



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Commercial Cannabis Business (CCB) Permit**

#### **Applicant Interviews**

<http://www.fresno.gov/cannabis>

**Revised August 10, 2021**

**The Fresno Municipal Code (FMC) can be found here:**

[https://library.municode.com/ca/fresno/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=MUCOCHFRCA](https://library.municode.com/ca/fresno/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=MUCOCHFRCA)

#### **Standard Application Interviews**

1. Will another applicant be given the opportunity to interview in place of an applicant that is disqualified or withdraws from the process?
  - a. It will be at the City Manager's discretion as to whether additional applicants will be added to the interview pool based on the number of permits available.
2. How will the interview be scored or weighted? Is there a score sheet or a rubric applicants can refer to?
  - a. Please see page 5 of the Application Procedures & Guidelines for a Commercial Cannabis Business Permit.
3. If a Social Equity Applicant is selected, and their location buffers the location of a Standard Applicant, will the Standard Applicant be notified and removed from the Phase 3 interviews?
  - a. The top standard applicants will proceed to Phase 3 for an interview. Applicants will be notified in writing with a final decision once one is rendered.
4. If a specific district has multiple applicants that buffer one another, and the results of the buffering enable only 2 Applicants to receive a license (including Social Equity) will the City interview additional individuals in that district, or stop at the 2 licenses awarded?
  - a. It will be at the City Manager's discretion as to whether additional applicants will be added to the interview pool based on the number of permits available.

5. For Phase 3, is the scoring criteria including the 7 sections totaling 2400 points, as described in the Application Procedures and Guidelines, still being used to score Phase 3?
  - a. Yes, page 5 of the Application Procedures & Guidelines for a Commercial Cannabis Business Permit (Application Procedures) document is still the scoring criteria. The guidance listed in the interview letter dated June 24, 2021 should be considered a reminder to include the listed information in your presentation. Applicants should divide their total presentation time of 20 minutes as they see fit to cover each section listed in the Application Procedures.
6. In order to receive the maximum points for the local ownership section as part of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan, an applicant must have a local owner who resides or owns a business in the CITY of Fresno, not the County. Is this correct?
  - a. Yes.
7. Please confirm that maximum points cannot be achieved in the category of local ownership (a subset of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan) in either Phase 2 or Phase 3 by an applicant who identified local owners holding less than 51% equity.
  - a. Yes, confirmed.
8. Please confirm that maximum points cannot be achieved in the category of local ownership (a subset of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan) in either Phase 2 or Phase 3 by an applicant who identified local owners who either reside or own a business in Clovis, Fresno County, or anywhere outside of the City of Fresno.
  - a. Yes, confirmed.
9. Please identify what percentage of points allotted for the local ownership category (a subset of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan) will be awarded for those who identified local owners who reside or own a business in the COUNTY of Fresno as opposed to the City of Fresno, and who hold equity less than 51%, in Phase 3.
  - a. This information will be available on applicant score sheets which will be available through a Public Records Act request. Please visit <http://www.fresno.gov/pr>.
10. Please identify what percentage of points allotted for the local ownership category (a subset of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan) will be awarded for those who identified local owners who reside or own a business in the CITY of Fresno, but who hold equity less than 51%, in Phase 3.

- a. This information will be available on applicant score sheets which will be available through a Public Records Act request. Please visit <http://www.fresno.gov/pr>.
- 11. Please identify what percentage of points allotted for the local ownership category (a subset of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan) were awarded for those who identified local owners who reside or own a business in the COUNTY of Fresno as opposed to the City of Fresno, and who hold equity less than 51%, in Phase 2.
  - a. This information will be available on applicant score sheets which will be available through a Public Records Act request. Please visit <http://www.fresno.gov/pr>.
- 12. Please identify what percentage of points allotted for the local ownership category (a subset of Social Policy & Local Enterprise Plan) were awarded for those who identified local owners who reside or own a business in the CITY of Fresno, but who hold equity less than 51%, in Phase 2.
  - a. This information will be available on applicant scores sheets which will be available through a Public Records Act request. Please visit <http://www.fresno.gov/pr>.
- 13. Since some applicants have submitted multiple applications and will hear the interview questions during their first interview, will the City provide the interview questions to all applicants in advance?
  - a. There are only three standardized questions. They are as follows:
    - i. What motivated your ownership team to start your business?
    - ii. What motivates you to operate your business in the City of Fresno?
    - iii. What strategies do you use to ensure you stay in compliance with local and State regulations?
  - b. All other follow-up questions will be specific to the application, based on the presentation, depending on whether the interview panel members need additional information to understand and evaluate the proposal.

### Applicable to All Applications and Permit-types

- 1. Who is on the interview panel for the City?
  - a. Gregory Barfield, Assistant City Manager; Mike Sanchez, Planning & Development Department Assistant Director; Jennifer Ruiz, Project Manager
- 2. Will the City consider changing the number of interviewees from 3 to 4?

- a. The number of interviewees will remain at a maximum of three for all applicants.
- 3. Please confirm that awarding 21 licenses is the maximum that can be awarded, but not the minimum. In other words, the City has the authority to award less than 21 licenses?
  - a. Yes.
- 4. Is there a deadline for turning in the visual presentation to the City?
  - a. Please email presentation materials to [cannabis.regs@fresno.gov](mailto:cannabis.regs@fresno.gov) at least two business days prior to your interview so that the City can confirm that the file can be opened. One of your interview panel members will be made co-host during the interview so that you can share and control the screen, however, the City will have a copy of your presentation in case of technical difficulties.
- 5. How will Section 6 (Location) and Section 7 (Community Benefits and Investments Plan) components be scored?
  - a. The total points possible for these sections are listed on Page 5 of the Application Procedures document. The score will be an evaluation of the interview and written materials for these sections.
- 6. Is there a specific amount of time dedicated to each specific question asked in the question and answer (Q/A) portion?
  - a. No. There is a maximum of 45 minutes for the interview. This includes the presentation and Q/A.
- 7. Are videos allowed?
  - a. The use of videos during the applicant's presentation is at the discretion of the applicant. It will be considered part of the interview time if an applicant chooses to include it.

### Social Equity Application Interviews

- 1. How will the scoring and selection work for social equity applicants?
  - a. Please see page 6-7 of the Social Equity application procedures. Applicants are force-ranked against each other to establish an eligibility list.
- 2. Will more than one social equity applicant be awarded per district?
  - a. It is possible that more than one social equity applicant may be awarded in a district. All permit approvals are at the discretion of the City Manager.
- 3. Will the Social Equity Applicant preliminary permit approvals be selected and finalized before the Standard Applicant Phase 3 interviews?

- a. The Social Equity applicants will be issued preliminary decisions once the interviews are complete for all social equity applicants. The City is estimating a two week period for the City Manager to review and confirm the results after all interviews for that group is complete. Therefore, it is anticipated that standard applicant interviews will be in progress at the time the social equity applicant permit approvals are issued.
- 4. Is the City planning to award only 1 Social Equity license per every 7 licenses, or does the City plan to award more than 1 per every 7?
  - a. Fresno Municipal Code Section 9-3316(b)(6)(i) allows for a minimum of 1, maximum of 2 out of every 7 retail permits to be awarded to Social Equity applicants. The City Manager will determine the number of permits to issue Social Equity applicants based on the interview process.