

Cannabis License FAQs

- **Who needs a license?**
 - o The Adult Use Cannabis Store license is required to operate any adult use cannabis establishment in accordance with Article III Section 304 through 315 of Chapter 14 of the City Ordinance
 - o The Medical Cannabis Dispensary license is required to operate any medical cannabis dispensary establishment in accordance with Article III Section 304 through 315 of Chapter 14 of the City Ordinance
- **Where can a cannabis establishment operate?**
 - o Adult Use Cannabis establishments shall only operate within the Adult Use Cannabis Overlay Zone and is strictly prohibited from all other zoning districts. Establishments shall not be located within five hundred (500) feet from the property line of a preexisting public or private school and/ or within one thousand (1,000) feet of the boundary of a drug-free zone designated by the City.
 - o Medical Dispensary establishments shall only be allowed within the Urban (U), Industrial (I), and Commercial (C) zoning districts and is strictly prohibited from all other zoning districts. Establishments shall not be located within five hundred (500) feet of the property line of a preexisting public or private school and/ or within one thousand (1,000) feet of the boundary of a drug-free zone designated by the City.
- **Is a public hearing required for this license?**
 - o Yes, a public hearing is required prior to action on the license application or renewal for medical and adult use licenses (see Article III Section 306 of Chapter 14 of the City Ordinance)
 - Note: presence at the hearing is required for initial license applications
- **Is City Council action required to obtain this license?**
 - o Yes, upon referral by the City Clerk of a completed application in accordance with Section 304 of Chapter 14, the City Council shall hold a public hearing to consider the license/permit application.
- **Is Planning Board action required to obtain this license?**
 - o In general, no. Planning Board reviews Major Use Site Development Plans, Subdivision Plans, and some Shoreland Zoning proposals. If the premises of the cannabis establishment triggers the requirement of any of these, the applicant would need to follow that process.
- **Do I need to submit separate license applications for medical and adult use?**
 - o Yes, these are treated as separate applications, and although the application form is the same, there is no combination license
- **What do I need to pay up front?**
 - o A public notice fee of \$100 is collected with the application form.

- o A license fee is required upon license approval and prior to the issuance of a license
 - Adult use = \$10,000
 - Medical = \$1,000
- **Do I need a victualer's (food establishment) license?**
 - o If the cannabis establishment will be selling or providing cannabis in an edible or drinkable form, the applicant must obtain a food establishment license, pursuant to 22 M.R.S.A section 2167 and Section 424 Victualer License of Chapter 14.
- **What do I need to submit with my application?**
 - o Conditional License from the state (adult use only)
 - o State Certificate of Registration (medical only)
 - o Letter from the Ellsworth Police Department confirming:
 - The security plan and anti-diversion policy and amendments are on file and found to be acceptable
 - The receipt of the summary report for incidents and illegal activities for the previous year
 - The semi-annual receipt of the employee lists and that the employees were found to be acceptable
 - o Letter from the Ellsworth Fire Department confirming the receipt of the material safety data sheets and annual updates
 - o Sign off from the Code Enforcement Officer and Life Safety Officer
 - o Public notice fee of \$100
- **What is required in a security plan?**
 - o A cannabis establishment shall have a security plan approved by and filed with the Ellsworth Police Department. The policy shall address means of preventing a continuing pattern of offenses against the public peace; drug-related criminal conduct within the premises of the cannabis establishment or the immediate area surrounding the cannabis establishment; and criminal conduct directly related to or arising from the operation of the cannabis establishment. The policy shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - The use of devices or a series of devices, including, but not limited to, a signal system interconnected with a radio frequency method such as cellular, private radio signals, or other mechanical or electronic device to detect unauthorized intrusions.
 - The interior must be equipped with electronic monitoring, video cameras, and panic buttons,
 - Qualified security staff may be required by the Ellsworth Police Chief.
 - The adult use cannabis store shall have a policy to consistently and systematically prevent loitering.
 - Surveillance records shall be kept for a minimum 30 days and be available to the City of Ellsworth Police upon requests.

- A service delivery plan.
- **What is required for incident reporting?**
 - o A cannabis establishment shall submit to the City of Ellsworth Police Department a copy of the State of Maine incident report form on the next business day after it discovers a violation of the requirements set out in the State rules regarding the operation of an adult use cannabis store. The report must indicate the nature of the breach and the corrective actions taken by the establishment.
- **What is required for illegal activity reporting?**
 - o Any suspected illegal activity involving the operation of a cannabis establishment must be reported to the City of Ellsworth Police Department by the establishment in a timely manner.
- **Can cannabis be consumed on or within the premises of the store or dispensary?**
 - o No, the consumption or inhalation of cannabis on or within the premises of a cannabis establishment is prohibited. Cannabis Social Clubs are prohibited within the City.
- **How many licenses are available?**
 - o The number of adult use cannabis store local licenses shall be limited to three (3)
 - A one-time conversion of an existing medical marijuana dispensary or a portion of an existing medical marijuana dispensary (such that the existing medical marijuana dispensary may continue operations within the same building as the adult use cannabis store), within the Cannabis Overlay Zone to an adult use cannabis store is allowed within the first year of the adoption of this ordinance, allowing for a one-time maximum of four (4) adult use cannabis stores.
 - If the number of stores drops below three (3) and there are multiple applicants for each available license, a new lottery will be held to bring the number to no more than three (3).
 - o There shall only be one (1) medical cannabis dispensary within the City of Ellsworth and it shall operate from only one physical location.
- **When does the adult use application window open?**
 - o The adult use cannabis store license application window will open on April 14, 2026 and close 30 days later on May 14, 2026.
- **What is the lottery? How does it work?**
 - o The adult use cannabis lottery only applies to adult use cannabis licenses. There is no lottery for medical cannabis dispensaries.
 - o A Local adult use cannabis store license shall be awarded subject to the lottery process found in Appendix B of Chapter 14.
 - o Applications received within 30 days of May 14, 2026 that meet the license and application requirements shall be eligible to participate in a lottery drawing to determine which applicant(s) will be awarded any available local license.

- o If there are three or less applicants for adult use cannabis store local licenses a lottery will not be required.
 - o When an adult use cannabis store local license remains or becomes available, the same 30-day application window and evaluation process shall apply.
- **Will applications be available outside of the application window?**
 - o The initial adult use cannabis store license application window will open on April 14, 2026 and close 30 days later on May 14, 2026.
 - o When an adult use cannabis store local license remains or becomes available, a new 30-day application window and evaluation process shall apply.