

Affordable Marijuana License
AFFORDABLE - CARING - EFFICIENT

Medical Marijuana *Basics*

New Patient Guide for Florida





What is Medical Cannabis?

Cannabis: 101

Terms to Know

- » **Cannabis:** Cannabis is the preferred designation of the plant *Cannabis sativa*, *Cannabis indica*, and of minor significance, *Cannabis ruderalis*. The term cannabis will be used instead of marijuana, or other names indigenous to local cultures, unless there is a need to refer to a specific phrase, e.g., *medical marijuana ballot initiatives*.
- » **Cannabinoids:** Naturally occurring chemical compounds in hemp and marijuana plants; also known as plant cannabinoids or phytocannabinoids
- » **CBD (cannabidiol):** Often, but not always, the second-most abundant cannabinoid in marijuana
- » **CBN (cannibinol):** Cannabinoid known for its ability to promote sleep and relaxation
- » **Medical marijuana** (as defined by [Florida Senate Bill 8A](#)): All parts of any plant of the genus *Cannabis*, whether growing or not; the seeds thereof; the resin extracted from any part of the plant; and every compound of the plant or its seeds or resin, including low-THC cannabis, which are dispensed from a medical marijuana treatment center for medical use by a qualified patient
- » **THC (tetrahydrocannabinol):** Cannabinoid responsible for marijuana's mind-altering/psychoactive effects



What is Cannabis?

Cannabis is a flowering plant that has fibrous stalks used for paper, clothing, rope, and building materials. The leaves, flowers, and roots have been documented in medicinal use for millennia. The seeds used for food and extracts thereof for fuel oil. Cannabis leaves and flowers are consumed in several forms: dried flower buds or various types of concentrated, loose, or pressed resin extracted from the flowers or leaves through a variety of methods.

Once mature, the plant's leaves and flowers are covered with trichomes, tiny glands of resinous oil containing cannabinoids and terpenes, the active ingredients of the cannabis plant.

- » 100+ different types of cannabinoids and over 120 terpenes have been identified in varieties of cannabis.
- » Concentrations or percent of each type of cannabinoid can vary widely in different varieties of cannabis
- » The best-studied cannabinoid is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol). THC has the most distinct psychoactive effect of the cannabinoids.
- » The ratio of THC to other cannabinoids varies from strain to strain.



What is Cannabis?

While THC has been the focus of breeding and research due to its various psychoactive and therapeutic effects, non-intoxicating cannabinoids have physiologic effects that can be therapeutic.

- » Cannabidiol (CBD) relieves convulsions, inflammation, anxiety, and nausea—many of the same therapeutic qualities but without THC's distinct psychoactive effects. It is the main cannabinoid in low-THC cannabis strains, and modern breeders have been developing strains with greater CBD content for medical use.
- » Cannabinol (CBN) when administered alone it has no reported effect in humans but may mildly increase the effects of THC related to psychoactivity, decreasing intraocular pressure, and seizures 208. CBN is the degradation product of THC.
- » Cannabichromene (CBC) promotes the analgesic effects (pain relief) of THC and has sedative (calming) effects.
- » Cannabigerol (CBG) has sedative effects and antimicrobial properties, as well as lowers intraocular pressure.
- » Tetrahydrocannabivarin (THCV) is showing promise for type 2 diabetes and related metabolic disorders.



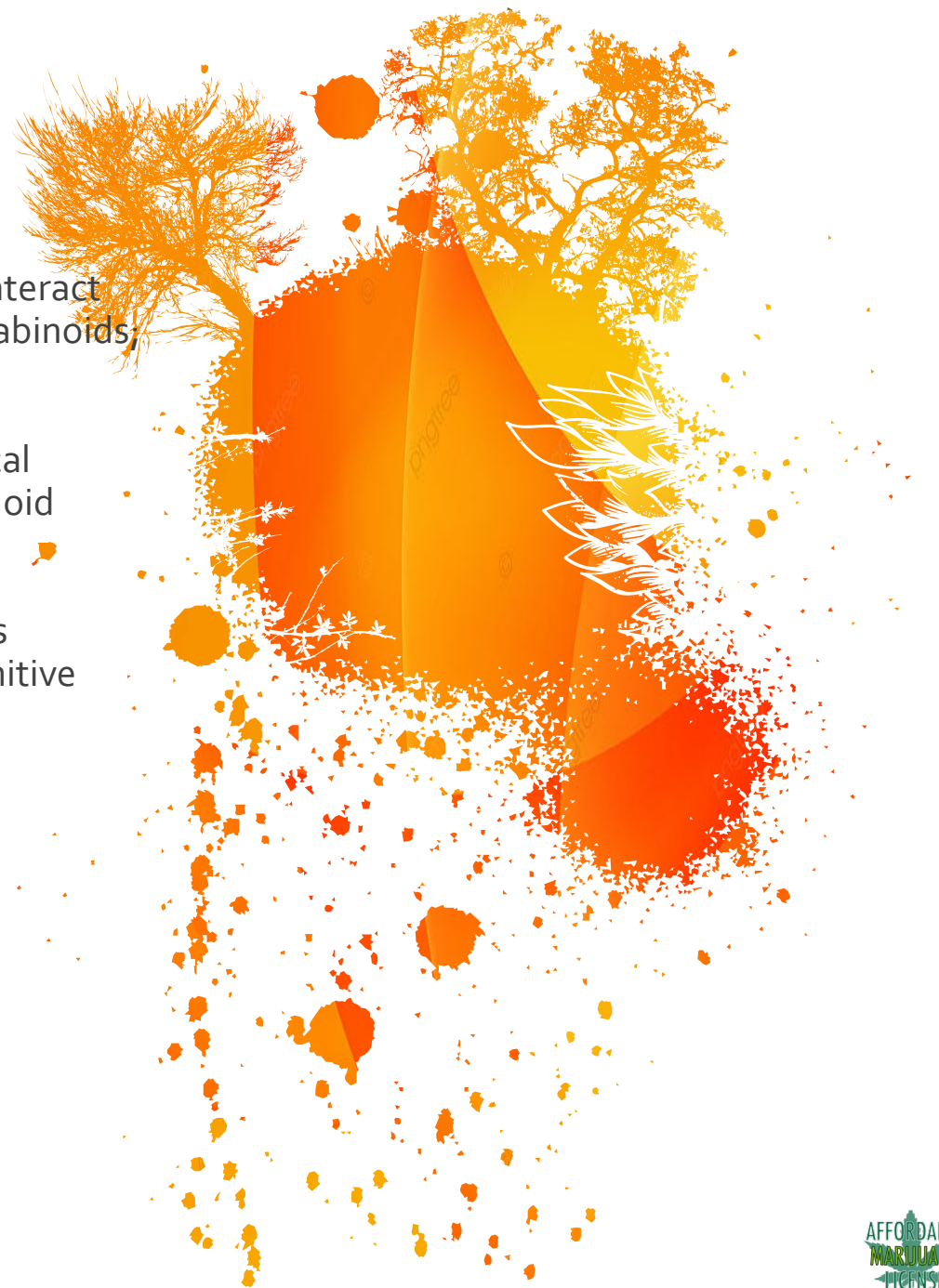


How Does Medical Cannabis Work?

Endocannabinoid System

Terms to Know

- » **Cannabinoid receptors:** Receptors located throughout the body that interact with both endogenous (“natural/human”) cannabinoids and plant cannabinoids; the two known types of receptors are classified as CB1 and CB2
- » **Endogenous cannabinoids:** The body’s “natural cannabinoids”; chemical compounds (lipid-based neurotransmitters) that interact with cannabinoid receptors to form the endocannabinoid system
- » **Endocannabinoid system:** Biological system composed of endogenous cannabinoids and cannabinoid receptors; involved with regulating cognitive function, appetite, metabolism, stress, immune function, sleep, pain, thermoregulation, and more



How Safe is Cannabis?

Cannabis and its psychoactive cannabinoid, THC, have an excellent safety profile. [The Drug Awareness Warning Network Annual Report](#), published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), contains a statistical compilation of all drug deaths that occur in the United States. No deaths from cannabis use have ever been recorded, according to this report. The late Dr. Leslie Iversen, pharmacology expert at the University of Oxford and author Dr. Iverson explains the enormous doses that have been tested.

Cannabis has an extraordinarily high estimated lethal dose, equivalent to smoking approximately 1,500 pounds in 15 minutes, a physical impossibility. Scientists have had to estimate the LD₅₀, or Lethal Dose for 50% of the human population, because it has never been demonstrated. This puts cannabis in a class of its own, since even relatively safe medications such as aspirin and penicillin have a lethal dose.



How Does Cannabis Work in the Body?

Herbs can treat both chronic and acute ailments thanks to their blend of both palliative and healing properties. Scientists have discovered that humans and many other animals possess an endocannabinoid system. The understanding of this system led to the creation of a new branch of science called the Endocannabinology.

Marijuana contains a variety of chemical compounds called cannabinoids. Some examples are CBN, CBD and THC. These interact with our body through the endocannabinoid system to produce cannabis' effects.

The ECS naturally produces cannabinoids similar to those of the cannabis plant. These are known as phytocannabinoids and need to be differentiated from the ECS's endogenous cannabinoids, which are extremely close in resemblance to cannabis' cannabinoids.



How Does Cannabis Work in the Body?

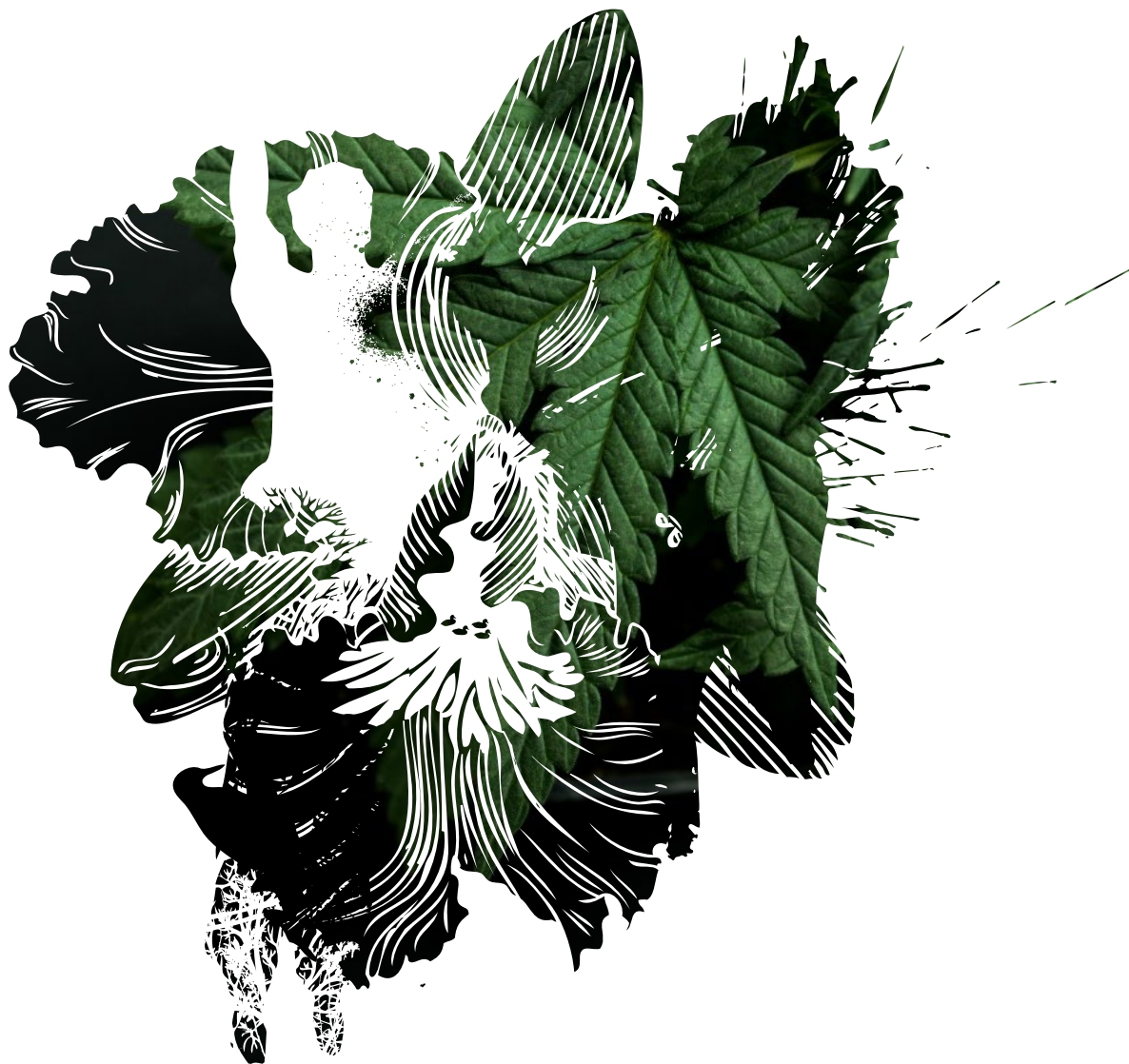
New scientific research is still being done on the topic, despite the subject being young. This is because everything is so new.

Our body naturally produces cannabinoids that interact with receptors called CB1 and CB2. CB1 receptors are found in the nervous system, specifically the brain, as well as other important organs such as the lungs, digestive tract, eyes and kidneys. However, compared to the presence of all other neurotransmitter receptors combined, CB1 receptors are extremely localized in the brain. Researchers continue to discover new things about CB2 receptors. These are the receptors located in the thymus, bone marrow, tonsils, white blood cells and spleen. The body naturally creates these receptors and additional research is in its early stages.

These endocannabinoid system interactions help define many vital processes, such as:

- » Appetite
- » Sleep
- » Pain
- » Cognitive function
- » Metabolism
- » Stress
- » Immune function





How to Qualify for Medical Cannabis

Process Overview

Do You Have A Qualifying Condition?

If you have one of the qualifying conditions below, seek an appointment with a physician qualified to recommend cannabis in the state of Florida. Call us at 904-586-0041, and our friendly Affordable Marijuana educators will be able to provide you with more information.

- » Cancer
- » Epilepsy
- » Glaucoma
- » Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- » Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
- » Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- » Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig's disease
- » Crohn's Disease
- » Parkinson's Disease
- » Multiple Sclerosis
- » Medical conditions of the same kind or class as or comparable to those listed above
- » A terminal condition diagnosed by a physician other than the qualified physician issuing the physician certification
- » Chronic Nonmalignant Pain
- » Other comparable medical conditions

(Medical conditions of the same kind or class as or comparable to those above.)



Follow These 5 Easy Steps

Step One – Complete Form

Click on the “[Get Started Here](#)” link on the menu on our homepage and complete the short appointment request form. After you have submitted your appointment request online you will receive an email or text message confirming your appointment time and date.

Step Two – Await Confirmation

You will receive an email or call from one of our specialists who will confirm your information and schedule an appointment to get your affordable medical card. When you arrive for your appointment, you will need to have the following documents:

- » a valid Florida Driver’s license, State ID, a valid Out-of-State Driver’s License or Passport
- » your Medical Records, if available

Step Three – Consultation/Registration

When you arrive, you will sign-in at the front desk and receive a clipboard with a short questionnaire to complete. Once completed you will be checked in by our front desk where they will collect your intake forms, valid ID, and payment of \$160.

After a short period, we will take your vitals and lead you to a consultation room. You will be evaluated by the doctor, and we will begin processing your application with the State of Florida.



Follow These 5 Easy Steps

Step Four – Await Approval

We will provide some take home instructions on how to complete your part of the application and it will require the following:

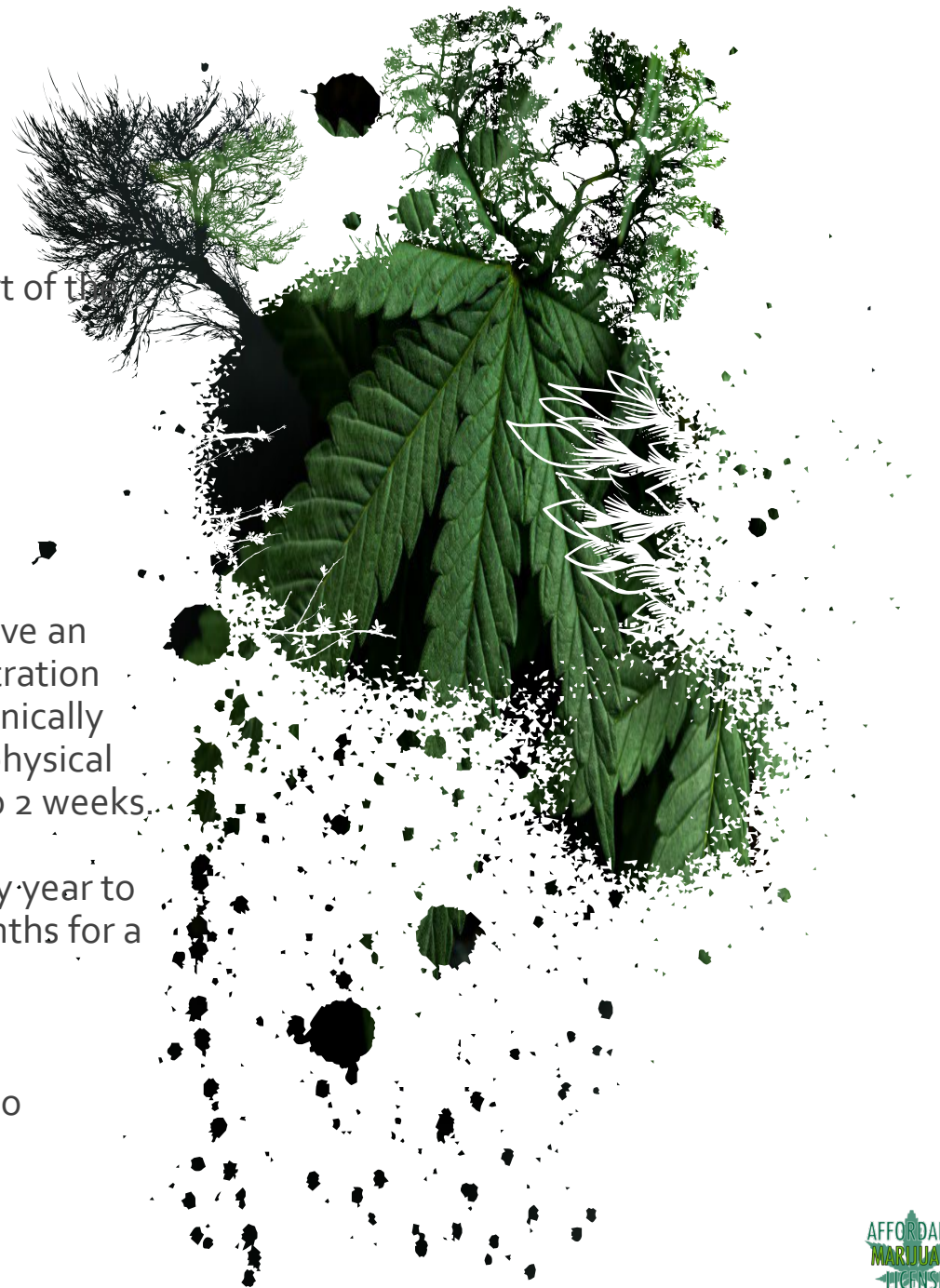
- » Photo
- » Proof of Residency
- » Your Signature (electronic)
- » Payment \$75, plus \$2.75 processing fee

Step Five – Receive Your Card

When your registration is processed with the State of Florida you will receive an email from the State of Florida at the email address you gave during registration indicating you have been approved. Once you have been approved electronically you are able to visit the dispensaries using your driver's license until your physical copy of your medical card comes in the mail, which typically can take up to 2 weeks.

You will be required to complete the online portion of the application every year to maintain your license and you'll have a follow up appointment every 7 months for a new set of recommendations.

Your affordable medical card allows you to possess and transport medical marijuana. A recommendation is like a "prescription" it's what allows you to purchase the medical marijuana.



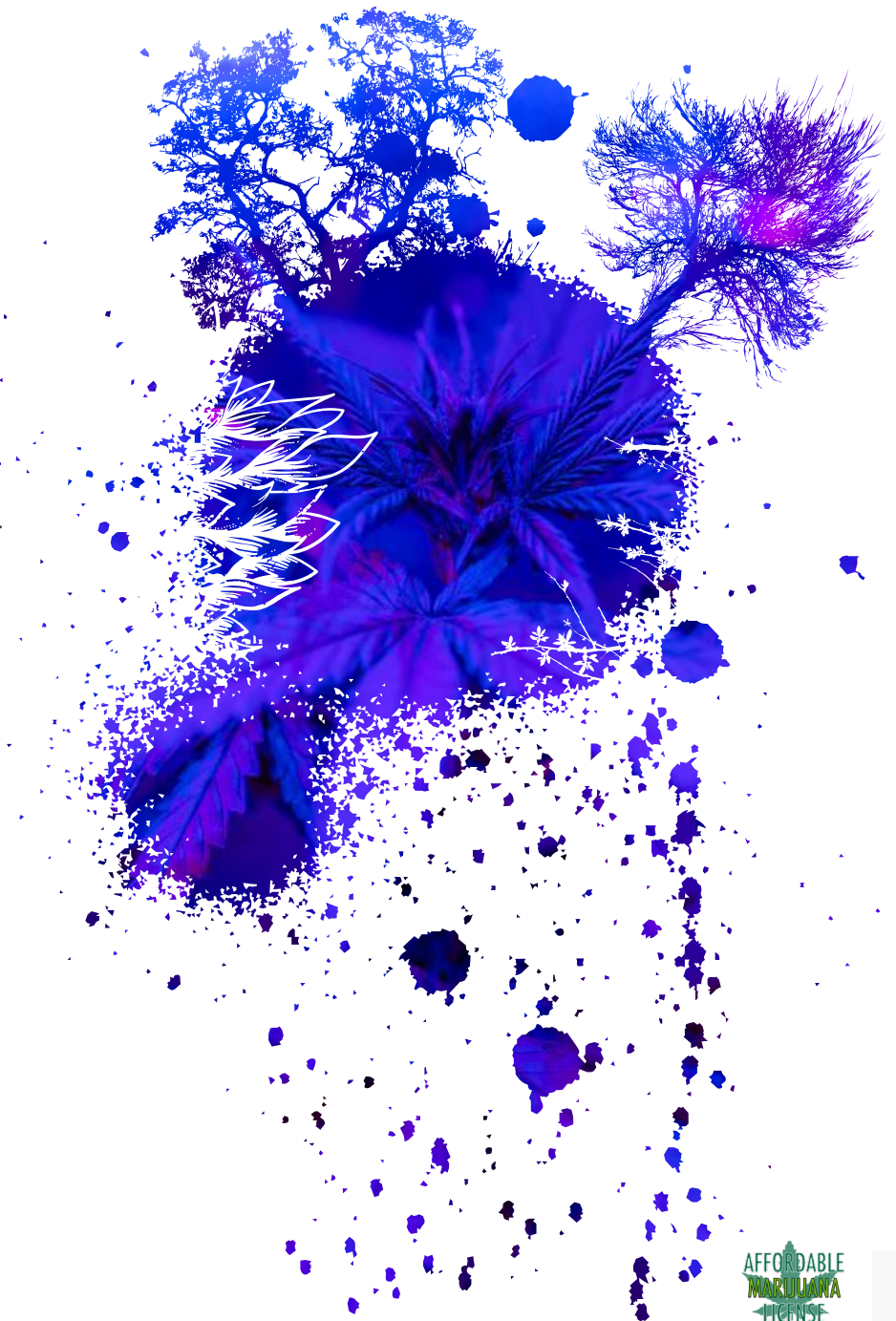


Florida's Marijuana Law

Know Your Rights

Terms to Know

- » **Amendment 2:** Florida legislation, passed in 2016, legalizing statewide use of medical marijuana; also known as the Florida Medical Marijuana Legalization Initiative
- » **Low-THC cannabis** (as defined by Senate Bill 8A): A plant of the genus *Cannabis*, the dried flowers of which contain .8 percent or less of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and more than 10 percent of cannabidiol weight for weight
- » **Medical Marijuana Use Registry:** Database for the registration of ordering physicians and qualified patients, run by the Florida Department of Health: Office of Medical Marijuana Use
- » **Seasonal resident:** Any person who resides in Florida for a period of at least 31 consecutive days in each calendar year, maintains a temporary residence in Florida, returns to the state or jurisdiction of his or her residence at least one time during each calendar year, and is registered to vote or pays income tax in another state or jurisdiction
- » **Senate Bill 8A:** Florida legislation, passed in 2017, implementing Amendment 2; outlines rules for use and administration of medical marijuana



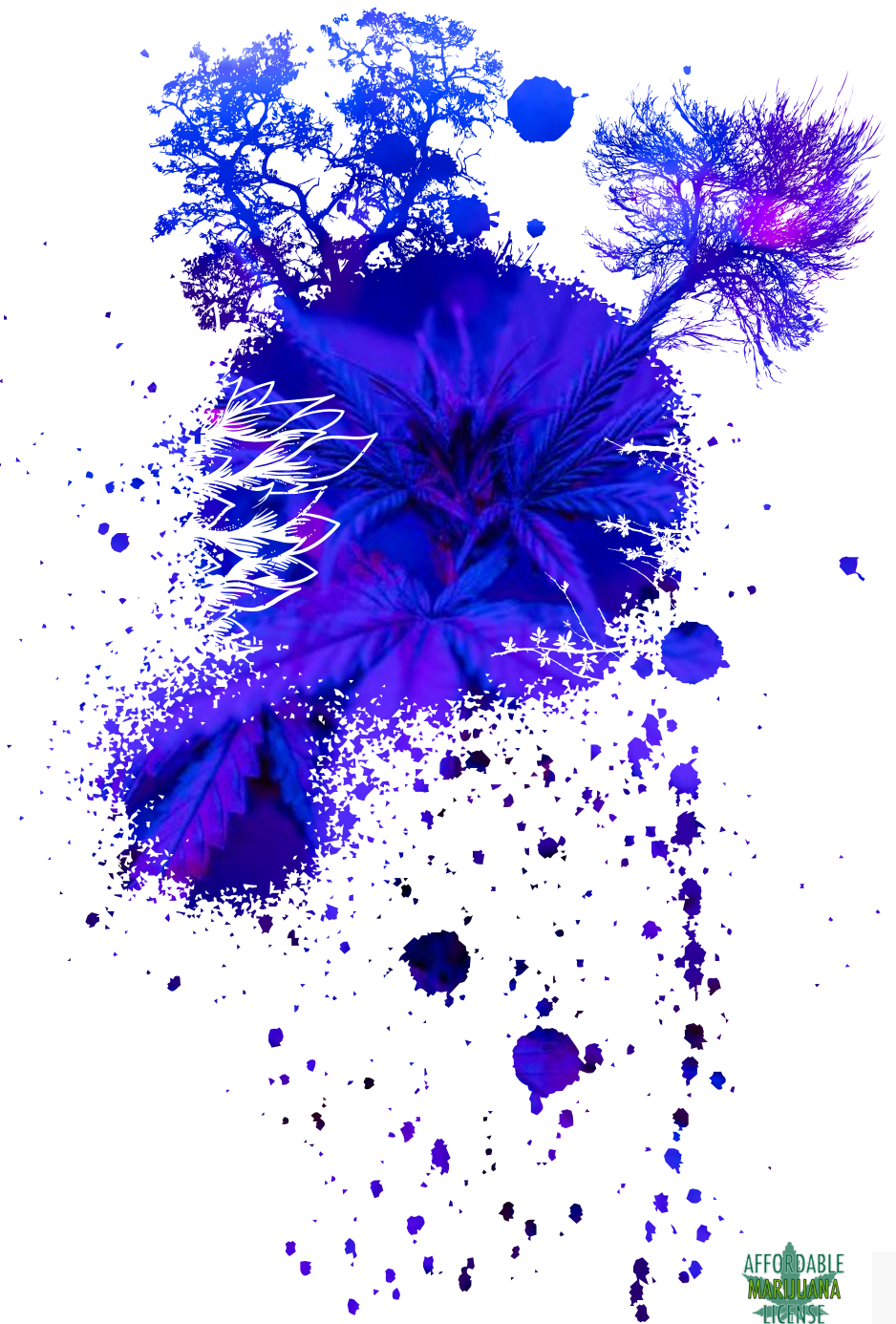
When is Marijuana Legal in Florida?

The Florida Medical Marijuana Legalization Initiative was passed in 2016. It was called **Amendment 2**, and marijuana was made legal in the state. This happened because of a statement made by the **Senate Bill 8A** several months later.

Chapter 381 of the Florida Statutes outlines procedures for obtaining a Medical Marijuana Use Authorization. This allows marijuana to be consumed, purchased and grown by patients in the state. Additional guidelines are provided for caregivers, cannabis user registries and treatment centers. It's against the law to use marijuana for recreational purposes in Florida. This includes the act of transferring legal medicinal marijuana to someone else.

Furthermore, in some Florida cities, possession of small amounts of marijuana has been decriminalized and will result in a payable citation rather than an arrest. This muddies the waters a bit regarding understanding the law, as there may be different rules in different areas. However, there are a few important things to understand if you are arrested or questioned due to marijuana possession or use.

"BEST LAW ENFORCEMENT ENCOUNTER IS THE ENCOUNTER THAT NEVER OCCURS"



What Medical Conditions Qualify?

According to Florida state law, patients suffering from the following conditions may qualify for medical marijuana treatment:

- » Cancer
- » Epilepsy
- » Glaucoma
- » HIV/AIDS
- » PTSD
- » ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease
- » Crohn's Disease
- » Parkinson's Disease
- » Multiple Sclerosis

[Senate Bill 8A](#) also allows for treatment of other “diagnosable, debilitating conditions of like, kind, or class” (such as anxiety, depression, and migraines), as well as **terminal conditions** (diagnosed by a physician other than the physician issuing certification) and **chronic nonmalignant pain** (defined as pain caused by a qualifying medical condition that persists beyond the usual course of that condition).

See our [Qualifying Conditions](#) page for a list of conditions that could qualify.

Do I Qualify? Let **Affordable Marijuana License** help! Complete a [free application](#) or give us a call at **(904) 586-0041**!



Encounters with Law Enforcement?

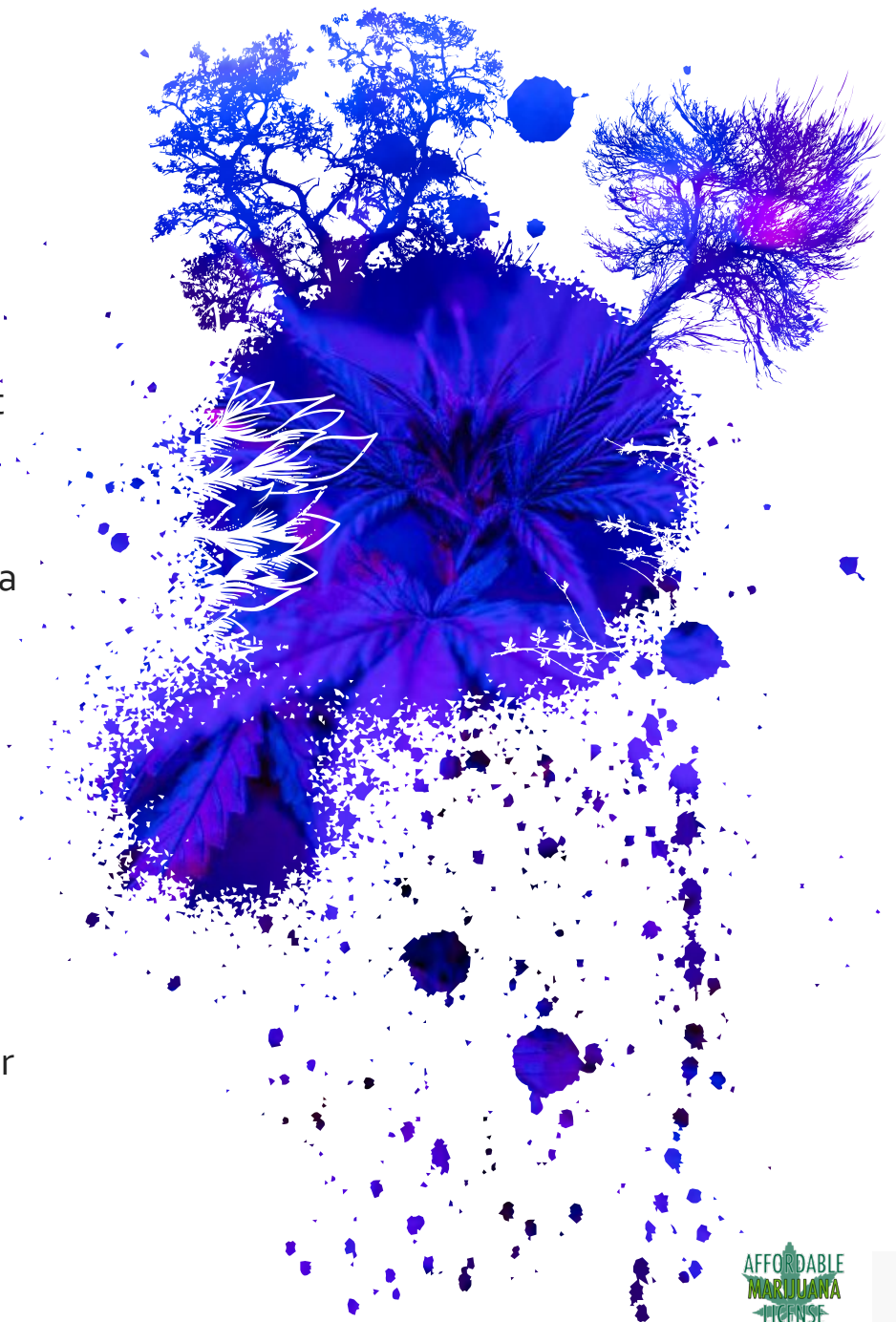
While Florida may have extensive laws that protect your right to use medical cannabis, law enforcement officers often seize medicine, harass patients, issue citations, and even arrest patients for exercising their rights. Always carry your doctor's written recommendation and/or state-issued ID Card, but do not present it to law enforcement unless accused of a cannabis-related crime.

According to state law, it's a 2nd-degree misdemeanor if you either can't or refuse to present your physical MM card to law enforcement. Not having it is considered a serious infraction and can get you up to 60 days in jail, a \$500 fine, and potential lawyer fees. This law pertains to both patients and caregivers.

If you follow these tips, you will be that much less likely to be harassed by law enforcement.

Use Common Sense - Consider safety when and where you choose to medicate; cannabis smoke and vapor have very distinctive smells. You will attract less attention if you do not consume cannabis in plain view or near open windows.

Be a Good Neighbor - Neighbors and nearby businesses may or may not share your opinion about medical cannabis, but they will be much more likely to respect your right to safe access if you are not causing them problems. By being conscious of neighbors' rights, privacy, and property, patients and dispensing centers can establish and maintain harmonious relationships.





How to Obtain Your Medical Cannabis

Florida Dispensaries

Terms to Know

- » **Medical marijuana treatment centers (MMTCs):** The only businesses in Florida authorized to dispense medical marijuana to qualified patients and caregivers; also known as dispensaries
- » **Office of Medical Marijuana Use:** Part of the Florida Department of Health, charged with writing and implementing the department's rules for medical marijuana, overseeing the statewide Medical Marijuana Use Registry, and licensing Florida businesses to cultivate, process, and dispense medical marijuana to qualified patients

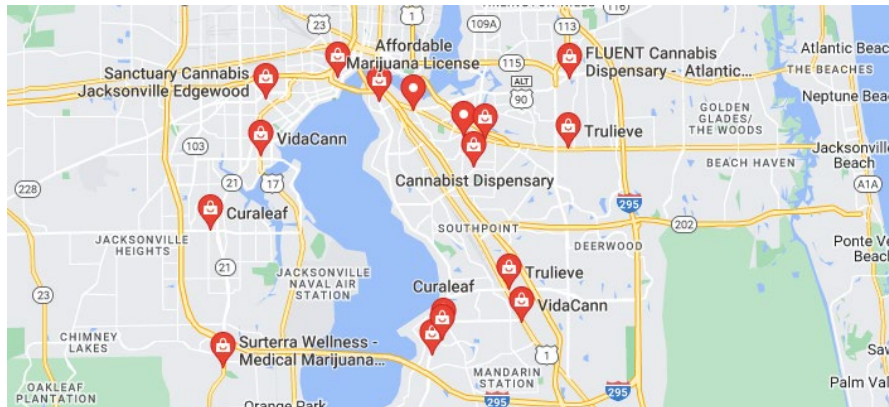


Where Do I Buy Medical Cannabis?

Dispensaries are organizations or businesses licensed under the Florida Department of Health: Office of Medical Marijuana Use to provide medical cannabis to legal patients. Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTCs), as dispensaries are called in Florida, require patients to prove their status as a legal medical cannabis patient by presenting a state medical cannabis ID card or other documentation.

Fortunately, there are several convenient Florida MMTC locations (and most will even deliver to your house!). To find the closest dispensary, consider using a free location service (such as [WeedMaps](#)) or visiting each MMTC's website (as new locations are frequently added).

Dispensaries may have a formal or informal orientation process for new patients, and many provide printed materials with information about membership. Ask the intake staff at your chosen dispensary what resources or educational materials they provide for new members or clients.



What Do I Buy?

Affordable Marijuana License doctors will provide you with dosing guidelines and approved methods of ingestion (basically: how much you can take and in what way). MMTC staff members will help advise on specific strains (or types of marijuana) and products.

Most dispensaries will have a variety of medical cannabis and medical cannabis infused products from which patients can choose. The staff should be knowledgeable about the products and able to answer questions. Don't be afraid to ask questions, especially if you are an inexperienced medical cannabis user. The dispensary and its staff are there for you, and helping you make good decisions about your health care should be a top priority.

Some questions you might want to ask when choosing a dispensary include:

- Is the facility licensed to operate?
- Does it feel safe? Is security adequate?
- Is the dispensary comfortable?
- Is the variety of medicine suitable?
- Is the medicine laboratory tested and clearly labeled?
- Are the prices reasonable?
- Does the dispensary take credit cards or have an ATM?
- Is the staff friendly, respectful and knowledgeable?
- Does the dispensary deliver?
- Are the hours of operation convenient?



What's the Best Way to Use Medical Cannabis?

According to Florida state law, patients may consume medical marijuana via different routes of administration, including smoking, vaping, sublingual, oral, edibles, topicals, and suppositories.

Medical cannabis should fit into your health regimen just like any other medication you use, but there are unique qualifiers to think about and, considerations to make when using, storing, and transporting your medicines.

There are certain things to consider when you start to use prescription drugs – dosage, safety, side effects, contraindications, etc. Doctors are experienced with talking to patients about these things, but there are some special considerations for using medical cannabis. Your doctor may not be able to talk to you about things like safety, storage, and transportation of medical cannabis.

Additional reading

Looking for more resources? We've got you covered!

- » [Affordable Marijuana License: MMTC Resource Page](#)
- » [Affordable Marijuana License: Edibles Page](#)
- » [Florida Department of Health: MMTC Page](#)



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*Thanks for reading!
Let us know if we can
help on your journey*



AML Team



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