

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Medical Marijuana Practitioners in Pennsylvania

- **What is a Practitioner?**
 - Under the law, Pennsylvania physicians who have an active medical license in this Commonwealth in accordance with the Medical Practice Act of 1985 (63 P.S. § § 422.1—422.51a) or the Osteopathic Medical Practice Act (63 P.S. § § 271.1—271.18), are eligible to apply to be included on the registry of practitioners who can certify patients for medical marijuana. (35 P.S. §§ 10231.401-405).
- **Who is eligible to participate in this program as a practitioner?**
 - MDs or DOs that have an active license with the Pennsylvania Department of State, apply for registration with the Department of Health, and complete the required Department of Health-approved training. (35 P.S. §§ 10231.401-405 and 28 Pa. Code §§ 1181.21-33).
- **How can a physician participate in the medical marijuana program?**
 - To participate in the program, an MD or DO must:
 - First, create a profile in the [Department of Health Physician Registry](#).
 - A validation of the physician's Pennsylvania medical license with the Department of State will occur.
 - Complete the required 4-hour training provided by one of the Department of Health-approved training entities (current list shown below), when prompted via email.
 - Finally, receive an email from the program with next steps and when approval has been granted to begin issuing certifications, which may take up to 2 months.
- **Where can I sign up for the 4-hour training?**
 - Once validation of the physician's license occurs with the Department of State, physicians will be prompted to complete the required training. CMEs will count toward the physician's licensure requirement. The following entities are currently approved to offer training:
 - [TheAnswerPage Inc](#)
 - [The Lambert Center for the Study of Medicinal Cannabis and Hemp at Thomas Jefferson University](#)
 - [St. Joseph's University](#)
 - [Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine \(PCOM\)](#)
 - [Pennsylvania State Nurses Association](#)
 - [Medical Marijuana CME](#)
 - [Medical Marijuana 411](#)
- **What is my practitioner profile?**
 - The practitioner profile you create when registering with the program is where all your relevant information is stored, which includes your:
 - practitioner ID#
 - medical practice address
 - phone number
 - email address
 - Each time you log onto the practitioner registry, you will be able to access this information.
 - Please keep it current by using the Profile Settings tab.
 - You can also view all the certifications you have submitted using the Patient Certifications tab.
- **Once I receive approval from the Department of Health approved, how do I get started?**
 - After a practitioner is approved by the Department of Health (Department) to begin issuing certifications, they receive an email with some tips for getting started and a list of practitioner resources.
- **What is a patient certification?**

- MDs and DOs approved by the Department for inclusion on the practitioner registry can issue a patient certification where the practitioner had determined that the patient meets the requirements:
 - The patient has at least one of the eligible serious medical conditions
 - The patient is under the practitioner's continuing care; and
 - that patient is likely to receive therapeutic or palliative benefit from the use of medical marijuana.
 - Patients must have a practitioner's certification to get their medical marijuana ID card or to be dispensed medicine via an approved caregiver to whom they are linked
- **Who can be a patient?**
 - Any Pennsylvania resident with one of the eligible serious medical conditions can be a patient in the program and otherwise meets the requirements of 28 Pa. Code 1181.27.
 - Do all patients receive an ID card? No
 - For the following three categories of patients, a caregiver registers on their patient's behalf and is the only one with a medical marijuana identification card, in the form of a caregiver's card:
 - Minor Patient
 - Homebound Patient
 - Benefits from Assistance (with daily activities) patient
- **What is a caregiver in Pennsylvania's Medical Marijuana Program?**
 - A caregiver is an individual designated by a patient and authorized by the Department of Health to pick up medical marijuana for a patient.
 - The caregiver registers, completes a criminal background check, and purchases an ID card. They must be linked to a patient to purchase medicine for them.
 - Please reference the Caregiver section of our website for more information on medical marijuana caregivers
- **Can an Adult Patient also be linked to a caregiver?**
 - It is important to note that an individual registered as an Adult Patient can also be linked to a caregiver, but in that case both individuals have a card, and either or both can visit the dispensary.
- **What are the 23 eligible conditions?**
 - A "serious medical condition" under the law is any one of the following:
 1. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
 2. Anxiety disorders
 3. Autism
 4. Cancer, including remission therapy
 5. Crohn's disease
 6. Damage to the nervous tissue of the central nervous system (brain-spinal cord) with objective neurological indication of intractable spasticity, and other associated neuropathies
 7. Dyskinetic and spastic movement disorders
 8. Epilepsy
 9. Glaucoma
 10. HIV / AIDS
 11. Huntington's disease
 12. Inflammatory bowel disease
 13. Intractable seizures
 14. Multiple sclerosis
 15. Neurodegenerative diseases
 16. Neuropathies
 17. Opioid use disorder for which conventional therapeutic interventions are contraindicated or ineffective, or for which adjunctive therapy is indicated in combination with primary therapeutic interventions
 18. Parkinson's disease
 19. Post-traumatic stress disorder
 20. Severe chronic or intractable pain of neuropathic origin or severe chronic or intractable pain
 21. Sickle cell anemia
 22. Terminal illness
 23. Tourette syndrome
- **Should I require a patient register online before getting certified?**

- Yes, a patient registers and should have their patient ID number handy when having their consultation with the practitioner.
- **What is a “patient consultation”?**
 - 28 Pa. Code § 1181.21 defines “patient consultation” as “[a] complete examination of a patient and the patient’s health care records at the time a patient certification is issued by a practitioner.”
 - Among other requirements, the patient consultation is required as part of a practitioner’s determination that the patient has a serious medical condition. (28 Pa. Code § 1181.27(a)).
- **Can I issue certifications to patients via telemedicine?**
 - Act 44 of 2021 grants practitioners the ability to issue certifications via synchronous interaction (i.e., phone or video conference).
- **How do I fill out and submit a new certification?**
 - A video of completing a certification can be found here: [Patient Certification example](#). The basic steps are listed below:
 1. Log in to your practitioner portal and navigate to the “Patient Certifications” tab.
 2. Search for the patient in the registry using their last name, DOB, and patient ID# if known. Email address may also be used.
 3. Once the patient record is found, check the box under Select and click Create New Certification.
 4. Scroll down and fill out sections 1-8, and then click Submit. If you do not complete all the sections or click Save instead of Submit, the certification will be in a pending status until you complete and submit it.
 5. The system will generate a certification number. This number should be recorded in the patient’s chart.
- **What happens after I certify a patient?**
 - If it is a patient’s first certification, they will receive an email with instructions for paying for their medical marijuana ID card.
 - 60 days before a patient’s certification and card are set to expire, they are sent an email letting them know it’s time to be certified again by the doctor.
 - They can be certified again any time after receiving that email.
 - Their new medical marijuana ID card will automatically go to print as long as their annual card fee is not overdue.
- **How do I cancel a certification?**
 - Send an email to RA-DHMMDOCTORS@pa.gov requesting that the certification be cancelled. Include the patient’s name, DOB, and patient ID # if known.
- **Can I certify myself or someone in my family? No.**
 - A practitioner may not issue a patient certification for the practitioner’s own use or for the use of a family or household member. (35 P.S. § 10231.403(e).
 - Also, a practitioner may not be a designated caregiver for a patient that has been issued a patient certification by that practitioner (28 Pa. Code § 1181.31).
- **My account is locked, and I cannot log in.**
 - Your account was locked from 5 attempts to log in with an incorrect username/password combination or because your password has expired.
 - Please wait 30 minutes and then request a password reset email, which will unlock the account.
 - To do this, lick the “Forgot your username or password” link on the login page.
 - Follow the prompts for creating a new password.
 - An email will be sent to you – check your junk/spam folder if you don’t see it in your inbox.
- **How do I disable my account if I no longer want to participate as an approved practitioner?**
 - You must send your request in an email to RA-DHMMDOCTORS@pa.gov. The Department of Health will disable the account and send you an email confirmation when it is completed.
- **What do I do if I cannot find the patient I’m searching for?**
 - Verify that you have the patient’s information correct. If it is correct and you still cannot locate the patient’s record, contact us at RA-DHMMDOCTORS@pa.gov.
- **How do I reopen a pending approval certification?**

1. Login to your Practitioner Portal and navigate to the "Patient Certifications" tab.
2. Search for the patient in the registry using their last name, DOB, and patient ID# if known. Email address may also be used.
3. Once the patient record is found, locate the Pending Practitioner Approval Certification, and check the box next to that certification under View Certification.
4. Scroll down and fill out Sections 1-8, and then click Submit.
5. You will then be given a certification number; this number should be recorded in the patient's chart.

- **Who do I contact for more information?**

- Practitioners or staff from their office may contact us at RA-DHMMDOCTORS@pa.gov.
- Patients who are having account issues or other questions should contact our help desk at 888-733-5595.
- Our medical marijuana patient helpdesk is open every day, except state holidays from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM EST

Further Resources for Practitioners

[Approved Practitioners \(PDF\)](#)

[Chapter 1181. PHYSICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS](#)

[Chapter 1141. GENERAL PROVISIONS](#)

[Patient Certification example \(animation\)](#)

[Application for Approval to Provide a 4-hour Training Course in the Medical Marijuana Program \(PDF\)](#)

[Survey for Pennsylvania Licensed Physician](#)