



Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

Purpose

Cannabis advertising continues to be among the top compliance-related complaints for the Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB). Many issues are due in part to limited advertising options and lack of clarity in state law. Signage and advertising often are viewed as one, however business marketing utilizes many different forms and types of signage for different purposes. Although all fit under an overall marketing strategy for businesses, the LCB seeks to provide clarity and flexibility in law for various signage and their purpose.

Licensees and trade associations have expressed interest in advertising regulations that treat the cannabis industry with greater similarity to other regulated products, such as alcohol. Other stakeholders have expressed concerns related to expanded advertising allowances, which typically involve preventing youth appeal and use, along with preventing poly drug use and impaired driving. And consumer groups, such as qualified medical cannabis patients have showcased challenges and concerns related to knowing where to find a medically endorsed retailer for either medically compliant product or to be able to register as a qualifying patient.

This proposal seeks to provide better alignment with alcohol regulations, providing greater flexibility for licensees while supporting regulations for youth prevention and public safety. The proposal aims to support recent legislative policy to maintain separation of age restricted products. The LCB also seeks to support allowances for medically-endorsed retail stores to advertise product and service availability.

Summary of Draft Bill Provisions

- The draft edits and amends terminology for greater clarity.
- The draft creates greater distinction between standard business trade name signs, billboards, and other advertising, including increasing the size allowance for trade name signage.
- The draft established greater clarity for signage location based on type.
- The draft increases the number of overall allowable signage.
- The draft offers additional advertising and clarity for medical cannabis purposes.
- The draft restricts cross advertising with other age restricted products.
- The draft restricts advertising associated with driving motor vehicles.