



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
One Ashburton Place, Room 2102, Boston, MA 02108

Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund Social Equity Grant Program

FY2026 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Program Guidelines and Application Template

COMMBUYS POSTING ID:

NOFA Publication Date: **Friday, October 31, 2025**

Virtual Information Session: **Thursday, November 6, 2025**

Application Deadline: **Thursday, December 11, 2025 @ 11:59PM ET**

Questions: CannabisEquityFund@mass.gov

Table of Contents

A. INTRODUCTION	2
B. WHAT’S NEW IN FY2026	2
C. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS	3
D. ELIGIBILITY	4
E. APPLICANT TYPES, GRANT AMOUNTS AND USE OF FUNDS	4
F. LIMITATION OF FUNDS.....	7
G. EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	8
H. AWARD DECISIONS.....	9
I. APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDANCE	9
J. CONTRACTING, DISBURSEMENTS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	10
K. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	10
APPENDIX A: Acceptable Documentation	12
APPENDIX B: Definitions	14

A. INTRODUCTION

The Healey-Driscoll Administration is pleased to announce the launch of the FY26 round of the Social Equity Grant Program (“Grant Program”), which distributes financial assistance to cannabis entrepreneurs through the Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund (“Trust Fund”).

The Trust Fund was established by Section 14A of Chapter 94G of the General Laws to provide financial assistance to eligible applicants for the purpose of encouraging the full participation in the Commonwealth’s regulated marijuana industry of entrepreneurs from communities that have been disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and enforcement. The Trust Fund and corresponding programs are administered by the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED).

The authorizing statute also established the Cannabis Social Equity Advisory Board (“Advisory Board”), to work with and advise EOED on the promulgation of regulations and administration of the Trust Fund. The Advisory Board is comprised of individuals who are experienced as advocates on behalf of communities that have been disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and enforcement and have backgrounds in business development.

This Notice of Funding Availability is issued as public notice to all prospective applicants interested in requesting financial assistance from the Trust Fund. This document outlines the eligibility rules, program requirements, evaluation criteria, and other relevant information required to apply.

B. WHAT’S NEW IN FY2026

The FY26 Social Equity Grant Program builds on the success of the FY25 Social Equity Grant Program to support cannabis entrepreneurs at various stages of the licensing process, including Pre-Licensed Cannabis Business, Pending Provisional Licensees and cannabis businesses with a Provisional or Final License issued by the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC).

Eligible applicants may apply for funds for past and future expenses in a wide range of categories to support entry into the regulated cannabis industry, the acquisition of licensure, commencement or continuation of business operations, or to improve or expand the business

The FY26 Social Equity Grant Program introduces the following updates:

- Increased prioritization for existing and operating licensed cannabis businesses, including businesses with Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant status and applicants that did not receive a grant in the FY25 Social Equity Grant Program round.
- New support for businesses that have submitted a license application to the Cannabis Control Commission and are awaiting approval for Provisional Licensure.
- Eliminating timing restrictions on past expenses.
- Expediting reimbursement requests to ensure the timely allocation of grant funds.
- Ensuring the equitable distribution of available grant funds by limiting each business, as well as each majority owner of a business, to one application submission.
- Clarifying eligible use of funds, including payroll and debt expenditures, to ensure the integrity of Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund resources.

C. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Grant Award Size	Grants are expected to range from \$25,000 to \$300,000 .
Anticipated Number of Grant Awards	Grants will be awarded to eligible applicants that meet the program's criteria, until the available funds are exhausted.
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Licensed Cannabis Businesses; • Pending Provisional Licensees; • Provisional Licensees; and • Final Licensees
Allowable Use of Funds	Depending on the funding tier, grant funds may be used to support entry into the regulated cannabis industry, the acquisition of licensure, commencement or continuation of business operations, or to improve or expand the business.
Evaluation Criteria	Applicant business eligibility, social equity status and ownership, clear project description and realistic timeline, demonstrated need and readiness to deploy financial assistance.
Anticipated Application Timeline	NOFA Published: Friday, October 31, 2025 Application Opened: Friday, October 31, 2025 Application Deadline: Thursday, December 11 @ 11:59PM
Informational Webinar	<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, November 6 at 10:30AM (Virtual)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Zoom registration will be posted on website https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AdK5J1bOR-q49r6okASgDg</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Webinar recording and FAQ documents will be made available on the program website after the event.</i></p>
Notification of Award Decisions	All applicants will be notified in writing about the decision made on their application no later than January 2026.

Performance Period	Tier 1 and 2 grants will be awarded to support projects that can be completed by June 30, 2026. Tier 3 and 4 grants will be awarded to support projects that can be completed by December 31, 2026.
Acquisition Method and Contract Payment Terms	All grant funds will be disbursed as outlined in the contract terms and conditions. Tiers 1 and 2 grantees will receive the full grant amount at contract execution. Tiers 3 and 4 will receive funds based on cost reimbursement requests.
Reporting Requirements	Grantees will be required to submit periodic reports with documentation of expenditures demonstrating use of all funds and a final report to close out the contract. Grantees must successfully close out any current contract to be eligible for a future grant contract.

D. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for funds from the FY26 Social Equity Grant Program, the applicant must be a duly organized business entity in good standing and located in Massachusetts that:

1. Is designated by the CCC as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant;
2. Has a majority ownership comprised of individuals that are Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants; or
3. Has a majority ownership comprised of individuals designated by the CCC as Social Equity Program Participants.

Additionally, applicants must comply with and meet the following requirements:

- No applicant business entity may apply for more than one grant award. Additionally, no individual or entity that holds, directly or indirectly, a majority ownership interest in more than one business entity may apply for more than one grant award.
- The applicant business entity's organizational documents filed with the Massachusetts Secretary of Commonwealth's Office must have a stated purpose of engaging in activities related to the manufacture, sale, distribution, delivery, etc. of cannabis.
- Any business entity that received grant funds through the FY25 Social Equity Grant Program may apply for funds through the FY26 Social Equity Grant Program. However, any award made through the FY26 Social Equity Grant Program will be conditioned upon the successful closeout of all prior grant awards.
- All individuals designated as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant or Social Equity Program Participant with an ownership interest in the business entity that allows the applicant to meet the criteria to apply for financial assistance from the Social Equity Grant Program shall not be a nominal, pass-through or sham interest holder for purposes of receiving grant funds.
- The applicant's CCC license (if applicable) is valid and not currently suspended or revoked.
- The entity applying for financial assistance, or any person or entity with an ownership interest in the entity applying for financial assistance, does not currently have a determination of adverse suitability from the CCC.
- All individuals or entities must continue to meet the criteria allowing them to receive initial designation as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant or Social Equity Program Participant at the time of application for financial assistance during their participation in the Social Equity Grant Program.

E. APPLICANT TYPES, GRANT AMOUNTS AND USE OF FUNDS

Grants will be distributed based on the applicant's license status. Applicants are required to request only the amount of funds necessary to cover eligible and reasonable expenses that directly support entry into the regulated cannabis industry, the acquisition of licensure, commencement or continuation of business operations,

or to improve or expand the business, as applicable. Applicants will be required to demonstrate in their application that the requested funds will be used in furtherance of the applicable descriptions of support according to the respective Tier, as outlined below.

Requests that are determined to be excessive, unsupported or not directly tied to eligible expenses may be reduced or denied in full. All proposed uses of funds must be clearly documented in the application and align with the applicant's proposed project. EOED may request additional documentation to verify the necessity and appropriateness of any proposed expense and reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any application or portion of an application that appears to seek grant funds beyond what is necessary to accomplish the applicant's proposed project.

Tier 1 – Pre-Licensed Cannabis Businesses

Eligible Applicants: A business that is not currently licensed by the CCC, does not have an application pending with the CCC, and intends to apply for a Marijuana Establishment or Marijuana Medical Treatment Center license.

Description of Support: Applicants may request funds for past and future expenses that directly support entry into the regulated cannabis industry.

Maximum Grant Size: \$25,000

Allowable Use of Funds:

- Professional Fees – Payments to third-party vendors providing contracted professional services such as consulting, accounting, or legal fees for document and application preparation, feasibility and market studies, etc.;
- Facility Fees – Lease or mortgage payments, utilities (e.g. waste management, water, electric, gas), etc.;
- Regulatory and Compliance Fees – Permitting and site assessment; bank fees to establish or maintain financial accounts for the applicant business; licensing or regulatory fees that support license application preparation.

Tier 2 – Pending Provisional Licensees

Eligible Applicants: A business that has submitted a Marijuana Establishment or Medical Marijuana Treatment Center license application to the CCC, received notice from the CCC the application is deemed complete, and is awaiting provisional license approval.

A business that has submitted a Marijuana Establishment or Medical Marijuana Treatment Center license application to the CCC but has not yet received notice their application is deemed complete may apply for grant funds. However, such applicants must submit notice from the CCC that the license application was received as part of their application for grant funds. All grant awards are conditioned upon receiving notice from the CCC that the license application is deemed complete.

Description of Support: Applicants may request funds for past and future expenses that directly support the acquisition of a provisional license.

Maximum Grant Size: \$50,000

Allowable Use of Funds:

- Professional Fees – Payments to third-party vendors providing contracted professional services such as legal, accounting, architectural, consulting, point of sale providers, etc.

- Facility Fees – Lease or mortgage payments, utilities (e.g. waste management, water, electric, gas), etc.;
- Regulatory and Compliance Fees – Permitting and site assessment; bank fees to establish or maintain financial accounts for applicant business; licensing or regulatory fees that support license application.

Tier 3 – Support for License Acquisition and Commencement of Business Operations

Eligible Applicants: Applicants with a Provisional License or Final License without a notice to commence operations from the CCC.

Description of Support: Applicants may request funds for past and future expenses that directly support the acquisition of final licensure or commencement of business operations.

Maximum Grant Size: \$200,000

Allowable Use of Funds:

- Professional Fees – Payments to third-party vendors providing contracted professional services such as legal, accounting, architectural, consulting, point of sale providers, etc.;
- Facility Fees – Lease/mortgage payments and utilities (e.g. waste management, water, electric, gas);
- Regulatory Fees – Application, permitting, licensing (certain exclusions apply – see limitations of funds) and other regulatory fees needed for licensure;
- Debt Service – Loan repayments or business debt service, both principal and interest, for allowable use of funds;
- Equipment Capital Expenses – Purchase and installation of equipment from third-party vendors that is necessary for cannabis establishment operations (e.g., growing/manufacturing machinery, packaging machinery);
- Facility Capital Expenses – Construction, renovation or build-out of facility; security and building systems, including installation and maintenance (e.g. HVAC, electrical, plumbing, etc.). Eligible facility capital expenses must be performed or purchased by third-party contractors/vendors – costs related to self-construction are ineligible;
- Business Related Insurance Fees (excluding any insurance related to payroll costs)
- Delinquent Massachusetts Department of Revenue Taxes;
- Vehicle Expenses (up to \$25,000) – Expenses to lease or purchase vehicles used to distribute, transport or deliver marijuana or marijuana products or to outfit such vehicles with security and compliance equipment required by the CCC (e.g. cameras, GPS Tracking devices, lock boxes, or other safety features necessary for compliant operations). Vehicle expenses are limited to businesses with a delivery or transporter license from the CCC.

Tier 4 – Existing Business Support

Eligible Applicants: Applicants with a Final License that have received notice to commence operations from the CCC.

Description of Support: Applicants may request funds for past and future expenses that directly support the continuation of business operations or to improve or expand the business.

Maximum Grant Size: \$300,000

Allowable Use of Funds:

- Personnel Expenses (up to \$50,000) – Business payroll expenses, including fringe benefits and payroll tax contributions, for W-2 employees;

- Professional Fees – Payments to third-party vendors providing contracted professional services such as legal, accounting, architectural, consulting, marketing/advertising, point of sale providers, website hosting, etc.;
- Facility Fees – Lease/mortgage payments and utilities (e.g. waste management, water, electric, gas);
- Regulatory Fees - Application, permitting, licensing (certain exclusions apply – see limitations of funds) and other regulatory fees needed for licensure;
- Debt Service – Loan repayments or business debt service, both principal and interest, for allowable use of funds;
- Equipment Capital Expenses – Purchase and installation of equipment from third-party vendors that is necessary for cannabis establishment operations (e.g., growing/manufacturing machinery, packaging machinery);
- Facility Capital Expenses – Construction, renovation or build-out of facility; security and building systems, including installation and maintenance (e.g. HVAC, electrical, plumbing, etc.); Eligible facility capital expenses must be performed or purchased by third-party contractors/vendors – costs related to self-construction are ineligible
- Business Related Insurance Fees (excluding any insurance related to payroll costs)
- Delinquent Massachusetts Department of Revenue Taxes
- Vehicle Expenses (up to \$25,000) – Expenses to lease or purchase vehicles used to distribute, transport or deliver marijuana or marijuana products or to outfit such vehicles with security and compliance equipment required by the CCC (e.g. cameras, GPS Tracking devices, lock boxes, or other safety features necessary for compliant operations). Vehicle expenses are limited to businesses with a delivery or transporter license from the CCC.

F. LIMITATION OF FUNDS

Grantees are prohibited from using grant funds for the following purposes:

- Related-Party Transactions – Grantees are prohibited from using grant funds to pay for allowable uses from any owner, shareholder, member, officer, director or employee of the applicant or their immediate family member, or any business entity in which an owner of the applicant business holds a majority interest, directly or indirectly, unless such transaction is bona fide transaction.
- Purchase of marijuana products, paraphernalia, or any related inventory.
- Food, entertainment, travel.
- Any fees eligible to be waived by the Cannabis Control Commission, including licensing fees for social equity businesses.
- Fines or penalties.
- Lobbying; allocations to reserve funds; or for the satisfaction of any obligation arising under or pursuant to a settlement agreement, judgement, consent decree, or judicially confirmed debt restructuring plan in a judicial, administrative, or regulatory proceeding.
- Grantees must prevent the duplication of benefits, which means grant funds may not be used to pay expenses if another source of financial aid has paid or will pay that same expense.
- Grantees are prohibited from using grant funds to pay for expenses previously paid through the Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund.

Grantees may have additional restrictions imposed on use of grant funds, including, but not limited to:

Debt Service: Grant funds may be used to pay debt service on existing loans entered into by the applicant entity for allowable use of funds, provided the following conditions are met:

- Eligible Loans – Only bona fide loans are eligible for debt service payments under the Grant Program. Loans structured or disguised as a gift, equity contribution or reimbursement of expenses incurred by the borrower are ineligible.

- **Written Agreement** – Loans must be evidenced by a contemporaneous, signed and dated written agreement between the borrower (applicant entity) and lender, which clearly state the principal amount, repayment terms, and interest rate.
- **Loan Origination Date** – The loan must have been executed prior to the submission of the grant application. Loans originated after the submission of an application, including those pursued in anticipation of grant funding, are not eligible.
- **Repayment Obligation** – Loan agreements must establish a legally enforceable obligation to repay the loan. Repayments must be scheduled and documented in a manner consistent with standard lending practices. EOED may require proof of regular payment history.
- **Allowable Costs** – Grant funds may only be used for principal and interest payments on an eligible loan. The use of grant funds for late fees, penalties, default interest, or other ancillary charges is prohibited. Reimbursement of debt service payments made prior to the award is not an allowable use of funds.

Personnel Expenses are limited to the following:

- Personnel expenses are limited to \$50,000 of the total amount of grant fund request.
- **Amount and Time Limitations** – Payroll expenditures are limited to the first \$30/hour of wages and no more than \$5,000 per employee.
- **Eligible Employees Only** – Payroll expenses shall be limited to W-2 employees of the applicant entity who are directly engaged in the day-to-day cannabis business operations supported by the grant award. Payroll expenses for independent contractors are ineligible.
- **Use of Funds for Prospective Payroll** – Grant funds may only be used for payroll expenses incurred after the effective date of the grant agreement.
- **Ineligible Personnel Expenses** – Grant funds may not be used for employee bonuses, commission, severance or separation payments.

Restricted Assets: Grantees are prohibited from selling, conveying, transferring or pledging any Restricted Asset or interest in a Restricted Asset for a period not to exceed three years from the date of contracting. [Restricted Assets (400 CMR 8.02) shall mean: Any real estate interest, equipment, capital asset or other asset with a market value in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) acquired in whole or in part using the grant funds.]

G. EVALUATION CRITERIA

All applications submitted by an eligible business entity will be evaluated on their own merits and in alignment with this NOFA, 400 CMR 8.00 and G.L. c. 94G § 14A. EOED will thoroughly evaluate and score each complete application to establish the extent to which the project meets the criteria. The strongest projects will be recommended for funding.

Applications will first be required to demonstrate eligibility based on the following criteria:

- Duly established business entity, located in Massachusetts, and in good standing.
- A majority of ownership in the applicant business entity have social equity status with the CCC.
- Evidence that FY25 Social Equity Grant Program recipients have successfully closed out their grant or will close out the grant prior to contracting, if applicable.

Applications will then be evaluated based on the proposed project and need for financial assistance. The application will be scored on a 100-point scale, in the areas outlined below:

- Clear business description and leadership capacity (up to 20 points)

- Detailed project description, with realistic timeline and outcomes (up to 20 points)
- Compelling statement of need and clearly outlined budget proposal (up to 20 points)
- Applicants that did not receive an FY25 Social Equity Grant Program grant award (15 points)
- Applicants designated by the CCC as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant or that have a majority ownership comprised of individuals that are Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants (15 points)
- Cannabis businesses located in Area of Disproportionate Impact (5 points)
- Social equity ownership of 75% or more (5 points)

H. AWARD DECISIONS

Submitted applications will be evaluated after the close of the application period and all applicants will be notified in writing once final decisions are made. Applicants must meet all eligibility criteria to be considered for an award. EOED will evaluate and score all applications and reserves the right to make partial awards based on an evaluation of applicant need, proposed use of funding, or as appropriate to ensure the equitable distribution of grant funds. Awarded applicants will receive an award letter outlining the amount of the approved grant and any conditions on the award. The award of a grant will be contingent on the successful execution of a contract with EOED, which may include terms and conditions not set forth in this NOFA.

EOED will allocate a total amount of grant funds to each Tier after the application period closes based on total available funding, number of eligible applicants, and prioritized as follows:

1. Businesses with a Final License that have commenced operations (Tier 4)
2. Businesses with a Provisional License or Final License that have not commenced operations (Tier 3)
3. Pending Provisional Licensees (Tier 2)
4. Pre-Licensed Cannabis Businesses (Tier 1)

I. APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

1. Program materials, including a copy of the NOFA and the application template are available online at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/cannabis-social-equity-trust-fund>
2. The formal application must be completed and submitted by the deadline through the online portal **(Submittable) link** on the website. Email or fax submissions of applications or supporting documents will not be accepted.
3. Questions may be submitted by email to CannabisEquityFund@mass.gov and responses may be posted on the CSETF website.
4. EOED may post a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and other information on its website to assist prospective applicants.
5. **Applications are due by 11:59 PM on Thursday, December 11, 2025.**
6. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is received on time by EOED. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as a public record. Late submissions will not be considered.

A complete application packet includes the following components with required attachments:

- Eligibility confirmation
- Information about the business entity applying for financial assistance
- Information about the cannabis business and its licensing status
- Project narrative
- Project funding request

Acceptable application documentation is outlined in Appendix A. EOED reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary to complete the application review or reject any and all submitted proposals and any or all parts of a proposed application.

J. CONTRACTING, DISBURSEMENTS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Contract, Scope of Work, Budget, and Performance Period: All applicants awarded financial assistance are required to enter into a grant contract with EOED prior to the disbursement of any grant funds. All documents ultimately negotiated and incorporated into the grant agreement will be added as attachments or referenced to the form prior to the execution of the grant contract. The anticipated start date for contracts awarded in the current grant round will be upon the full execution of the contract. All grant funds must be expended by the date noted in the contract.

Reimbursement Requests and Payment Process: Once the contract is fully executed, EOED will authorize payments based on the schedule outlined in the contract. Tier 1 and 2 grant funds will receive the full award amount upon contract execution. Tier 3 and 4 grants funds will be disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis, and grantees may submit reimbursement requests on a rolling basis once they have documented at least \$50,000 in eligible expenses, but no more than once per month. Grantees are required to submit reimbursement requests on a form provided by EOED detailing the use of funds along with all supporting documentation. Acceptable documentation evidencing use of grant funds is outlined in Appendix A. EOED reserves the right to withhold or delay reimbursement if documentation is incomplete or insufficient and may require additional reporting upon request. Upon submission, program staff will review requests within 2 weeks and approved requests will be submitted to the State Comptroller's Office for payment. All payments will be issued within 45 days of submission to the Comptroller.

Reporting Requirements: At the conclusion of the project, grantees shall submit a final report on a form provided by EOED. The form will detail the use of funds, along with all supporting documentation or other information required by EOED. Acceptable documentation evidencing use of funds is outlined in Appendix A. Such report is subject to review and acceptance by EOED. Grantees must successfully close out any current grants to be eligible for funding in future rounds.

K. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Each applicant to this program will be required to certify that they are duly authorized to submit the application on behalf of the named business entity and that the responses to the questions provided in the application, and the attached documentation, are true, accurate, and complete. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Economic Development will rely on the information provided in the application to make decisions about whether to award a grant from the respective funding source(s). The Commonwealth reserves the right to deem an application ineligible for consideration, or if awarded a grant, to take action against the applicant, the applicant organization, or any other beneficiary of a grant, if any of the information provided is determined to be false, inaccurate, or misleading.
2. The Massachusetts Executive Office Economic Development complies with all Commonwealth of Massachusetts procurement laws and regulations set forth and overseen by the Commonwealth's Operational Services Division when awarding contracts as well as the state's award requirements as mandated and overseen by the Office of the State Comptroller when dispersing these funds.
3. All data, materials, documentation, responses, or information submitted in response to this solicitation are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66 § 1 and to c. 4 § 7(26).
4. Successful applicants, upon notification of award, will be required to enroll in EFT as a contract requirement by completing and submitting the Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form for review, approval and forwarding to the Office of the Comptroller. If the applicant is already enrolled in the program, it may so indicate in its response.

5. Misappropriation or misuse of grant funds by a grantee may be reported to law enforcement authorities and the Cannabis Control Commission and may subject the grantee to criminal and civil liability. Violations of applicable legal requirements, including but not limited to this Notice of Funding Availability, M.G.L. c. 94G § 14A and 400 CMR 8.00, or any other terms and conditions in the grant contract, may subject the grantee to additional penalties including but not limited to revocation or recapture of the grant award, and disqualification from applying for future financial assistance from the Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund, or disciplinary action by the Cannabis Control Commission.
6. During the term of a contract agreement and for a period up to seven years thereafter, if the Executive Office of Economic Development is audited, the grantee will be required to make all records relating to this grant available.

APPENDIX A: Acceptable Documentation

Acceptable Application Documentation: The following documents may be required as part of the application.

1. **Business Ownership** – Documentation evidencing all current ownership interests in the applicant business may include bylaws, operating agreement, or recent CCC license documentation. Documentation must reflect 100% ownership interest and be fully executed and dated.
2. **Social Equity Status** – Documentation evidencing each individual with a current ownership interest in the applicant business identified as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant or Social Equity Program Participant may include CCC email confirmation of such status or license documentation reflecting status.
3. **Proof of CCC Licensure (if applicable)** – Documentation evidencing licensure status with the Cannabis Control Commission may include a copy of the applicant's Provisional or Final License, or an active license record printed from the Cannabis Control Commission's public portal.
4. **Proof of Occupancy (if applicable)** – Documentation evidencing proof of occupancy for the location of the applicant's cannabis business may include a lease agreement, mortgage statement, deed, or a utility or property tax bill.
5. **Certificates of Good Standing** – All applicants must submit certificates of good standing or compliance from the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth, Department of Revenue (DOR) and Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) dated within 30 days prior to submitting the application. All required certificates should be in the name of the entity applying for grant funds. An attestation may be submitted in lieu of applicable certificates in the following circumstances:
 - a. Applicants with a Provisional or Final License applying for grant funds to satisfy delinquent Massachusetts Department of Revenue taxes should submit an attestation explaining the tax delinquency and amount owed. Upon payment of delinquent state taxes, the award recipient must submit a DOR Certificate of Good Standing to EOED.
 - b. If a Pre-Licensed Business, Pending Provisional Licensee or Provisional Licensee applicant has no employees, they may be unable to register and receive a Certificate of Compliance from DUA and may submit an attestation to that effect in lieu of the Certificate.

Acceptable Documentation Evidencing Use of Grant Funds: Grantees must submit at least two forms of documentation evidencing use of grant funds – (1) invoice or service agreement; and (2) proof of payment. Specific use of funds may require additional documentation, as follows:

- **Debt Service** – EOED may require a fully executed loan agreement, evidence of original disbursement of loan proceeds (such as a closing statement or wire transfer confirmation), proof of regular payment history and other documentation as necessary to determine the loan is a bona fide transaction eligible for grant funds.
- **Payroll Expenses** – Recipients will be required to submit and maintain, upon request of EOED, payroll registers, job description and proof of payment (including cancelled checks or bank statements).
- **Facility Fees (Lease/Mortgage)** – Fully executed lease or mortgage agreements, monthly invoices or statements, and proof of payment.
- **Equipment Capital Expenses** – Invoices, receipts, and proof of payment.
- **Facility Capital Expenses (Construction, Renovation, Security, Building Systems, etc.)** – Executed contract or agreement, itemized invoices, proof of payment, and if applicable, a signed paid invoice

from the vendor. Costs related to the construction, renovation or build-out of a facility requires submission of at least two bids evidencing market rate costs.

- Professional Services (Legal, Financial, Consulting, etc.) – Service agreement and proof of payment.
- Business-Related Insurance Fees – Insurance policy declaration page, invoices, and proof of payment.
- Delinquent Massachusetts DOR Taxes – Statement of Account from DOR evidencing outstanding tax liabilities (contact DOR at (617) 887-6367 or (800) 392-6089 to request a Statement of Account) and proof of payment/settlement. Upon payment of outstanding DOR tax liability, recipient must submit a DOR Certificate of Good Standing to EOED.
- Regulatory Fees (Applications, Permitting, Licensing, etc.) – Regulatory invoice or receipt and proof of payment.
- Vehicle Expenses – Executed lease or purchase agreement registration, invoice, proof of payment, and Certificate of Inspection issued by the Cannabis Control Commission.

APPENDIX B: Definitions

Area of Disproportionate Impact (935 CMR 500.002): means a geographic area identified by the Commission for the purposes identified in M.G.L. c. 94G, § 4(a½)(iv), and 935 CMR 500.040: Leadership Rating Program for Marijuana Establishments and Marijuana-related Businesses and 500.101: Application Requirements, and which has had historically high rates of arrest, conviction, and incarceration related to Marijuana crimes.

Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant (935 CMR 500.002 and 935 CMR 501.002): means an applicant who as an entity or through an individual certified by the Commission in 2018, meets and continues to meet three or more of the following six criteria, at least one of which shall be a majority-equity-ownership criterion:

1. Majority-equity-ownership Criteria:
 - a. A majority (more than 50%) of ownership belongs to people who have lived for five of the preceding ten years in an Area of Disproportionate Impact, as determined by Commission.
 - b. A majority (more than 50%) of ownership has held one or more previous positions where the primary population served were disproportionately impacted, or where primary responsibilities included economic education, resource provision or empowerment to disproportionately impacted individuals or communities.
 - c. A majority (more than 50%) of the ownership is made up of individuals from Black, African American, Hispanic or Latino descent.
2. Additional Criteria:
 - a. At least 51% of current employees or subcontractors reside in Areas of Disproportionate Impact and by the first day of business, the ratio will meet or exceed 75%.
 - b. At least 51% of employees or subcontractors have drug-related CORI and are otherwise legally employable in Cannabis enterprises.
 - c. Other significant articulable demonstration of past experience in, or business practices that promote, economic empowerment in Areas of Disproportionate Impact.

Marijuana Establishment (935 CMR 500.002) - means a Marijuana Cultivator (Indoor or Outdoor), Craft Marijuana Cooperative, Marijuana Product Manufacturer, Marijuana Microbusiness, Independent Testing Laboratory, Marijuana Retailer, Marijuana Transporter, Delivery Licensee, Marijuana Research Facility Licensee (as defined in 935 CMR 501.002: Marijuana Research Facility Licensee), Social Consumption Establishment (as defined in 935 CMR 501.002: Social Consumption Establishment), or any other type of licensed Marijuana-related business, except a Medical Marijuana Treatment Center (MTC).

Medical Marijuana Treatment Center (935 CMR 501.002) - formerly known as a Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD)), means an entity licensed under 935 CMR 501.101 that acquires, cultivates, possesses, Processes (including development of related products such as Edibles, MIPs, Tinctures, aerosols, oils, or ointments), Repackages, transports, sells, distributes, delivers, dispenses, or administers Marijuana, products containing Marijuana, related supplies, or educational materials to Registered Qualifying Patients or their Personal Caregivers for medical use. Unless otherwise specified, MTC refers to the site(s) of dispensing, cultivation, and preparation of Marijuana for medical use

Pre-Licensed Cannabis Business: A duly organized business entity in good standing and located in Massachusetts, designated by the CCC as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant or with a majority ownership comprised of individuals that are Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants or Social Equity Program Participants, without a provisional or final license from the Cannabis Control Commission, does not have a pending application, and intends to apply for licensure as a Marijuana Establishment or Medical Marijuana Treatment Center.

Pending Provisional Licensee: A duly organized business entity in good standing and located in Massachusetts, designated by the Cannabis Control Commission as an Economic Empowerment Priority Applicant or with a majority ownership comprised of individuals that are Economic Empowerment Priority

Applicants or Social Equity Program Participants, that has submitted a license application to the Cannabis Control Commission for licensure as a Marijuana Establishment or Medical Marijuana Treatment Center which has been deemed complete and is awaiting provisional license approval.

Social Equity Program Participant (935 CMR 500.002 & 501.002): An individual who is qualified to participate in the Social Equity Program and is designated as a program participant by the Commission.