



Massachusetts Municipal Association

## MMA BEST PRACTICES SERIES

*Recommendations for Effective Local Government Administration and Management from MMA Policy Committees*

January 2019 • Volume 4 • Number 6

### **MMA Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration Best Practice Recommendation: Create a Policy Surrounding the Review and Negotiation of Applicants and Host Community Agreements**

*(Supplement to 2018 MMA Recreational Marijuana Best Practice)*

**BEST PRACTICE:** For municipalities that have opted not to impose a ban on marijuana commerce, including those that are engaged in planning and decision-making while a temporary moratorium is in place, adopt a best practice or community policy for the review of applications and negotiation of host community agreements.

State law and Cannabis Control Commission regulations created several license types: cultivators, product manufacturers, retailers, transporters, testing laboratories, research facilities, microbusinesses, and craft cooperatives. Each license type created a wide variety of distinct areas of business operations that create jobs in distinct fields.

Recommendations:

- Municipalities wishing to encourage the development of small businesses should consider what type of licenses they wish to allow within their community. Municipalities should negotiate specific terms in their host community agreements with an understanding of the differences in business practices and business models between cannabis applicants.
- Community leaders should attend an applicant's community outreach meeting, where they may hear specific concerns raised by community members.
- Municipalities should consider prioritizing applicants that have been disproportionately affected by the enforcement of previous cannabis laws, small or local businesses, and companies led by people of color, women, veterans, and farmers. One option would be to sign host community agreements alternating between these prioritized applicants and all other applicants.
- Establish an objective selection process and clear timeline for prospective licensees.

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**Resources:**

- Cannabis Control Commission, Guidance on Equitable Cannabis Policies for Municipalities:  
<http://mass-cannabis-control.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Municipal-Equity-Guidance-August-22.pdf>
- Cannabis Control Commission, Guidance for Municipalities:  
[http://mass-cannabis-control.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FINAL\\_Guidance-for-Municipalities\\_040218.pdf](http://mass-cannabis-control.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FINAL_Guidance-for-Municipalities_040218.pdf)
- Town of Amherst, Guidance for Recreational Marijuana Retail Establishments:  
[www.amherstma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/45082/2-Guidance-for-Marijuana-Establishments-in-Amherst](http://www.amherstma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/45082/2-Guidance-for-Marijuana-Establishments-in-Amherst)
- City of Somerville, Ordinance Regarding Adult Use Marijuana Establishments:  
[www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/SCO%20License%20final%20clean.pdf](http://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/SCO%20License%20final%20clean.pdf)