

1. Portal Questions

YES or NO

A. Have you been told in an email or other method of communication what standards must be met for an application to be deemed 'complete'?	N/A
B. Have you been told in writing what the standards of proof are if you have to disprove a wrong assumption made by staff that could be the basis of a denial?	N/A
1. Do you feel an error or incorrect assumption made by Staff has led to you being deemed incomplete'?	N/A
C. Do you know what the policies and procedures of MCP are for the Portal?	N/A
1. Do you know how to locate them?	N/A
2. Did you understand the portal questions and instructions?	N/A
3. Were you able to upload the documents you needed/wanted to in the portal system based on the questions you were asked?	N/A
D. Do you feel that you have been provided clear directions on how to address any incomplete items?	N/A
1. Are all the forms and instructions clear and without errors by the MCP?	N/A
2. Does the Portal allow you to attach the documents you thought you needed to attach?	N/A
3. Did the instructions cause you confusion as to what items to attach in what location of the portal?	N/A
4. Did you find that if you checked the box you thought was applicable, that you were not able to upload documents that you thought you would be able to upload because there was no place to do it unless you changed your answer?	N/A
E. Have you been marked incomplete?	N/A
F. Have you been marked incomplete more than once?	N/A
1. Were any of those times due to MCP error or Portal Limitations?	N/A
2. If you received multiple incompletes were the reviews consistent?	N/A

G. Has MCP been effective in answering your questions about the Portal?	N/A
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2. Equity Questions

YES or NO

A. Do you feel that MCP & Elevate Impact have clearly informed you of policies, procedures and standards of success versus failure for your application?	NO
B. If you are unclear on those policies, procedures and standards of success from MCP & Elevate Impact, are they effective at providing clarity when you present them with questions?	NO
C. Do you find it difficult to get timely responses from MCP & Elevate Impact?	YES
D. Do the webinars offered by MCP & Elevate Impact provide you with useful, clear information?	NO
E. If you have been required to make revisions to your specific grant application or budget, were you given all the corrections at one time or did they happen in small successive installments?	N/A
F. If in successive installments, do you believe that the information could have been presented to you more efficiently?	N/A
G. Do you feel like the goal posts have changed during your grant application process?	N/A

• 3. General Program questions

YES or NO

A. Do you feel that you have a clear understanding of MCP policies, procedures and standards of success versus failure for your permit or application?	NO
B. If you are unclear on those policies, procedures or standards for success in the program, how effective is MCP at providing clarity when you present them with questions?	NO
C. Do you find it difficult to get timely responses from MCP?	YES

D. Do the webinars offered by MCP provide you with useful, and meaningful way to obtain clear information?	NO
E. Do you feel like you can participate effectively in MCP webinars?	NO
F. Do you know what the policies and procedures of MCP are?	NO
1. Do you know how to locate them?	NO
2. Are all forms you need on the website?	NO
3. Are they in the location they should be for the task you must perform?	NO

4. Additional Comments

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to shed light on a few issues that I have encountered over the course of trying to obtain my cannabis license through Mendocino County. While I have struggled financially with this business and its extreme rules and regulations, I have somehow been able to make it this far.

First off, I am thankful that I have not had to enter the portal submission process as of yet as we were issued our permit. Nonetheless, the rigorous emails and calls back and forth have often stalled many of my processes which keep my business from full production. For example, I have had a final CalFire inspection on April 9, 2021 and an email was sent out regarding it to be completed. As of today, close to a year later, I am still waiting.

One major issue that I would like to bring up is with the Equity Grant. When first applying for the grant, I had no idea that there was a possibility that a return email would go to spam. It was not until almost a month later that I had to inquire about it, that they said to check that mailbox. I was given a person that lives on the East Coast and this has been nothing but difficult. First off, I am three hours apart and I have to plan that I can only communicate until 2pm which makes things difficult. I was able to meet after hours but it had to be a quick conversation and nothing was accomplished. When I asked for a link to the LEEP grant website, I was told that they didn't have it on them and to just look it up. I also had to talk while they were driving and were distracted. Shouldn't a California based equity grant that oversees California applicants hire someone

from the area? This person has no idea about Mendocino County, the rural workforce, and the amount of contractors that are available for services. Let alone, the information that can be obtained from such a small community. This should be a requirement that the ones who work for this grant are living in California at the very most and then have some understanding of Mendocino County and cannabis history. After all, it is California residents that are part of this contract. Moreover, when trying to communicate with the equity grant contractors, it was difficult and often I did not receive an email back. For example, I emailed on Friday around lunch time asking a very specific question about modifying the budgets and I still have yet to hear back. It is now Monday afternoon. I then emailed the lead and she replied but it took 8 back and forth emails to finally get an answer after I reworded my question using examples of what I had heard in a webinar. With this, my answers that I received to the questions were one sentence, no salutation, no capitalization, punctuation, greeting or signature. It felt like I was a burden and that it was just easy to quickly write something so as to "reply." While I have been cleared for the first initial acceptance, I fear that my budget will not suffice and I will have to go back and forth wasting my time because of lack of education about our county as well as the gregarious regulations that keep being laid out. Unfortunately, I foresee the state taking the money back as we are being fooled by them. We are told to file for things and then all of sudden get a certain deadline that we have to meet "or else." How come no one has received any grant monies as of yet? Who is behind the mismanagement and who is not doing their job to help the farmers?

I hate to say it, but I feel like we are at the mercy of funding. When we go to meetings, I feel like we have to put our hands together and pray that something will eventually work out while we are being laughed at. I have been hesitant to speak out because I am afraid of retaliation from the county and/or the equity program. I feel that if I do not bow down to them and let them know that I will fail without them, they sit back and just don't care. Just like everything else, both MCP and now this grant has been mismanaged and us small farmers are seeing the blunt of it.

My hope is that MCP and the equity grant contractors get their act together so that we are given what we deserve. I wish that I could have more positive things to say and be thankful for the program. Those that put their necks out to go legal and pay an insurmountable amount in doing so, are seeing their fate fade away at a fast rate. One can only look at how many are selling their farms or moving away.

Thanks for reading and I hope this letter finds you well and that you are able to see the light that, or rather the long dark tunnel with a faint light at the end, that the small farmers face daily.

Sincerely,
Cyrus Maahs
Ridge Top Rukus, LLC