



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Nonmedical Cannabis Banned; Focus is on Medical**

*Board of Supervisors opts for local control on business activities*

**San Rafael, CA** – To maintain local control over nonmedical cannabis in the future, the Marin County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on February 7 to ban nonmedical cannabis business activities in unincorporated areas.

“Our primary focus is to consider medical cannabis dispensaries over the next few months,” said Board President Judy Arnold. “Banning nonmedical cannabis business activities allows us to preserve local control rather than accept state-imposed guidelines.”

California voters passed Proposition 64, also known as the [Adult Use of Marijuana Act](#), in November 2016. It allows local governments to ban business activities or develop local ordinances to govern nonmedical cannabis business activities. Adults over 21 can still use cannabis and cultivate up to six plants indoors following certain restrictions.

The new County ordinance, passed at a hearing that lasted less than 5 minutes with no public comment, contains two prohibitions. First, it prohibits all recreational cannabis business activities in unincorporated Marin, including manufacturing and retail distribution. Second, it prohibits outdoor cultivation. The local ban gives the County time to implement and learn from the licensing program for medical cannabis dispensaries that is currently underway.

With the ban on nonmedical cannabis, residents living near a licensed medical cannabis dispensary in the future would be assured that such a business would be licensed for medical purposes only.

The County is hosting [three public meetings](#) so residents can learn more about applicants and locations for proposed medical cannabis dispensaries. The first meeting in the Tamalpais Valley area south of Mill Valley attracted more about 150 people, and the second was scheduled for 6 p.m. February 7 at Lagunitas School in the San Geronimo Valley. The final one is at 6 p.m. February 16 in the Marin County Board of Supervisors chamber, 3501 Civic Center Drive, San Rafael. No decisions

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are being made at any of the meetings; they are designed for the advisory committee members to hear public feedback, concerns and suggestions.

Although cannabis is considered an illegal drug by the federal government, Proposition 215 has since 1996 ensured that seriously ill Californians have the right to obtain and use cannabis for medical purposes upon receiving a recommendation from a physician. The County's ordinance is consistent with the state's [Compassionate Use Act](#) and [Medical Cannabis Program](#). A licensed dispensary would have to be at least 800 feet from schools, public parks, smoke shops, and other cannabis dispensaries to qualify for a permit.

Learn more about the County's cannabis programs at [www.marincounty.org/cannabis](http://www.marincounty.org/cannabis).

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**NOTE TO MEDIA:**

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