



**Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force  
Homegrow/Non-Violent Offense Workgroup  
July 11, 2022  
Virtual Meeting**

**Workgroup Members Present:**

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead	John Kingsbury
Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead	Danielle Rosellison
Shawn Robbins	Micael Tsegai
Dawn Bennett	

**Workgroup Members Absent:**

Elixabeth Azmitia	Cherie MacLeod
Shawn DeNae	

**Guests and Other Participants:**

Throughout the meeting, approximately 4 members of the public joined and participated. Micah Sherman, Task Force Member, is also noted in attendance. The workgroup thanks all of those who attended and shared their time, expertise, and lived experience to help shape this important work.

**Staff Support:**

Anzhane Slaughter	Crystal Ogle
Lauren King	

**Call to Order**

Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead, called the public meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. and Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead read from a prepared statement (on file). Anzhane Slaughter, Staff shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, reviewed the agenda and facilitated introductions of members.

**1. Review – LCB Non-Violent Offense Policy Update**

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead asks Anzhane to share her screen with the LCB policy document showing the current update in a then vs now format (on file).

Rule changes to the personal criminal history requirements (WAC 314-55-040) for cannabis licensing were implemented on October 3, 2021. Changes expanded

conviction allowances, removed the self-reporting requirement, and clarified the criminal history review process. One of the most significant changes was moving from a point system to a threshold system. Applicants are subject to a review if they have had one or more Class A or B convictions in the last 10 years, 2 or more Class C convictions in the last 7 years, or 3 or more Gross Misdemeanors or Misdemeanors in the last 3 years. If an applicant's criminal history exceeds these thresholds, the application will go to a manager for further review. During the review, an applicant can provide a statement and other information. The manager will review materials and history to determine if there is a current public safety concern. [WAC 314-55-040](#), outlines the threshold evaluation criteria.

## **2. Discussion – LCB Non-Violent Offense Policy**

Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead opens the floor to discussion amongst workgroup members, and begins with few questions herself. Kaitin Bamba, representing the Liquor Cannabis Board (LCB) explains when a manager reviews an application and applicant, this is an opportunity to get the entire picture. If the licensing manager recommends a denial, it will go to the licensing director to review the application as well. It's not up to just one person to determine. The applicant is also given a letter with an explanation as to why they were denied. Applicants can file an appeal if they do not agree with the denial. A review looks for direct threats to safety and violation of the law. She goes on to explain in reviewing 17,000 criminal convictions, they only denied 43 applicants. Workgroup members ask if the LCB has a rubric, there is not one that Kaitlin is aware of. The workgroup briefly discusses if they may recommend a rubric. It's also clarified that felonies are not separated between violent and non-violent. Concern for the threshold being subjective is heard. The workgroup inquires about training for the individual reviewing the applications. Kaitlin confirms there is training. The workgroup asks for a copy of the training manual and Kaitlin will look into getting a copy. Members are curious to know how threshold numbers were determined, 10 years for a Class A or B felony, for example. Kaitlin is not sure exactly but reminds workgroup members that it is a public rule making process. Discussion about what counts as various types of felonies occurs. It's pointed out that growing one plant without a medical card is a Class C felony and when you compare that to some crimes considered "white collar" such as fraud, the white collar crimes could be considered more serious or concerning than growing one plant without a medical card. Many workgroup members suggest anything drug related should be simply removed and possibly a rubric be created. Justin Nordhorn, representing the LCB, reminds workgroup members that rubrics can create boxes and applicants can be confined to those boxes. There are also many, many crimes to consider, the list is extensive to have to consider in making a complete rubric. Members discuss recent arrests or convictions for home grow. Data on arrests is discussed and shown that yes, recently there are arrests and convictions. Due to time, Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead suggests that workgroup members email staff their thoughts on forming a recommendation based off this discussion. Staff can compile replies and they can be discussed at the next meeting. Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead then asks Anzhane to proceed with Next Steps.

**Next Steps**

Upcoming meetings include:

Regulation of Cannabis Production Workgroup: July 26<sup>th</sup> 3-4:30pm

Task Force Meeting: August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2-5pm

**Adjournment**

Michelle Merriweather, Co-Lead thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 1:27 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](mailto:kelie.kahler@sboh.wa.gov) TTY users can dial 711.

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington • 98504-7990  
360-236-4110 • [wsboh@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:wsboh@sboh.wa.gov) • [sboh.wa.gov](http://sboh.wa.gov)