior approval is required before the change may be implemented.

~~((12))~~ (13) The WSLCB may place licensing change applications made by a licensee on hold if the change application is reasonably related to an ongoing investigation.

(a) The WSLCB may withdraw licensing change applications pending the results of an adjudicative proceeding regarding a violation of chapter 314-55 WAC. Depending on the outcome of the adjudicative proceeding, the licensee may reapply for the withdrawn licensing change application(s).

(b) Examples of licensing change applications that may be affected under this subsection include:

- (i) Application for additional funding;
- (ii) Application for added medical marijuana endorsement;
- (iii) Assumption of a license;
- (iv) Change in governing people, percentage owned, or stock/unit ownership;
- (v) Change of location;
- (vi) Expanding plant canopy to maximum allotted;
- (vii) Request to alter marijuana site or operating plan;
- (viii) Request to add a processor license; and
- (ix) Splitting a producer and processor license.

~~((13))~~ (14) (a) To aid the WSLCB in monitoring the industry as it develops, the WSLCB requests that all applicants and licensees seeking renewal provide the following information:

(b) **Employees compensation and benefits data.**

(i) Will the applicant/licensee provide a living wage (at least one hundred fifty percent of the state minimum wage) to eighty-five percent or more of its hourly employees?

(ii) Will the applicant/licensee provide health insurance to at least eighty-five percent of its hourly employees?

(iii) Will the applicant/licensee provide a defined benefit pension plan to at least eighty-five percent of its hourly employees?

(iv) Will the applicant/licensee provide five or more paid sick days annually to at least eighty-five percent of its hourly employees?

(v) Is there a signed labor peace agreement or collective bargaining agreement with a labor organization in place?

~~((14))~~ (15) Applicants applying for a marijuana license must be current in any tax obligations to the Washington state department of revenue and other state agencies, as an individual or as part of any entity in which they have an ownership interest. Applicants must sign an attestation that, under penalty of denial or loss of licensure, that representation is correct.

~~((15))~~ (16) The issuance or approval of a license shall not be construed as a license for, or an approval of, any violations of local rules or ordinances including, but not limited to: Building and fire codes, zoning ordinances, and business licensing requirements.

~~((16))~~ (17) Upon failure to respond to the WSLCB licensing and regulation division's requests for information and/or documentation within the timeline provided, the application may be administratively closed or denial of the application will be sought.