

Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council Meeting #11
Wednesday, April 16, 2025 · 4:00 – 5:56 PM

Members Present:

Dr. Madhumi Mitra
Dr. Deondra Asike
Dr. Leigh Vinocur
Karrissa Miller
Dr. Elizabeth Kromm
Dawn Berkowitz
Del. Terri L Hill
Nishant Shah
Bethany Young

Members Not Present:

Dr. Leah Sera
Dr. David Gorelick
Jocelyn Bratton-Payne
Sen. Benjamin Kramer
Martin Proulx
Jason Semanoff

MDH Members Present:

Alexandra Nowalk
Dana Moncrief
Erin Portillo
Katherine Natafji
Michelle George
Pamela Williams

Members from Public:

Annie Carver
Cassidy McConnell
Christine Boyd
Elease Booker
George Townsend
Johanna Heller
Mathew Swinburne
Mikayla Symone Roberts
Rebecca Jackson

1. Open Meeting. 4:02 PM.

- a. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Deondra Asike, Council Chair, at 4:02 PM on Wednesday, April 16, 2025.
- b. Kate Natafji took a roll call; 7 members were present at the start of the meeting. Dr. Asike provided an update about the progress of filling the Council Vice Chair position. Karrissa Miller has agreed to serve in the position of Vice Chair.
- c. Erin Portillo was introduced as the new Program Manager for MDH's Cannabis Public Health branch.
- d. Dr. Asike announced the dates of the remaining 2025 CPHAC meetings:
 - July 16, 2025, 4:00- 6:00 PM
 - September 24, 2025, 4:00- 6:00 PM
 - Note: The Council will discuss setting a new date for the September meeting during the July meeting.
 - October 15, 2025, 4:00- 6:00 PM
- e. Council members with terms expiring soon were reminded that they must reapply for appointments to continue to serve on the council.
- f. Recommendations Report: Members will revisit the current recommendations in the July meeting to track progress and inform the December 1st report. Internal coordination for updates across entities (e.g., MCA, MDH, MSDE) is planned.
- g. A quorum was reached after 30 minutes. The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved by the council.

2. Session Debrief

Mat Swinburne, Director of the UMB Legal Resource Center for Public Health Policy, provided an overview of Cannabis-related bills proposed during the 2025 Maryland legislative session.

- Key Passed Bills:
 - o SB214/HB12: Regulates intoxicating hemp products and strengthens ATCC enforcement.
 - o SB215: Adjusts rules for cannabis on-site consumption establishments; smoking prohibited off-premises.
 - o SB222/HB46: Adds members from the Motor Vehicle Association and Office of Social Equity to the Council.
 - o Tax Increase: Retail cannabis sales tax increased from 9% to 12%.
- Failed Bills:

- o HB1377: Attempted to repeal restrictions on outdoor cannabis advertising; did not advance.
- o SB1023/HB1408: Sought employment protection for medical cannabis users in fire/rescue; failed in House committee.

3. **Legislative Reflections and Improvements**

The council discussed ideas for improving its responses and processes for future legislative sessions:

- Having evidence-based briefs and position papers on hand
- Engage legislators with education outside of session.
- Improve voting procedures and definitions of quorum and voting eligibility.

4. **Bylaws Review**

- Proposed revisions to clarify quorum definitions (e.g., "voting members actively serving").
- Need to define "voting" vs. "non-voting" members.
- Bylaw revision vote postponed for additional clarification and cleanup.

5. **Data Overview: Insights from the 2025 Maryland Cannabis Use Biannual Study**

Dawn Berkowitz of the Maryland Cannabis Administration presented information from the 2025 Maryland Cannabis Use study. This study is a follow-up to the 2023 baseline study assessing usage trends post-legalization. Key findings from the study include: a downward trend in youth cannabis, ongoing challenges in distinguishing regulated vs. unregulated product exposure in health data, and initiatives underway with Poison Control to better identify product origins in incident reports.

6. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

7. **Adjourn. 5:56 PM.**

Dr. Asike asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. David Gorelick made the motion and Jocelyn Bratton-Payne seconded the motion. All members present were in favor of the motion.