



# Cannabis Advisory Board

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Applicable provisions in the Rhode Island Cannabis Act

**RHODE  
ISLAND**

# Who is the Cannabis Advisory Board?

8 Non-voting members

11 Voting members

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-6, “Cannabis advisory board”

# Cannabis Advisory Board Non-Voting Members

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## Secretary of Commerce

Member: Elizabeth M. Tanner, Esq.

## Director of the Department of Labor and Training

Member: Matthew D. Weldon

## Director of the Department of Health

Member: Interim Director Utpala Bandy, MD,  
MPH

## State Superintendent of Public Safety

Member: Colonel Darnell S. Weaver

## Commissioner of Education

Member: Angelica Infante-Green

## Director of the Department of Business Regulation

Member: Elizabeth Dwyer, Esq.

## Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Member: Richard Charest, R.Ph.

## Representative from the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy

Member: Stephanie Forschner-Dancause,  
Ph.D.

# Cannabis Advisory Board Voting Members

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“The members of the advisory board appointed by the governor, the speaker of the house and the president of the senate pursuant to the provisions of the chapter shall to the extent possible be individuals with expertise in the following areas: public and behavioral health, substance use disorder treatment, effective rehabilitative treatment for adults and juveniles, homelessness and housing, economic development, criminal justice, law enforcement and drug policy.”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-6(e)

# Cannabis Advisory Board Voting Members

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“Further, the advisory board shall include representation from communities most impacted by cannabis prohibition, such as individuals with prior drug convictions, the formerly incarcerated, and representatives of organizations servicing communities impacted by past federal and state drug policies.”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-6(e)

## Appointed by Governor Dan McKee

3 members - 1 chairperson, 2 members

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Chair of Advisory Board/ Social Equity Officer:  
Ronald Crosson II

Cannabis Laboratory Testing Industry Representative  
Member: Stuart Procter, Ph.D.

Member: Angela Bannerman Ankoma, MPH, MSW

# Appointed by Speaker of the House

## K. Joseph Shekarchi

4 members



Cannabis Cultivation Industry Representative Member:

Armand Lusi

Member: Angelyne E. Cooper-Bailey, Esq.

Member: Michael A. DiLauro, Esq.

Member: Melina Lodge

## Appointed by President of the Senate

### Dominick Ruggiero

4 members

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Cannabis Retail Industry Representative Member:

Emily R. Almeida

Member: Mary J. Archibald, Ph.D.

Member: Dioscaris R. Garcia, Ph.D.

Member: Nicole M. Verdi, Esq.

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# Terms of Appointed Members

Voluntary service

Three (3) year term, or until new successor member is appointed

Vacancies filled in the manner of original appointment

# Relationship Between the Cannabis Advisory Board and the Cannabis Control Commission



# Relationship between Board and Commission

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## **Cannabis Advisory Board Enabling Statute, R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-6(a):**

“There is hereby established a cannabis advisory board, which is directed to work in collaboration with the commission and the administrator of the cannabis office to advise and issue recommendations on the use, commerce, regulation and effects of adult-use and medical cannabis within the state. The advisory board shall additionally provide recommendations to the commission regarding the administration and distribution of the social equity assistance fund established pursuant to § 21-28.11-31.”

# Relationship between Board and Commission

## **Cannabis Advisory Board Role and Responsibilities, R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-6(g):**

“The advisory board shall:

- (1) Consider all matters submitted to the board by the cannabis control commission;
- (2) Advise and make recommendations to the commission on the preparation and promulgation of guidelines, rules and regulations and any changes to guidelines, rules and regulations that the advisory board deems fundamental or necessary for the commission’s review and consideration;
- (3) Provide analysis and recommendations to the commission relating to the administration and distribution of the social equity assistance fund established pursuant to § 21-28.11-31;
- (4) Conduct all meetings in compliance with chapter 46 of title 42 (the “open meetings act”); and
- (5) Report the findings, analysis, recommendations and conclusions adopted and approved by the board to the commission within thirty (30) days of adoption and approval.”

# Relationship between Board and Commission

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## Organizational Structure, R.I.G.L § 21-28.11-2(b)

“The commission shall work in conjunction with the cannabis advisory board which shall provide advice, recommendations and proposals to the commission relative to the equitable administration and regulation of cannabis, including the distribution of funds from the social equity assistance fund pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.”

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# Relationship between Board and Commission

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## **Powers and Duties of the Commission, R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-5(a)(29)**

“[T]he commission shall have all the powers necessary and reasonable to carry out and effectuate its purposes, including, but not limited to, the power to . . . [r]equest and/or approve or disapprove recommendations by the cannabis advisory board made pursuant to § 21-28.11-6 to include, but not be limited to, distribution of funds from the social equity assistance fund established pursuant to § 21-28.11-31”

# Work of the Cannabis Advisory Board



# Administration of the Social Equity Assistance Fund

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“The advisory board shall . . . provide recommendations to the commission regarding the administration and distribution of the social equity assistance fund established pursuant to § 21-28.11-31.”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-6(a)

“In consultation with the cannabis advisory board, the commission shall promulgate rules and regulations establishing the criteria, eligibility, qualifications and process for administering the disbursement of funds from the social equity assistance fund.”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-31(d)

# Qualifications for Social Equity Applicants

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“The commission shall . . . adopt rules and regulations . . . for the administration, clarification and enforcement of provisions regulating and licensing cannabis establishments and the sale, possession and use of cannabis . . . [which] shall include, but not be limited to . . . [i]n consultation with the cannabis advisory board, identification of factors to be evaluated in the approval and certification of social equity applicants and establishment of procedures and policies to promote and encourage full participation in the regulated cannabis industry by people from communities that have previously been disproportionately harmed by cannabis prohibition and enforcement[.]”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-5(b)(5), “Powers and duties of the commission”

# Disproportionately Impacted Communities and Members

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“The commission shall, with recommendations from the cannabis advisory board and the chief equity officer, issue guidelines to determine how to assess which communities have been disproportionately impacted and how to assess if someone is a member of a community disproportionately impacted.”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-3(23)(vi), “Definitions”

# Evaluation of Cannabis Cultivation

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“During the moratorium pursuant to this section, the commission, with the assistance of the advisory board, as required, shall submit a report to the general assembly which evaluates the cultivation of adult use and medical cannabis.”

R.I.G.L. § 21-28.11-7(c), “Licensed cannabis cultivators”

# Cannabis Advisory Board Subcommittees



# Subcommittees

Public Health	Develop recommendations on products, labeling, marketing, advertising, related public health issues, potency, and packaging
Public Safety and Community Mitigation	Develop recommendations on law enforcement, property, business, consumer, and issues that affect the locality of cannabis establishments
Cannabis Industry	Develop recommendations on cultivation, processing, manufacturing, transportation, distribution, tracking systems and market stability
Market Participation	Develop recommendations on minority and veteran-owned businesses, local agriculture and growing cooperatives
Social Equity	Develop recommendations on remedying harm to individuals impacted by past enforcement of cannabis-related laws

# Questions?

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