



**DRAFT**  
**CANNABIS BUSINESS LICENSE  
SCREENING APPLICATION**

Department of Public Works  
8300 Santa Monica Boulevard  
West Hollywood, CA 90069  
(323) 848-6375

On November 20, 2017, the West Hollywood City Council adopted a Cannabis Ordinance allowing a variety of different cannabis businesses to be licensed in the City. Specifically, the City Council approved five types of cannabis business licenses (as shown below), and approved the issuance of eight (8) of each of the licenses.

- Eight (8) Adult-Use Retail Business Licenses
- Eight (8) Consumption Area (smoking, vaping, and ingestion) with on-site adult-use retail sales (sales of products to be consumed on-site) Business Licenses
- Eight (8) Consumption Area (edible ingestion only) with on-site adult-use retail sales (sales of products to be consumed on-site) Business Licenses
- Eight (8) Medical-Use Dispensary Business Licenses
- Eight (8) Delivery Service Business Licenses (when the physical location of the business is located in West Hollywood)

## **APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW**

As a part of the Cannabis Ordinance the City Council adopted a merit based approach to selecting which applicants would receive the licenses listed above. The selection process starts with all interested applicants submitting a screening application to the City. The screening application will include information about the applicant's proposed business plan, design concept, security plan, and experience. Applicants do not need to have secured a physical location to submit a screening application. Each screening application will be reviewed and scored by an independent five member Application Evaluation Committee appointed by the City Manager. The Application Evaluation Committee members will score the screening applications based on specific criteria and weighting (points) that were formulated based on the general selection criteria that the City Council adopted as a part of the Cannabis Ordinance (Municipal Code Section 5.70.035(3)). The Application Evaluation Committee member's scores will be totaled and averaged for each applicant. The weighting criteria are included with this screening application as Exhibit A.

After the Application Evaluation Committee has reviewed and scored all the screening applications the top eight scoring applicants in each cannabis business license category will be allowed to move forward with obtaining a business license from the City. At this point in the process applicants will be required to secure a physical location for their business. Once an applicant has secured a physical location they will need to obtain a Zone Clearance from the City's Current and Historic Preservation Planning Division, affirming that the proposed use is permitted within the zoning for the property.

After obtaining the Zone Clearance the applicant will have a hearing before the Business License Commission in which the commission will approve or deny issuance for the business license and set any necessary conditions on the business. During the same time the applicant is also encouraged to apply for any necessary Planning or Building and Safety permits needed to make improvements to the property (for example, building permits for tenant improvements). In addition, proof of a state-issued cannabis license shall be submitted to the City prior to operation of the cannabis business.

# SCREENING APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

## Information Required in Screening Application:

The following information shall be included in each screening application:

- **Completed Applicant/Owner Information Form**  
(the form will be added when the final screening application is posted the week of April 16th)
- **Cover Letter**  
(overview of the applicant's proposed business concept, including license(s) being sought (if more than one license describe how they will work together))
- **Proof of Payment for Screening Application Fee**  
(City of West Hollywood Cashier's Receipt)
- **Detail of the Applicant's Business Plan and Concept**
  - Section 1: Business Plan
  - Section 2: Design Concept
  - Section 3: Security Plan
  - Section 4: Applicant Experience

## Required Format and Submittal Guidelines for Screening Application:

Length - Screening Applications shall be no longer than 75 pages. The page total does not include the applicant/owner information form or proof of payment, but does include the cover letter. Of the 75 pages, only 50 pages can consist primarily of text; the other 25 shall consist of only images (limited description of the images is allowed). Double sided pages count as two pages. Please limit the use of duplicative information throughout the submittal.

Font and Page Size - 11-point font shall be used in the narrative portions of the screening application. All pages shall be 8.5 x 11.

Order of Information - The "required information" listed in the prior section shall be provided (and labeled) in the screening application in the same order as shown above. Applicants are also encouraged to follow the ordering in the weighting criteria (Exhibit A) to the greatest extent possible; to make review of the screening applications as efficient as possible.

Submittal Period – Screening applications may be submitted to the City anytime between 12:00am (pacific time) on May 2, 2018 and 11:59pm (pacific time) on May 31, 2018. Screening applications received before or after this period will not be accepted. No additional weight will be given to screening applications that are submitted earlier than others (for example, a screening application received on May 20<sup>th</sup> will receive no additional advantage over an application received on May 30<sup>th</sup>).

Document Submittal – All screening applications shall be submitted through the City of West Hollywood's online vendor portal submittal platform PlanetBids. Applicants will need to register with PlanetBids in order to submit their applications. Applicants should be aware that depending on the size of their screening application it may take some time for the document to upload; please plan accordingly). Registration for PlanetBids is free and the portal can be found at:

<https://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=22761>.

Multiple Applications – Applicants applying for more than one license type may combine their application submittal package. Applicants need to submit only one applicant/owner information form and cover letter for the entire combined package, however, applicants need to submit separate proof of payment and a separate Business Plan and Concept for each license type. The page limitation stated previously applies to each license type, not the combined application package (if there is more than one license type). It is necessary for applicants to submit a separate business plan and concept for each license type, because they will be scored separately.

Screening Application Fees – Applicants are required to pay the following fees prior to submittal of their screening application.

<b>License Type</b>	<b>Screening Application Fee</b>
Adult-Use Retail	\$9,880
Cannabis Consumption Area (both types)	\$9,880
Medical-Use Dispensaries	\$9,880
Cannabis Delivery Services with a Physical Location in West Hollywood	\$5,025

If applicants are submitting screening applications for more than one type of cannabis business license they must pay the applicable screening application fee for each license type (for example, if an applicant is submitting screening applications for an adult-use retail license, medical dispensary license, and consumption lounge license they would need to pay \$29,640 (\$9,880 multiplied by three)).

Proof of payment must be included with the screening application submittal. The only proof of payment that will be accepted is a City of West Hollywood cashier receipt. The City will not accept online payments. Payments must be made in person at the Cashier’s Window on the first floor of City Hall during normal operating hours (Monday-Thursday 8am-6pm, and Friday 8am-5pm). If an applicant is not to come to City Hall they may mail a check to the City’s Revenue Management Division for payment processing. The mailed check shall include a cover letter with an email address where a copy of the payment receipt can be emailed. A copy of the emailed receipt shall be included with the screening application submittal. If applicants choose to mail their payment, they should do so well in advance of the screening application submittal deadline; the City will not take any responsibility for checks not received on time. For any questions regarding mailing a check to City Hall please contact Laura D’Ambrosia ([ldambrosia@weho.org](mailto:ldambrosia@weho.org) or 323-848-6319).

Checks mailed to the City should sent to the following address:

City of West Hollywood  
Attn: Revenue Management Division  
c/o Laura D’Ambrosia  
8300 Santa Monica Blvd  
West Hollywood, CA 90069

## **OTHER KEY INFORMATION**

Contact With City Officials, City Staff, and Members of the Application Evaluation Committee – On February 5, 2018, the City Council adopted a practice that prohibits applicants (or their representatives) from contacting any member of the Application Evaluation Committee or the Business License Commission in any way. Any violation will result in the dismissal of the applicant's screening application. Additionally, applicants should be aware that all Application Evaluation Committee members are required to immediately report any attempted contact by an applicant (email, phone, in person, by mail, etc..) to the City Manager. The City Council also adopted a practice that prohibits City Councilmembers or Business License Commissioners from contracting Application Evaluation Committee members.

Applicants are allowed to contact City Councilmembers, but they should be aware that the City Council will not be reviewing or scoring the screening applications and will not be the deciding which applicants will receive business licenses. In addition, City Councilmembers are not allowed to contact Application Evaluation Committee members. Staff strongly encourages applicants to carefully review the weighting criteria, and focus their efforts on submitting a detailed and comprehensive screening application that aligns with the criteria.

Multiple Licenses – Applicants are allowed to submit screening applications for multiple types of cannabis licenses. However, an applicant may not submit a screening application for more than one of the same type of cannabis license. For example, an applicant could submit screening applications for an adult-use retail license, medical dispensary license, and consumption license, but could not submit for two adult-use retail licenses. (Municipal Code Section 5.70.030(8))

Multiple Licenses in One Location – Applicants are permitted to have more than one type of cannabis business license at the same location. For example, an adult-use retail license, medical dispensary license, and consumption license could all be located at the same location. (Municipal Code Section 5.70.030(6)). However, applicants should be aware that certain restrictions apply to consumption lounges that are located on the same premises as adult-use retail or medical dispensaries (Municipal Code Section 5.70.041(13)(d))

Licenses Not Transferrable – The assignment of or attempt to assign any cannabis license is unlawful and any such assignment or attempt to assign a license shall render the license null and void. (Municipal Code Section 5.70.060)

Public Records Requests and Proprietary Data – All screening applications are subject to public records act requests. Any sections or pages the applicant considers proprietary should be clearly marked within the screening application.

Existing Medical Dispensaries – The four existing medical dispensaries do not need to submit a screening application for a medical dispensary license. However, if any of the four existing medical dispensaries wish to apply for an adult-use retail license, consumption license, and/or delivery license they are required to submit a screening application for those licenses and follow the process outlined previously.

Questions – Questions regarding the screening application and weighting criteria should be emailed to City staff at [cannabis@weho.org](mailto:cannabis@weho.org).