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LEGISLATIVE
ANNUAL
REPORT



ALABAMA
MEDICAL
CANNABIS
COMMISSION

2024:

Annual Report

On May 17, 2021, Governor Kay Ivey signed into law the Darren Wesley “Ato” Hall Compassion Act (Alabama Act 2021 – 450). The Act establishes the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission and authorizes the Commission to implement the Act by making medical cannabis derived from cannabis grown in Alabama available to registered qualified patients, by licensing facilities that process, transport, test, or dispense medical cannabis, and by administering and enforcing the Act and all rules adopted pursuant to the Act (Section 20-2A-22, Code of Alabama 1975).

During the 2024 legislative session, the Act was amended to remove the medical cannabis licensing and regulatory responsibilities of the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI). AMCC has amended its rules to be consistent with changes to the law and coordinated with ADAI on the transfer of regulatory responsibilities.



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Commission Appointments

The Act provides the appointing authority for members of the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission and directed that initial appointments be made no later than July 1, 2021.

(1) Three members appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a physician licensed to practice medicine in Alabama; one of whom is a licensed pharmacist; and one of whom has experience in agricultural lending or banking.

(2) Three members appointed by the Lt. Governor, one of whom is a physician licensed to practice medicine in Alabama and certified in the specialty of pediatrics; one of whom is licensed to practice law in Alabama who specializes in health law; and one of whom is a biochemist.

(3) Two members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one of whom is licensed to practice medicine in Alabama and certified in the specialty of oncology; and one of whom has experience in multiple crop development and agricultural practices.

(4) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom has a background and experience in mental health or substance abuse counselling and treatment; and one of whom has professional experience in agricultural systems management.

(5) One member appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries who is experienced in agricultural production or agronomic or other horticultural practices.

(6) One member appointed by the State Health Officer.

(7) One member appointed by the Attorney General (nonvoting)

(8) One member appointed by the Secretary of the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency (nonvoting).

Commission Members



Dr. Sam Blakemore
Pharmacist
Birmingham, Alabama



Dr. William Saliski
Pulmonologist
Montgomery, Alabama



Dr. Jimmie Harvey
Oncologist
Birmingham, Alabama



Dr. Angela Martin
Pediatrician
Anniston, Alabama



Dr. Mac Barnes
Oncologist
Montgomery, Alabama



Taylor Hatchett
Farmer
Chilton Co., Alabama



Judge Charles Price
Circuit Judge
Montgomery, Alabama



Dr. Eric Jensen
Biochemist
Brownsboro, Alabama



Loree Skelton
Healthcare Attorney
Birmingham, Alabama



Dwight Gamble
Banker
Headland, Alabama



Rex Vaughn
Farmer
Huntsville, Alabama



James Harwell
Nursery/Landscaper
Montgomery, Alabama



Dion Robinson
AL Dept. of Corrections
Tuskegee, Alabama



Vacant
Attorney General Appointee

Letter from the Director

JOHN MCMILLAN

The Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission (AMCC) is pleased to submit its 2024 annual report to the Alabama legislature as required by Section 20-2A-9, Code of Alabama 1975. Despite ongoing and expensive delays caused by legal challenges related to the application process, AMCC is making progress in its efforts to provide the benefits of safe medical cannabis products to qualified patients in Alabama.

Since December 2023, the AMCC has issued nine cultivator licenses, four processor licenses, four secure transporter licenses and one state testing laboratory license. For the first time in Alabama's history, licensed Alabama businesses are preparing to grow, process, transport, and test cannabis. The licensees are developing their operations to meet the demands of a fully operational medical cannabis industry in Alabama.

For example, as I write this, several cultivator licensees are growing and harvesting cannabis in their facilities. (See more about licensees on page 16 of this report.) These businesses are owned and operated by outstanding Alabamians, who are building their operations with the goal to succeed and flourish in their mission to provide safe and beneficial products for Alabama patients.

In 2024, AMCC staff began conducting inspections of all licensed facilities. Under Alabama's medical cannabis law and the AMCC's administrative rules, the Commission performs pre-commencement inspections of licensees, as well as routine inspections.

Unfortunately, Alabama's medical cannabis program is not fully operational. As noted above, cultivators can grow



cannabis, processors can process the cannabis into medical cannabis, secure transporters can transport cannabis and medical cannabis at the request of a licensee, and a state testing laboratory can conduct product testing during all industry phases. Currently, however, these businesses have no market for their product because court orders have blocked the issuance of dispensary licenses (businesses that will provide medical cannabis to qualified patients). Thus, the program is frozen and Alabama physicians cannot be certified and their patients have no opportunity to purchase medical cannabis from licensed dispensaries.

Despite AMCC’s litigation challenges, some recent developments offer hope that the log-jam might be easing. Presently, the litigating parties are participating in a court-ordered mediation. AMCC is optimistic that the parties will reach an acceptable mediated settlement soon, resulting in Alabamians receiving treatment intended by passage of the Darren Wesley “Ato” Hall Compassion Act in 2021.

The Commission is grateful for support from Governor Ivey and her staff. The Alabama legislature and other state agencies have also been supportive and helpful.

Additionally, I commend and thank the thirteen commissioners who lead and direct the AMCC. Their service and commitment to this agency and to the citizens of this State is impressive. Their selfless efforts provide a model for what it means to be a public servant. Their determination to see AMCC’s program fully functioning is resolute. I am proud to serve with them.

Above all, this program is about Alabama patients. The absolute goal is to provide a safe and quality medical product to Alabama patients who meet one of the qualifying medical conditions and who have been recommended for medical cannabis by a certified Alabama physician. During 2024, the Commission has heard from hundreds of Alabama patients who can benefit from medical cannabis and can gain relief from pain and other debilitating symptoms. The AMCC looks forward to building on the progress of 2024, and seeing Alabama’s medical cannabis program become fully operational in 2025.



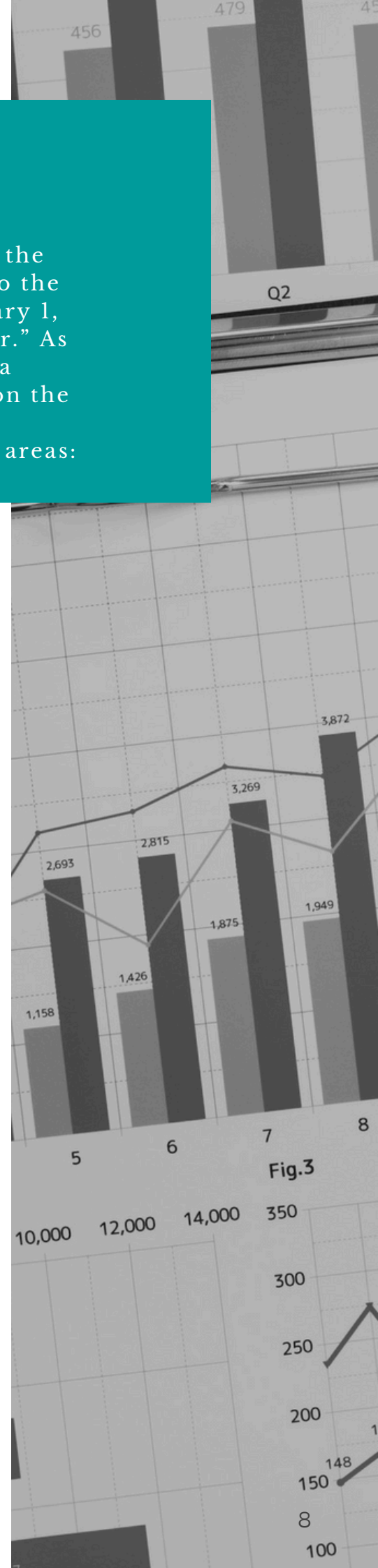
John McMillan
Director

Report Sections

Section 20-2A-9, Code of Alabama 1975, requires the Commission to provide “annual written reports to the Legislature, with the first one no later than January 1, 2022, tracking the implementation of this chapter.” As required by law, the annual report to the Alabama legislature will be publicly available and posted on the Commission’s website. The report is to include information and data in the following eleven (11) areas:

1. The number of patients applying for and receiving medical cannabis cards. *
2. The qualifying medical conditions identified to obtain the medical cannabis cards. *
3. Comments from physicians and other health care providers and from pharmacists.
4. Revenues and expenses of card issuance and licensing of medical cannabis facilities.
5. Relevant development in other states’ cannabis laws.
6. Relevant scientific research.
7. Applicable tax revenue. *
8. The commission’s annual operating expenses and revenues.
9. The number of total applicants for each type of license under Article 4 and the number of veterans, minorities, and women who applied and the number of these applicants who were denied a license.
10. Any other information available to the commission that would inform public officials of how this chapter affects the public. *
11. Any suggested legislative changes to this chapter or other state laws.

* = information not applicable for 2024 report





Comments from Physicians, Health Care Providers, and Pharmacists.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Darren Wesley “Ato” Hall Compassion Act, the Board of Medical Examiners approved rules to regulate the physician recommendation of medical cannabis in November 2021. These regulations are codified in Ala. Admin. Code R. 540-X-25. In 2024, after hearing from interested parties, the Board reviewed and amended several provisions of these rules to better protect and ensure the safety of unborn children who might inadvertently be harmed by medical cannabis consumption.

The Medical Association of the State of Alabama launched the mandatory training course for physicians seeking to become Registered Certifying Physicians in May 2023. Thus far, over 65 physicians have successfully completed the training. The Medical Association is preparing to launch a campaign to increase physician awareness of the course once the Cannabis Commission completes its licensure process.

Pursuant to Ala. Admin. Code R. 540-X-25-.04(5), the Board is prepared to begin accepting applications and issuing Alabama Medical Cannabis Certification Permits to qualified physicians once the Cannabis Commission issues its initial licenses to dispensaries and/or integrated facilities.

- Mr. William M. Perkins
Executive Director
State of Alabama Board of Medical Examiners



Revenues and Expenses



AMCC’s Schedule of Fees, Penalties and Fines can be found at <https://amcc.alabama.gov/cannabis-business-applicants/#fees>

*The Commission approved a one-time 25% reduction of the license fees for licensees (cultivators, processors, secure transporters, and state testing laboratory) whose licenses expire in 2024. After the renewal period for those licenses, the license fees will revert to the amounts previously established by the Commission.

Medical Cannabis Business Licensure

License-Related Fees Collected:

License Fees (FY 24): \$873,379.00

Application Fees (FY 25): \$37,500

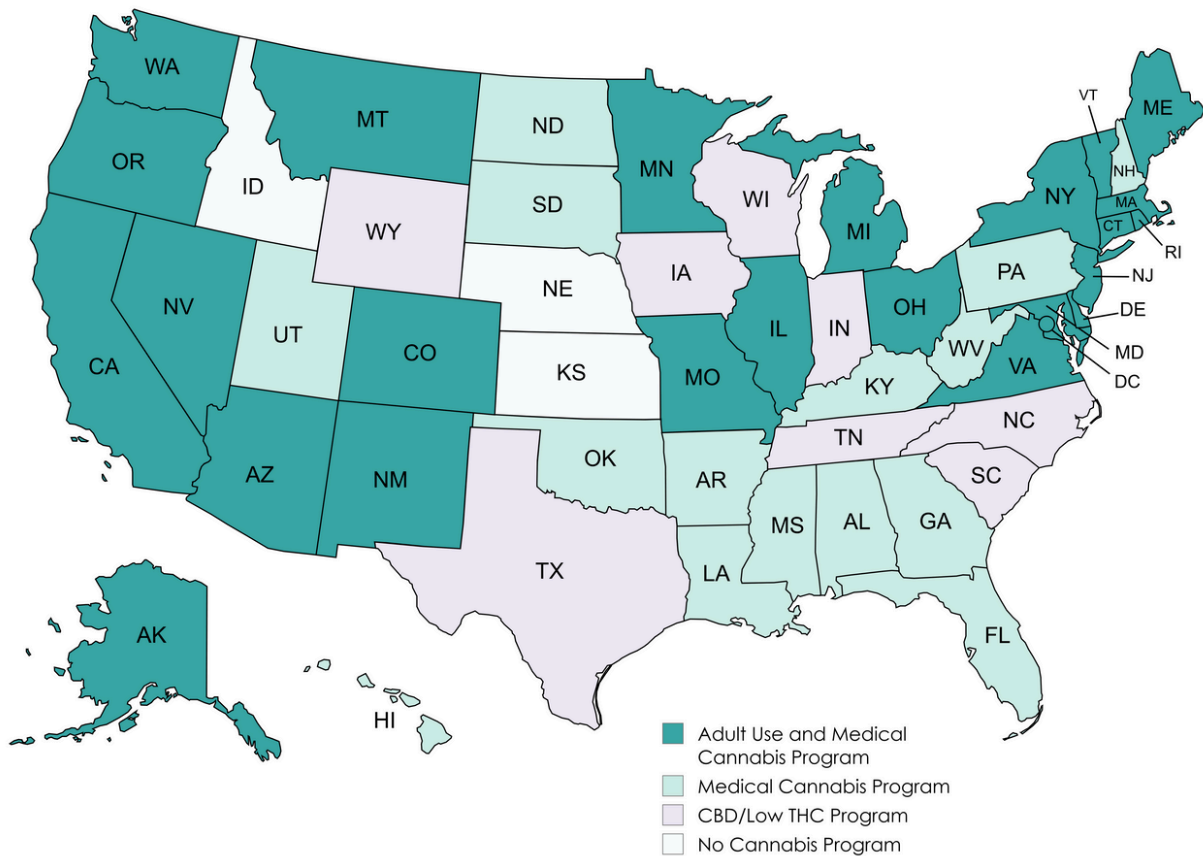
License Fees (Projected for FY 25): \$500,000

Patient/Caregiver Card Issuance

N/A

In Alabama, no physician is yet certified to recommend medical cannabis products to qualified patients. Under rules promulgated by the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners, no physician may be certified “until the AMCC has issued at least one license each for a cultivator, a processor, a secure transporter, and a dispensary or has issued at least one license for an integrated facility.” (Ala. Admin Code r. 540-X-25-.04(5)).

Relevant development in other states' cannabis laws.



TOTALS

Medical-Use: 38 states and the District of Columbia

Adult-Use: 24 states and the District of Columbia

CBD/Low-THC: 8 states

No Cannabis Program: 3 states

ADJACENT STATES

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi's medical cannabis law was enacted in February 2022. Unlike Alabama's law, Mississippi did not limit the number of licenses that can be issued. The Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program (MMCP) reported its data after one year of operations in February of 2024. See data below.

- There were just over 32,000 patients and 190 caregivers in Mississippi that received certification from physicians for medical cannabis cards.
- 207 practitioners were registered to certify patients with qualifying, debilitating conditions and for whom medical cannabis may be of therapeutic benefit.
- 393 medical cannabis establishments held licenses to operate.

- In 2023, the Medical Cannabis Program generated \$8,782,730.00 in application and licensure fees.
- The program has netted \$949,641.72 in Cannabis Excise Tax and \$2,345,387.18 in Cannabis Sales Tax.
- \$44,407,373.00 has been generated in retail sales of medical cannabis since the first sales occurred in late January 2023.
- 3,099 individuals held permits to gain employment in Mississippi's medical cannabis industry.

GEORGIA

In Georgia, the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission is authorized by Georgia law (effective since April 2019) to oversee the regulated licensing of limited, in-state cultivation, production, manufacturing, and sale of low-THC oil as well as dispensing to registered patients on the state's low-THC Oil Registry. Georgia's program was stalled by litigation following their 2022 license awards.

Patient registry enrollment hit 25,000 in November 2024. Under Georgia's enabling legislation, the number of dispensaries will increase by an additional dispensing site for each of the six production companies with every increase in the registry of 10,000 patients.

The Georgia Department of Public Health announced several changes to the process for obtaining low THC oil cards. Cards are now valid for five years instead of two. This change applies to new cards and renewal of existing cards as they expire. Additionally, The cost of a low THC oil card is increasing to \$30 for five years, a \$5 increase over the cost of a two-year card.

FLORIDA

Florida's medical cannabis program is managed by the Office of Medical Marijuana Use (OMMU), under the Florida Department of Health. OMMU is charged with the licensing and regulation of medical marijuana treatment centers. The treatment centers are vertically integrated businesses and are the only businesses authorized to cultivate, process, and dispense low-THC cannabis and medical marijuana. Florida issued 27 business licenses following extensive licensing litigation.

In late 2024, OMMU announced that it sent letters of intent to approve 22 additional companies to open medical marijuana treatment centers, which will nearly double the current number of licensees operation in Florida. As of November 2024, there are currently 882,524 patients participating in Florida's medical cannabis program.

In 2024, an effort to legalize the use of recreational marijuana in Florida failed to get the 60% voter support needed to pass a state constitutional amendment. Amendment 3 received 55.9% support from voters.

TENNESSEE

Tennessee created the Tennessee Medical Cannabis Commission (TMCC) in 2021, but has not legalized medical cannabis. Patients diagnosed with certain illnesses may possess oil containing 0.9% THC or less, as long as they can prove this oil was legally purchased out of state.

KENTUCKY

In 2023, the Kentucky legislature legalized medical marijuana for Kentuckians suffering from chronic illnesses. The Kentucky Office of Medical Cannabis (KOMC) received 4,998 applications for medical cannabis business licenses, including 918 cultivator and processor applications. The licensees will be selected via lottery.

Beginning in December 2024, the KOMC launched a directory so qualifying patients can search for a provider near them who can write a certification for medical marijuana. There are 230 registered practitioners in the state directory.



Relevant Scientific Research

During 2024, the AMCC began to look at cannabis use recommendations by various medical societies. Realizing there is a scarcity of rigorous medical research in cannabis use for specific diagnoses, several organizations have voiced opinions and published them in scientific literature. Recently, the Commission discussed a recommendation by the United States Department of Defense and the United States Veterans Administration that cannabis should not be prescribed or recommended to treat PTSD. The Commission agreed to study this recommendation and re-visit later, following discussions with the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners.

The Commission also heard a presentation by Dr. Lori Hensley of Jacksonville State University (JSU) on the newly initiated Cannabis Business and Culture Micro-Credential Program at JSU. This new program will allow undergraduate students to receive Minor degrees in both Biology and Business of Cannabis. The program is in response to the anticipated new jobs in Alabama's medical cannabis industry.

It is also expected that throughout 2025 and beyond, a committee of pharmacists and physicians on the Commission will meet regularly to examine and discuss the available literature on medical cannabis treatments.

Contributed by:

DR. JIMMIE HARVEY, AMCC COMMISSIONER



Commission's Annual Operating Expenses and Revenues

Revenue and Expenses Through November 30, 2024

Category	Available	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Total Obligations
Personnel Costs	1,466,602	216,469	0	216,469
Employee Benefit	482,456	66,560	0	66,560
Travel, In-State	50,000	704	0	704
Travel, Out-Of-State	54,000	0	0	0
Repair And Maintenance	15,000	0	0	0
Rentals And Leases	180,000	44,787	3,598	48,385
Utilities And Communication	15,000	266	2,929	3,195
Services	4,556,749	33,505	414,331	447,837
Supplies, Mat'l, And Operating	20,000	9,934	100	10,034
Transportation Equip Operation	7,500	0	3,100	3,100
Transportation Equipment Purch	50,000	0	0	0
Other Equipment Purchases	45,000	0	0	0
Total:	\$6,942,307	\$372,225	\$424,058	\$796,283

Financial Summary:

September 2024:

\$7.8 million budget for FY 2024.

Fiscal Year 2025:

\$2.76 million rollover funds from FY24.

\$6.9 million available to develop and maintain the patient registry, seed to sale tracking system, legal services, business licenses solutions, and continuing operations.

Fiscal Year 2026:

The Commission is requesting a budget appropriation of \$2.5 million for FY2026 to cover operating costs, regulation and compliance, and the development of new IT systems, while also maintaining its current systems.

Alabama Medical Cannabis Licensees

CULTIVATOR LICENSEES

- CRC of Alabama, LLC**
 - 📍 Goshen, AL
- Greenway Botanicals, LLC**
 - 📍 Centre, AL
- Gulf Shore Remedies, LLC**
 - 📍 Fairhope, AL
- Native Black Cultivation**
 - 📍 Bessemer, AL
- Creek Leaf Wellness Inc.**
 - 📍 Birmingham, AL
- Twisted Herb Cultivation, LLC**
 - 📍 Georgianna, AL
- I AM FARMS**
 - 📍 Knoxville, AL
- Pure by Sirmon Farms, LLC**
 - 📍 Daphne, AL
- Blackberry Farms, LLC**
 - 📍 Northport, AL

PROCESSOR LICENSEES

- Organic Harvest Lab, LLC**
 - 📍 Bessemer, AL
- Coosa Medical Manufacturing**
 - 📍 Centreville, AL
- 1819 Labs, LLC**
 - 📍 Anniston, AL
- Jasper Development Group Inc.**
 - 📍 Jasper, AL

SECURE TRANSPORTER LICENSEES

- Alabama Secure Transport, LLC**
 - 📍 Montgomery, AL
- Tyler Van Lines, LLC**
 - 📍 Troy, AL
- Pick Up My Things**
 - 📍 Dothan, AL
- International Communications, LLC**
 - 📍 Birmingham, AL

STATE TESTING LABORATORY LICENSEE

- Certus Laboratories**
 - 📍 Grand Bay, AL



3200 Plants Actively Growing in AL Facilities



1054 Plants Harvested



56 Registered Agents Working in Facilities

* Data as of December 23, 2024





Suggested Legislative Changes

At this time, the Commission does not propose or suggest any specific legislative changes to Alabama's medical cannabis law. However, the Commission supports any legislative effort that, without further costly delays, delivers medical cannabis to Alabama patients and maintains the integrity and stringency of the current law.





2024

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