



CANNABIS QUARTERLY *with*

IDFPR

Quarterly Newsletter

Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

SPRING 2023

**IDFPR WELCOMES
MORE SOCIAL EQUITY
ADULT USE CANNABIS
DISPENSARIES**

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INTRODUCING A FAMILIAR FACE AS DPR'S NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Sarah Snow serves as the Deputy Director for the Division of Professional Regulation of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. In this role, Snow manages and completes special projects for the Division, helps develop legislative, executive and legal policy, and represents the Division and IDFPR at meetings and events with community and regulated industry members.



Snow joined IDFPR in August of 2018 as the Industry Liaison for the Division of Real Estate, serving as liaison for more than 40 real estate industry associations while also leading a team to develop standard operating procedures for the agency's Boards and Commissions. Shortly after, Snow also joined the Executive Leadership Team under the Office of the Secretary where she managed an extensive portfolio of matters, including the continued modernization of the agency to reflect best regulatory body practices, modern technological advancements, and continue aligning with the agency's mission of consumer protection. In doing so, Snow provided the executive leadership team with guidance and suggestions related to internal Department improvements such as co-managing the modernization of IDFPR's Policies and Procedures Manual and the Agency's Strategic Plan.

Snow managed the Governor's initiative to waive licensure fees for frontline healthcare professionals by working and collaborating with internal agency parties and ensuring proper communication was shared externally. Snow has served on the agency's Internal/External Audit Team since May 2020 and continues to serve on the agency's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Prior to joining IDFPR, Snow served as a Senior Account Executive for an event marketing firm in Chicago, where she gained more than five years of management experience managing multiple field market teams and internal account executives responsible for event execution, personnel, logistics, and day-to-day operations. Snow provided exceptional service to numerous clients, including national brands such as U.S. Cellular, Verizon Wireless, and Hill's Pet Nutrition, through retail and sports sponsorship, including the National Football League, Major League Baseball, and the National Basketball Association.

Snow received her Bachelor of Science from Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

IDFPR WELCOMES MORE SOCIAL EQUITY ADULT USE CANNABIS DISPENSARIES

To date, IDFPR has issued 13 full adult use cannabis dispensary licenses to social equity applicants. The Department has been fortunate to attend several ribbon cuttings to help welcome these new businesses to the first state cannabis industry to prioritize social equity.

While conditional applicants have 180 days to meet the requirements for a full license, they may apply for a 180-day extension. The application may be found on the IDFPR website by going [here](#).



Okay Cannabis

781 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Wheeling, IL 60090



Star Buds Burbank

7844 Cicero Ave.
Burbank, IL 60459



Grasshopper Club

2551 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647



Kush21 Jacksonville

1112 Veterans Dr.
Jacksonville, IL 62650



RENEWING BADGES: THE IMPORTANCE OF DOING THINGS RIGHT

One of IDFPF's many responsibilities is handling license renewals for agents, agents-in-charge, and principal officers. The Cannabis Control Unit licenses more than 5,000 individuals, all of whom renew annually. With this in mind, it's very important to submit the correct information for your renewal in a timely manner.

All individual renewals should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the expiration date. If you don't know your expiration date, you can find that [here](#). **The expiration date can also be found on your physical badge.** Additionally, IDFPF will send an email to the address used to create your account reminding you of the renewal 90 days in advance. **Should you not receive an email or are unable to locate the email, the link to the renewal application is [eLicense Online \(micropact.com\)](https://micropact.com).** Renewals not submitted at least 30 days beforehand may not be reviewed and approved before the expiration date, resulting in a gap in your ability to work.

For all renewals for individuals a new photo is required. Please ensure this photo is no more than 30 days old, was taken against a plain white background, does not have any filters applied, and has square dimensions between 600 x 600 pixels to 1200 x 1200 pixels. **Individuals must be facing forward in the photo.** Photos that do not meet these requirements will result in a delay in issuing a new badge.

When renewing your individual badge, you'll be asked for your license number or credential number. These are the same number and appear in this format: XXX.XXXXXX. On your badge, you'll see an acronym (all of which we've detailed below for your convenience). Please keep this list handy, as it's important to have your license number correct for your renewal.

- Medical Cannabis Principal Officers – DOPO – 281 prefix
- Medical Agent-in-Charge – DOAC – 282 prefix
- Medical Agent – DOAG – 283 prefix
- Adult Use Principal Officer – AUPO – 285 prefix
- Adult Use Agent-in-Charge – AUAC – 286 prefix
- Adult Use Agent – AUAG – 287 prefix.

Please make sure you are using the most recent Affidavit form. All forms related to Medical Cannabis can be found here: <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/medcan.html>.

Finally, we ask that if you are working in an adult use only dispensary (either a secondary site or a stand-alone adult use dispensary) that you apply for an adult use credential. This will ensure the correct team is reviewing your applications and it doesn't end up being reviewed for additional information.

If you have any questions, please consult our [contact sheet](#). Only email the indicated inbox rather than multiple inboxes.

GOVERNMENT-ISSUED IDENTIFICATION CARDS



The Department has received inquiries about forms of identification that may be acceptable for purchaser age and limitation purposes. The [Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act](#) (“CRTA”) states, “A dispensing organization shall use an electronic reader or electronic scanning device to scan a purchaser’s government-issued identification, if applicable, to determine the purchaser’s age and the validity of the identification.” See 410 ILCS 705/10-20(a); and 410 ILCS 705/15-85(a)(1).

It is therefore the responsibility of the dispensary and its agents to verify the age and residency of all purchasers. Be sure to review the entirety of the CRTA for more specific information, including penalties for failing to verify the age and residency of purchasers.

Dispensaries may consider, at a minimum, the below four-step analysis when determining whether or not an identification card is acceptable.

1. Is it a Government-Issued Identification Card?

All acceptable forms of identification must be government-issued. It is up to the dispensary to make the determination that any card presented by a purchaser is indeed a valid government-issued identification card, such as a driver’s license or a state identification card. Some common examples of cards that should not be considered to be government-issued include International Driver’s Licenses/Permits (note that an International Driver’s License is NOT the same as a driver’s license that is issued by a specific country) and Educational Institution Identification cards (such as student IDs).

2. Does the Government-Issued Identification Card have a barcode?

The “if applicable” clause of the CRTA means that if the identification card itself has a barcode or is otherwise capable of being scanned, then the card must be scanned. If the card does not scan, the identification is not acceptable. Dispensaries may accept government-issued identification cards that physically do not have a barcode, so long as the card does not otherwise appear to be tampered with or invalid.

3. Are there any other aspects about the Government-Issued Identification Card dispensaries may consider?

Yes. For example, dispensaries may accept identification cards that do not contain an expiration date (such as a new Arizona Driver’s License) to verify the age of a purchaser, so long as the dispensary is otherwise able to verify the validity of the identification card. Additional forms of identification may be required in order to prove Illinois residency.

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Dispensaries may accept the following forms of identification to verify the age of a purchaser, but further identification may be required for proof of Illinois residency.

- Consular Identification Cards;
- Temporary Visitor Driver's License;
- Chicago CityKey Identification;
- International Election Identification Cards;
- Tribal Identification Cards/Indigenous Reservation Government Identification Cards;
- Visas; and
- Green Cards.

4. Dispensaries' Own Discretion

Finally, while this four-step analysis is provided for the benefit of the dispensaries and purchasers, it should not be considered an exhaustive list of what is or is not an acceptable form of a government-issued identification card. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of a dispensary and its agents to conduct their own due diligence and use their own discretion when determining whether to accept a particular identification card. Dispensaries and their agents are responsible for continued compliance with the CRTA in order to promote the health and safety of all who participate in the Illinois cannabis market.

A HISTORY OF “420”



Cannabis' association with 420 has much humbler origins than the urban myths surrounding it. 420 was not the police code for cannabis smoking, does not stem from a Bob Dylan song, and is not the number of chemical compounds in cannabis. Simply put, 420 was just the right time for five California teens to consume cannabis together. The teens, calling themselves the Waldos, began using 420 as a code for their smoking meetups, which were usually scheduled for 4:20pm.¹

The code reached mainstream prominence when an editor for the famed cannabis magazine High Times attended a Grateful Dead concert and saw a flier advertising a 420 celebration on April 20.² The editor subsequently published an article about “420,” attributing its origin to the California police code for cannabis.³ It took several years for the Waldos to emerge with the true story. In the 1970s, the Waldos became affiliated with the Grateful Dead backstage scene, where they introduced the term “420” to the band and crew.⁴ The term eventually spread out to the greater Deadhead community before being popularized by High Times and cannabis enthusiasts across the U.S.

If you choose to celebrate 420 this coming April 20, please consume responsibly, stay safe, and make a plan ahead of time to use a designated driver, public transportation, or a ride-sharing app. Cannabis use can impair your mental functions in ways that don't always show immediately. Whether or not it is 420, it is always the right time to follow safe and responsible cannabis consumption practices.

¹The Real Origin of 420 (and 4/20, and 4:20) Lies With a Bunch of High School Kids, *Esquire*, (April 19, 2019), <https://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a6833/420-meaning-0110/>.

²Christian Orozco, *Looking back at the absolutely unexpected and totally wild origin of 420*, *L.A. Times*, (April 19, 2022, 5:00 A.M.), <https://www.latimes.com/lifestyle/story/2022-04-19/what-does-420-mean-weed>.

³*Id.*

⁴*Id.*

DISPENSARY SAFETY CONSIDERATION FOR 420

With the celebration of April 20 approaching, dispensaries are strongly encouraged to give specific awareness to their local fire code restrictions on the number of persons who can be in rooms or areas within the dispensary. Pursuant to 410 ILCS 705/1-10, other than Department-approved visitors, Limited Access Areas are limited to entry by “purchasers, dispensing organization owners and other dispensing organization agents, or service professionals conducting business with the dispensing organization ... and registered qualifying patients, caregivers, provisional patients, and Opioid Alternative Pilot Program participants.” “Purchaser” means a person 21 years of age or older who acquires cannabis for valuable consideration. “Service professionals” are people “working on a job that requires their presence at the dispensary, such as installing or maintaining security devices or providing construction services” – they are not entertainers. As such, persons such as, but not limited to DJs, musicians, people performing marketing activities, and caterers are not permitted in Limited Access Areas.

If you plan to have any media in the Limited Access Area of your dispensary, please submit a visitor request to FPR.CannabisEnforcement@Illinois.gov. Remember, when submitting a visitor request, you must include the following information: (1) name of dispensing organization, (2) name of the visitor, (3) reason for the visit, and (4) date and time of the visit. If welcoming media into a medical cannabis dispensary, the licensee must follow all HIPAA rules related to patient privacy or it may be subject to discipline by the Department. Please try to submit requests before noon on Wednesday, April 19..

If you anticipate a high volume of sales on April 20, please consider making any necessary adjustments to your currency management policies to accommodate any increase in cash at the dispensary, such as scheduling additional cash pickups before, during, or immediately after April 20 to minimize the amount of cash the dispensary has at its location.



STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Intro

We here at IDFPD wanted to take a moment to introduce you to two backbones of the Cannabis Control Unit: Claudine Najjar and Billy Aouste. Each of these individuals play a pivotal role in keeping us running and making things run smoothly for our licensees. You may not know it, but you've probably interacted with Claudine and Billy. They are often the first point of contact for a lot of people reaching out to the Cannabis Control Section and we wanted to highlight both of them in recognition of their hard work!

Claudine Najjar

Hello Claudine! Can you start by telling us a bit about yourself and your role in IDFPD?

I have been with IDFPD for a little more than three years, and almost 20 years in total working for the state. I work closely with Tony Correa and the Medical Cannabis DCIs on a plethora of matters (seriously, it would read like a laundry list if I went in to detail) to ensure all is running smoothly in the world of Cannabis.

What's your favorite part of your job?

The team! I am thankful to be surrounded by a great group of people working in the Cannabis Control Section, on both the Medical and Adult Use side.

What's something you or someone in the Administration has accomplished in the last few months that you're proud of?

We are THIS CLOSE to being 100% digital, meaning no paper applications, paper checks, etc. Once we are completely digital, that will be HUGE and something worth celebrating!

When you are not at work, how do you have fun?

Trying new restaurants in Chicago and the suburbs, spending time with family (which includes my doggie) and friends, and traveling.



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Billy Aouste

Hello Billy! Can you start by telling us a bit about yourself and your role in IDFPR?

Hi! I'm 31 and have lived in Illinois all my life, including living in Hainesville for the last 15 years. I graduated from DePaul University with a bachelor's degree. I started here at IDFPR in May 2021 and thoroughly enjoy my time and the people I work with. I'm the office associate with Adult Use Cannabis, where I oversee the Enforcement inbox. Generally, I handle the day-to-day requirements dispensaries are supposed to follow as well as any citations they may receive.



What's something you or someone in the Administration has accomplished in the last few months that you're proud of?

I'm very proud that we were able to get the new Adult Use licenses up and running. We are now finally seeing new dispensaries open, and it's nice to see new voices submit to the inbox. We all put in a lot of work to see it through.

What is your favorite random fact?

The oldest company in the world is a Japanese construction company founded in 578 AD, which continues to operate to this day with its newest President being the 41st family member to head it.

When you are not at work, how do you have fun?

I've been playing tabletop Role-Playing Games ("RPGs") since college and generally do so on the weekend with my friends. We're currently running Warhammer Fantasy 4E, Lancer, and Dungeon Crawl Classics, depending on schedule availability.

CONTACT US

Have questions about cannabis in Illinois? Please email us using one of the addresses below:

Adult Use Cannabis:

FPR.AdultUseCannabis@illinois.gov

Medical Cannabis:

FPR.MedicalCannabis@illinois.gov



State of Illinois

Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation