

CITY OF AMESBURY, MA CANNABIS EQUITY POLICY 2024

Purpose and Scope

In August 2022, an Act Relative to Equity in the Cannabis Industry was signed into law. The law requires host municipalities to establish initial policies to promote equity in the cannabis industry through various means, all aimed at increasing participation by social equity applicants in local cannabis ecosystems. Based on cannabis social equity best practices, guidance from the Cannabis Control Commission (“CCC”), and the City of Amesbury’s current cannabis business permitting processes, the City of Amesbury hereby adopts this Policy to support people from communities disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and enforcement.

Applicability

This Policy applies to Qualifying Social Equity Applicants, defined as those that have been certified as eligible to participate in the CCC Social Equity Program or are Certified Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants by the CCC.

Policy

The City of Amesbury shall:

1. Designate the Chief of Staff and the City’s Department of Community & Economic Development, or their designees, as municipal contacts who shall work closely with social equity applicants in the permitting process from initial inquiry through the special permit and building permit process.
2. Wherever possible, reduce financial barriers and expedite the permitting for social equity and economic empowerment applicants.
3. Throughout the City’s special permit process, the City Departments shall endeavor to streamline permitting for these applicants.
4. Consider a waiver or reduction of fees associated with the municipal Host Community Agreement (“HCA”) approval process and/or special permit approval process, as allowable by ordinance or statute.
5. Include the most up to date local cannabis ordinances on the City website.