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Portland City Council Changes Cannabis Rules, Fees

The ordinance lowers cannabis fees, offers further fee reductions to small businesses and those affected by cannabis prohibition, offers deferred payments on license fees, and other changes

PORTLAND, OREGON, September 26, 2018 - This morning, Portland City Council voted to approve changes to Portland's cannabis regulations.

Effective immediately, fees will be reduced for all cannabis businesses in Portland. The proposal contains additional reduction in fees for small businesses and businesses whose owners or staff were impacted by cannabis prohibition. It also offers deferred license payments, eases requirements for some license types, and offer credits for early assistance building permitting meetings for qualifying businesses.

"Though Oregon voted to legalize cannabis in 2014, Cannabis prohibition still negatively impacts individuals and entire communities today," said Portland Commissioner Chloe Eudaly. "While we know our work isn't done, these changes are a small step toward reducing some of that impact. We're also excited to offer extra assistance and flexibility for small business owners, and to bring down fees for all license types, particularly retailers."

A brief summary of the adopted changes:

- **Reduce fees for all license types:**
 - Retailer license fees are now lowered from \$4,975 to \$3,500
 - Micro-Tier Producers and Processors and Retail Couriers will only pay a \$200 application and \$1,000 license fee
 - Other license types will continue to pay a \$3,500 license fee
 - Other license types (including Retailers) will now pay just \$500 for both the initial and the renewal application fee
- **Create a Social Equity Program with further reduced fees and other assistance**
 - Discounts on licensing fees for qualifying businesses, specifically for small businesses and for businesses whose owners or staff were directly impacted by cannabis prohibition
 - Provide a credit to qualifying businesses that utilize the Bureau of Development Services' Early Assistance and Preliminary Life Safety Meetings
- **Offer a deferred payment plan for license fees**
 - All license types may defer full payment of their license fees for six months

- **Modify permitting requirements for processors and producers**
 - Extract Processors must continue to demonstrate that all commercial building, mechanical, and tank permitting (if applicable) is final to get a license
 - However, all other Processors and Producers must now only demonstrate at least an issued (not final) applicable commercial building permit

There will be more changes to Portland's cannabis regulations in the coming months and years. These changes will be informed by data collected after implementing the above changes, by an upcoming citywide market study of Portland's cannabis industry, and by the restarting of Portland's cannabis advisory body in early 2019.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Brandon Goldner, City of Portland Cannabis Program
503-823-4462 – brandon.goldner@portlandoregon.gov

Winta Yohannes, Office of Commissioner Chloe Eudaly
503-823-3065 – winta.yohannes@portlandoregon.gov