



MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 14, 2023
TO: William Koch, Deputy Director, Community and Local Equity Grants Unit
FROM: Mendocino County Cannabis Department
SUBJECT: Local Equity Entrepreneur Program (“LEEP”) Round 5 Equity Criteria

Please find the proposed LEEP Round 5 Equity Criteria below which will be presented in Mendocino County’s LEEP Program Manual.

Any individual who has worked in or currently works in the cannabis industry who has obtained, applied for, or will apply for a cannabis CCBL (commercial business license) in Mendocino County, and owns at least 50% of the business while meeting at least one of the following six equity criteria:

1. Lived in a place for at least five years between 1980 and 2016 that was a California county with drug arrest rates that were higher than the state average drug arrest rates and is within the top 25% for unemployment and poverty; a DCC map tool is accessible to see if applicants reside in qualifying areas;
2. Any individual who was arrested and/or convicted of a non-violent cannabis-related offense prior to November 8, 2016, or who has a parent, sibling or child who was arrested for or convicted of the sale, possession, use, manufacture or cultivation of cannabis (including as a juvenile) prior to November 8, 2016;
3. Any individual who was personally raided or was subject to asset seizure arising from a cannabis enforcement-related event;
4. Any person who experienced sexual assault, exploitation, domestic violence, and/or human trafficking while participating in the cannabis industry;
5. Any person who has become homeless or suffered a loss of housing as a result of cannabis enforcement.
6. Any person who has a household income that is no more than 60% of the area’s median income, or is eligible to get financial aid through a program such as CalFresh, MediCal, CalWORKS, Supplemental Security income, and Social Security disability. In order to ensure that the funds dispersed will be utilized solely by verified equity applicants, the program only allows equity payments to be made to individuals who have been equity program verified or to businesses that have at least 50% ownership by equity program verified persons.