

Is Texas Getting Ready to Expand Its Compassionate Use Program?

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Yesterday, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Regulatory Services Division (RSD) announced it would begin accepting new applications for medical cannabis dispensaries in Texas, under the Lone Star State's Compassionate Use Program. The application window will run until 5:00 p.m. CT on April 28, 2023, and the [application form](#) can be submitted through the [RSD Contact US portal](#).

Texas, through Senate Bill 339, passed the Texas Compassionate Use legislation in 2015. That program allows certain qualified physicians to prescribe low THC products (max of 1% THC by weight) to patients having certain medical conditions. Currently, the state has only licensed three entities across the state as "dispensing organizations" to cultivate, process, and [dispense low-THC cannabis](#). While yesterday's announcement signals more dispensaries will receive licenses, DPS noted it would only issue "the number of licenses necessary to ensure reasonable statewide access to, and the availability, of low-THC cannabis for patients registered in the compassionate-use registry." A decision on the number of licenses may not come until this summer so that the Texas Legislature has an opportunity to weigh in, something that could be in the works given the number of bills Texas lawmakers have recently filed related to cannabis reform.

While Texas has a long way to go before it has a full-fledged medical cannabis program, things certainly appear to be moving in that direction. Surely, Texas won't continue to be the only state in its region without a program and without that additional tax revenue. One thing's for sure: Once that levee breaks, the Texas cannabis market will be a monster.

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