

How To Get A Card



Getting your Medical Use of Marijuana card is the first step to being able to purchase medical cannabis.

Dispensaries can't sell to you if you don't have a card. In fact, they can't even let you inside without one.

There are really just two steps to the process: Certification and Registration.

1 Certification means you have met with a properly-licensed doctor who can certify you for the Massachusetts Medical Use of Marijuana Program.

2 Registration happens once you are certified; it's how you get your Program ID Card.

Massachusetts residents who are 18 years of age or older are eligible to seek certification as a patient.

Residents under 18 are generally not qualified to be certified. In rare cases, a resident under the age of 18 could meet an elevated standard for qualification. For a patient younger than 18 years of age to be certified for use of medical cannabis, two certifying physicians must diagnose the patient with either a debilitating life-limiting illness, or a condition in which the benefits outweigh the risks of cannabis. At least one of those physicians must also be a pediatrician or board-certified pediatric subspecialist.

You will need to see a doctor with a current and valid registration as a certifying physician for the Massachusetts Medical Use of Marijuana Program.

This may be your current doctor, so you should check to find out if he or she participates in the program. Certifying physicians can determine that a patient would benefit from the medical use of marijuana.

The doctor will need a valid email address that you check regularly so you can be emailed your Personal Identification Number (PIN). This PIN is required when you register.

Expect to pay a fee, between \$50-\$250, to consult with a certifying physician. This fee is not covered by health insurance, and the state of Massachusetts requires a bona-fide physician-patient relationship to allow certification. That means you should expect to spend some time during your visit reviewing your current condition, medical history, and the risks and benefits of using cannabis as a treatment.

First Things First:

AGE:

Are you 18 or older?

CONDITION:

Have you been diagnosed with a debilitating medical condition?

DOCTOR:

Has your diagnosis been provided by a Massachusetts-licensed certifying physician?

If you meet these criteria, you may apply for your Medical Use of Marijuana card.

Recognized debilitating medical conditions are:

- AIDS
- ALS
- Cancer
- Crohn's disease
- Glaucoma
- Hepatitis C
- HIV
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Parkinson's disease

Other conditions may also be considered "debilitating." The certifying physician can determine in writing that a patient suffering "weakness, cachexia, wasting syndrome, intractable pain, or nausea, or impairing strength or ability, and progressing to such an extent that one or more of a patient's major life activities is substantially limited" has a debilitating condition and may treat the symptoms with medical marijuana.

What Exactly is a Certification?

Certifications are electronic documents created by the doctor during your consultation. The certifying physician uses the MMJ Online System to confirm to the state that, in his or her professional opinion, the potential benefits of medical cannabis for a qualified patient outweigh any health risks.

Certifications specify the patient's particular debilitating medical condition, and are valid for a limited period of time. The shortest certification is 15 days, and the longest is one year.

Now You Can Register

After a doctor has certified your use of medical cannabis as a treatment, you will need to register with the state of Massachusetts Medical Use of Marijuana Program. The fastest, most convenient way is to register online with the Medical Use of Marijuana (MMJ) Online System.

There are actually two registrations you need to complete, but don't worry! It seems more confusing than it is.

A paper registration process is also available if you cannot register online. You can request a form by calling (617) 660-5370.

First, you will need to create an account for the [Virtual Gateway system](#) you will use to access the MMJ Online System.

Make sure to select "Medical Use of Marijuana" from the Service Name menu, and use a PIN you'll be able to easily recall. This PIN is different than the one provided to you by your qualifying physician, but no less important.

When you click "Submit," the system will send an email with a link. Clicking that link will finish the Virtual Gateway registration process. Please be aware the email is only valid for 7 days from the time it was sent, and can only be clicked once.

Because registrations must be renewed every year, make sure you store the Virtual Gateway login information carefully.



Step 2: Personal Information

Please highlight the service to which you would like access and **complete all** of the sections below. When you are finished, click the **'Submit'** button.

Service Name

First Name

Middle Initial (Optional)

Last Name

4 Digit PIN Please choose any four digit number that you will be able to remember. You may be asked to give this number for identification reasons in the future.

Birth Date (Month/Day)

Email Address

Confirm Email Address

Security Question

Answers that are numbers should be typed as numbers not words (for example. enter 8 rather than 'eight' or 3 rather than 'three')

What number comes before 3?

Virtual Gateway account creation form

The next step is how you'll get your Program ID Card.

You'll need to collect a few things to complete this process.

You will need:

- A scanner, mobile phone, or other device that can upload documents
- The PIN provided by your health care provider, and emailed to you by the Program
- Valid form of identification (see below)
- A photograph of yourself (see below)
- Payment or proof of verified financial hardship

Valid form of identification

There are several acceptable forms of identification you can use to register.

- Massachusetts driver's license
- Massachusetts ID card
- United States passport plus an additional document proving you live in Massachusetts
- United States military ID plus an additional document proving you live in Massachusetts

Acceptable documents to prove primary residence are:

- Utility bill from the last two months
- Current Massachusetts motor vehicle registration with current address
- Tuition bill from the last 6 months
- Car insurance policy or bill from the last two months
- Home mortgage, lease, or loan contracts 6 months old or newer with your name, address, and signature
- Certified US Marriage Certificate 6 months old or newer
- Property or excise tax bill for the current year with your name and address
- First-class mail from any federal or state agency from the last two months with your name and address
- Current Massachusetts-issued Professional License

If you use your driver's license or Massachusetts ID card, the name and address on your application must match what's on the license or ID card.

Using a passport or US military ID will require a separate document to prove you live in Massachusetts. The name and address on the application must be the same as on the document you use to prove primary residence in Massachusetts.

Photograph of Yourself

The photo for your Program ID card can be one you take yourself or have taken for you. Passport photos meet all the requirements, and there are many locations around the state of Massachusetts where you can obtain one.

A photo you take yourself must be:

- In color
- A square photo in portrait/upright format
- Taken in front of a plain white or off-white background
- Taken within the last 6 months to reflect what you look like now
- Showing only your head and the top of your shoulders (see example below)
- Taken looking directly at the camera held at eye level
- Taken with both eyes open, and without eyewear
- Taken without any item that covers your face or head, except for religious purposes



Payment

There is a \$50 registration fee. Payment is accepted via credit or debit card, or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) directly from your bank account. To use EFT, you'll need to know your bank account and routing numbers.