



**Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force
Disproportionately Impacted Communities Workgroup
June 16, 2021
Virtual Meeting**

Workgroup Members Present:

Michelle Cadigan, University of Washington

Darlene Conley, Industry Representative

Alexes Harris, University of Washington

Lacrecia Hill, Cannabis Equity Advocate

Alison Holcomb, ACLU

Cherie MacLeod, Co-Lead and Task Force Member

David Mendoza, Task Force Member

Christopher Poulos, Co-Lead and Task Force Member

Sarah Ross-Viles, Public Health Seattle & King County

Yasmin Trudeau, Task Force Member

Workgroup Members Absent:

Rick Dimmer, City of Seattle

Will Hausa, Commission on African American Affairs

Guests and Other Participants:

Throughout the meeting, approximately 27 members of the public joined and participated. The workgroup thanks all of those who attended and shared their time, expertise, and lived experience to help shape this important work.

Staff Support:

Christy Curwick Hoff

Joe Radermacher

Anzhane Slaughter

Samantha Pskowski

Call to Order

Cherie MacLeod, Co-Lead, called the public meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Staff shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, and reviewed the agenda. Cherie MacLeod, Co-Lead facilitated introductions of members.

1. Report from May 25 Task Force Meeting

Cherie MacLeod, Co-Lead asked Chris Poulos, Co-Lead to provide a report from the previous Task Force meeting regarding the Social Equity Applicant Small Group. He provided a brief synopsis of the group's progress so far. Cherie MacLeod, Co-lead provided a report from the previous Task Force meeting regarding the

Disproportionately Impacted Area Small Group. She provided a brief synopsis of the group's progress so far.

2. Small Group Breakouts

Social Equity Applicant Small Group

Chris Poulos, Co-Lead provided some feedback he received from the TF and reviewed the small group's current progress. He then turned it over to Anzhane Slaughter, Staff Member to go over the priorities for today's small group session. She provided the elements listed in statute for a SE plan (on file).

The first element discussed by the group is a statement that the social equity applicant qualifies as a social equity applicant and intends to own (or make up in the case of a group) at least 51% of the proposed Cannabis retail business. General consensus from the group was yes, a statement from the applicant should be required, even if minimal to reduce barrier to entry. It was also widely accepted that the applicants should be required to prove at least 51% BIPOC ownership. Some concerns expressed by the group included having methods to ensure applicants don't game the system with this requirement, ensuring the license stays with owners who meet SE criteria (at least for a period of time), and what would be done with the license if the SE applicant is not successful.

The second element discussed by the group is a description of how issuing a cannabis retail license to the SE applicant will meet social equity goals. General consensus from the group was yes in some form but concerns over how burdensome that could be to an applicant were common. It was suggested that if an applicant wants to write more detail regarding their SE plan, however, that's great and it will make for a more compelling application. Other concerns included how much mentorship it would take for these applicants to develop these SE plans, the desire not to create additional elements that will require follow-up enforcement measures, and not wanting to create fear in applicants that the license will be taken away if they can't meet the SE plan goals they set for themselves.

The third element discussed by the group is the SE applicant's personal or family history with the criminal justice system, including any offenses involving cannabis. General consensus from the group was yes, this should be included. It was also agreed that this description does not need to be significant, 2-3 sentences would suffice. The state can already confirm criminal history through CHRI checks, the applicant shouldn't have to provide that via official records. Some concerns expressed by the group included whether or not this would become public record through the application process, hurting those who have worked to get records expunged, and ensuring that criminality is not the only entry point to the SE program.

The fourth element discussed by the group is the composition of the workforce the social equity applicant intends to hire. Although the group generally agreed that most SE applicants would be looking to hire a diverse workforce and there wasn't any

harm in this element, the group did not come to a consensus on how useful this element would be in the application process. One concern voiced by the group was legal considerations regarding possible intent to hire only BIPOC.

Disproportionately Impacted Area Small Group

Cherie MacLeod, Co-lead reviewed the small group's current progress and the priorities for today's small group session. She then turned it over to Michelle Cadigan, Workgroup Member who provided an overview of how Massachusetts has operated as well as some map work she has prepared of Pierce and Spokane counties using % Federal Poverty Line, median income, layered with non-white demographics as examples of potential DIA maps.

The group discussed data sets that may be used in the development of a formula to identify DIAs. Some of these data points include poverty level, per capita income, conviction rates, and employment rates. The group also discussed the potential of using some form of points system or a percentile as a cut-off point to help rank/filter applicants. The group discussed how to incorporate conviction rates and looked at Massachusetts using the number of convictions and convictions per 100,000 people and determined it was a good way to move forward concerning that data point.

The group also discussed poverty level vs. income level as a data point. Michelle Cadigan, Workgroup Member provided data in map form across Pierce and Spokane counties that generally showed that high poverty level areas tended to include significant white populations compared to low income per capita areas which tended to reflect BIPOC communities which are the desired target of this program. With this data in mind, the group discussed the different options and agreed to move forward with using per capita income and looking at multiple job data availability.

The group then discussed the indicator of participation in income-based programs. Michele Cadigan, Workgroup Member noted that data from DSHS was just received, which includes SNAP and TANF, but that it may be challenging to receive data from prior years. Research suggests that these programs have supported and uplifted white middle class but excluded the black community. The other indicators do a much better job picking up the populations that the TF is looking to target. The group decided that this is counter to the goal and should not be used.

Finally, the group discussed the expansion of application criteria from HB 1443, from just cannabis to all drugs and whether this is something that should be considered. The group identified some of the problems that might be encountered should they try to identify those convictions specifically for cannabis. How it is coded can be a bit messy and the process might miss a lot of cannabis convictions that are not listed as such. The group decided to allow more time to think on this subject and discuss it further at the next meeting.

3. Report Out from Small Groups

Social Equity Applicant Small Group

Chris Poulos, Co-Lead shared the potential elements for a social equity plan that were listed in statute. He provided a brief review of the group's discussions and findings on the first four elements. Lastly, he covered some additional elements that the group has discussed adding to the SE plan, including priority for previous dispensary or cooperative owners who were forced out of the industry as well as priority for women and women of color.

Disproportionately Impacted Area Small Group

Cherie MacLeod, Co-Lead shared which data points were discussed as well as the maps that had been developed. She provided a brief review of the group's discussions and findings on developing a formula to assist in identifying DIAs, which data sets are best suited to targeting the desired communities, and whether or not participation in federal/state income based programs should be included as a filtering method. Finally, they started the conversation about the indicator for having lived in a DIA and whether they should stick with a cannabis offense or any drug offense and will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

4. Next Steps

Anzhane Slaughter, Staff Member provided next steps to the group. The next meeting will be the Licensing Work Group on June 30, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and the focus will be on determining if additional retail licenses will be needed for the program and, if so, how many. Following that will be the DIA Work Group meeting July 12, 4-7 p.m. The next Tech Assistance & Mentorship Work Group meeting will be July 20, 1-4 p.m. And the next full Task Force meeting will be July 27, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Adjournment

Chris Poulos, Co-Lead and Cherie MacLeod, Co-Lead thanked the group for everyone's time and participation. Rep. Morgan has asked for some preliminary reports by the end of July and we are well on our way to that. The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Kelie Kahler, Washington State Board of Health Communication Manager, at 360-236-4102 or by email at kelie.kahler@sboh.wa.gov TTY users can dial 711.

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