

# **CITY OF SALEM, MA CANNABIS EQUITY POLICY**

**2023**

## **Purpose and Scope**

In August, 2022, an Act Relative to Equity in the Cannabis Industry was signed into law. The law requires host municipalities to establish initial policies to promote equity in the cannabis industry through various means, all aimed at increasing participation by social equity applicants in local cannabis ecosystems. Based on cannabis social equity best practices, guidance from the Cannabis Control Commission (“CCC”), and the City of Salem’s current cannabis business permitting processes, the City of Salem hereby adopts this Policy to support people from communities disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and enforcement.

## **Applicability**

This Policy applies to Qualifying Social Equity Applicants, defined as those that have been certified as eligible to participate in the CCC Social Equity Program or are Certified Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants by the CCC.

## **Policy**

The City of Salem shall:

1. Provide permitting technical assistance for social equity and economic empowerment applicants navigating the City’s cannabis permitting process.
2. Designate the City Solicitor and the City Planner, or their designees, as municipal contacts who shall work closely with social equity applicants in the permitting process from initial inquiry through the special permit and building permit process.
3. Wherever possible, reduce financial barriers and expedite the permitting for social equity and economic empowerment applicants.
4. Throughout the City’s special permit process, the City departments shall endeavor to streamline permitting for these applicants
5. Consider a waiver or reduction of fees associated with the municipal Host Community Agreement (“HCA”) approval process and/or special permit approval process, as allowable by ordinance or statute.
6. Include the most up to date local cannabis ordinances on the City website.