

April 6, 2020

Dr. Sara Cody  
County of Santa Clara  
Public Health Department  
976 Lenzen Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95126



**RE: Santa Clara County Shelter-in-Place Order**

Dear Dr. Sara Cody,

Thank you for your efforts to protect our community's public health. Your expertise and your collaborative spirit are exactly what this County needs to push through this crisis.

We write to formally request the Santa Clara County Public Health Office reconsider the Order only allowing medicinal cannabis to be purchased within a store, curbside, or by delivery. Retail in-store-take-out and curbside pick-up of both medicinal and recreational cannabis are essential to the health and well-being of many Santa Clara County residents.

Humbly, we advocate both employers and consumers of cannabis dispensaries abide by effective County public health guidelines. Should the County Office of Public Health consider amending the Shelter-in-Place Order, we expect social distancing to be enforced by the dispensary and regulated by public agencies.

The two most prominent natural compounds harvested from the cannabis plant are Cannabidiol (CBD) and Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). CBD and THC have many medical benefits and are available in various forms for those seeking pain relief.

Scientists have discovered that certain components of cannabis, including CBD, are responsible for its pain-relieving effects. CBD can be extracted from the cannabis plant and diluted with a carrier oil such as coconut or hemp seed oil. CBD oil has been used to treat various conditions including depression, anxiety, and even to manage seizures.

THC is the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis, and CBD and THC have many similar medical benefits including pain relief. THC has been prescribed by medical professionals to treat insomnia, muscle spasticity, glaucoma, and multiple sclerosis.

Many of our seniors have come to rely on cannabis-derived compounds for pain relief and discomfort from chronic medical issues and conditions. Today, recreational cannabis is only being distributed by delivery, but seniors are less likely to access smart phone applications for cannabis delivery services. For these vulnerable residents, access to these products is crucial for their health and well-being.

Cannabis in California was legalized for medicinal purposes in 1996 after the passage of Proposition 215, the Compassionate Use Act. At that time health professionals were legally allowed to issue patients a medical marijuana card to provide pain relief. On November 8, 2016, Proposition 64, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act, passed, which legalized the sale of adult use ("recreational") cannabis, which could be purchased and consumed in both dry and concentrated form. With the passage of Proposition 64, the

need for a medical marijuana card has diminished, and adults with ailments can visit a dispensary to purchase cannabis products.

That background is important because after Proposition 64 was passed and implemented, medical marijuana cards became almost entirely irrelevant. A medical marijuana card requires you to schedule an appointment and then seek approval from a doctor. That appointment can cost between \$45 - \$150, the application costs up to \$100, and the renewal for the medical card after it expires in one-year costs \$25 - \$40. Or you can walk into a dispensary, explain your ailment or sleep disorder, and walk out of the retail store with your treatment in-hand. Retailers estimate between 70% and 80% of their clientele are medical cannabis patients who have not renewed or taken the time to receive a medical marijuana card.

There is no doubt we are faced with an unprecedented global crisis, and we appreciate the aggressive approach of the Santa Clara County Office of Public Health. It is abundantly clear in our minds, the actions your office has taken will continue to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. However, there will be unknown and unintended consequences of a Shelter-in-Place Order, which could impact and place vulnerable residents at risk for increased depression, anxiety, and a variety of other ailments.

Today, a resident can walk out of a grocery store with a bottle of Tylenol, but that same person is unable to pull up curbside for pain relief from CBD oil. These individuals in need of relief should not be denied safe access to cannabis during this critical time.

We respectfully request the Santa Clara County Office of Public Health apply the Shelter-in-Place Order as consistently as possible towards medicinal and recreational sales of cannabis.

Sincerely,



San José City Councilmember — District 9, Pam Foley



San José City Council Councilmember — District 5, Magdalena Carrasco



San José City Councilmember — District 7, Maya Esparza