Effective January 1, 2024, all Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA) licensed growers, processors, and dispensaries are required to meet the packaging and labeling requirements listed in COMAR 14.17.18 for finished product packaging. The purpose of this bulletin is to clarify those requirements and provide guidance for inventory that does not currently meet the requirements in COMAR 14.17.18.

Packaging and Labeling Requirements

MCA emergency regulations took effect July 1, 2023 and include requirements for cannabis finished product packaging. The regulations allowed licensed growers, processors, and dispensaries a period of 6 months, until December 31, 2023, to update packaging to comply with the new statutory and regulatory requirements. MCA is providing the following information to assist licensees in navigating the approval process for products requiring pre-market review (edibles, liquids, tinctures, capsules, and exempt products).

1. Digital renderings are acceptable to submit for METRC manual approval.
2. Peel and reveal labels are acceptable and may be used to provide the following information:
    a. Nutrition facts;
    b. Non-cannabis ingredients;
    c. Itemization of cannabinoids/terpenes; and
    d. Allergens (if applicable).
3. QR codes are acceptable and may be used to provide the following information:
    a. Certificate of Analysis (COA), provided that the COA must have an individual code that links directly to the COA;
    b. Nutrition facts;
    c. Non-cannabis ingredients;
    d. Itemization of cannabinoids/terpenes; and
    e. Allergens (if applicable).
4. Warning statements, disclaimers, and the universal symbol are only acceptable directly on the outer marketing layer.

Metrc Item Categories

Metrc item categories previously used for the medical cannabis program will be unavailable for industry use effective December 1, 2023. At that time, processors will no longer be able to enter new inventory without using valid item categories and compliant packaging and labeling. Please be advised that product review and approval requires an estimated 30 days from the date of a complete submission being entered into Metrc.

In order to ensure all cannabis products meet the requirements of Title 36, Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Article and COMAR 14.17.18 by January 1, 2024, licensees will be able to remediate non-compliant labeling by applying a sticker and/or providing a product insert containing the missing information. The following information is able to be remediated by sticker or by product insert:

- Warning statements listed in 14.17.18.03(C);
- Product information listed in 14.17.18.03(D), including
    - Net weight of cannabis or cannabis product;
    - An itemization, including weight, of all cannabinoid and terpene ingredients;
    - Allergens (if applicable);
    - A list of all non-cannabis ingredients;
    - A list of any solvents used to produce the product;
    - A nutrition fact panel consistent with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Standards (edibles); and
- Active and inactive ingredients in descending order of predominance by weight (edibles).

Licensed Processors

Licensed processors are able to transfer remediated packaging to dispensaries until February 29, 2024. Beginning March 1, 2024, all packaging transferred to licensed dispensaries must comply in full with Title 36, Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Article and COMAR 14.17. As a reminder, effective January 1, 2024, all cannabis and cannabis products must be in packaging that is plain and opaque, child resistant, and tamper evident in order to be sold to licensed dispensaries.

Licensed Dispensaries

Licensed dispensaries are able to distribute cannabis and cannabis products in remediated packaging through May 31, 2024. Beginning June 1, 2024, all cannabis and cannabis products sold in licensed dispensaries must be in packaging that complies with Title 36, Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Article and COMAR 14.17. As a reminder, effective January 1, 2024, all cannabis and cannabis products must be in packaging that is plain and opaque, child resistant, and tamper evident in order to be sold to patients and consumers regardless of remediation.

If you have questions regarding the manual product approval process, please contact mca.productapprovals@maryland.gov. If you have questions regarding packaging compliance, please contact your MCA investigator or mca.compliance@maryland.gov.