



Growing Equity Together (GET) Program
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Growing Equity Together Administrative Manual

In January 2020, the Cannabis Program (Program) was informed of the Cannabis Equity Grants Program for Local Jurisdictions (CEG) offered by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). With guidance from the Legislative Program, Program staff applied to GO-BIZ in March 2020 for Type 1 funding to conduct an Equity Assessment (Assessment) to identify marginalized segments within Monterey County, and groups of individuals most impacted by economic disparities and cannabis arrest rates which will inform the creation of a local equity program.

In April 2020, the Program was informed the County received the \$150,000 grant award. In May 2020, the Board of Supervisors (Board) authorized the Program Manager to execute a grant agreement with GO-Biz to receive grant funding. In July 2020, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Program Manager to execute an agreement with University Corporation, at Monterey Bay to partner with staff from the Institute for Community Collaborative Studies (ICCS) at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB).

In August 2021 the Program presented the findings of the Assessment and staff was directed to develop an equity program structure and applicant criteria and return to the Board to gain policy direction. In October 2021 the Program presented the proposed structure of the Growing Equity Together (GET) Program to the Board and in December 2021, the Board authorized the creation of the GET Program.

The purpose of this Administrative Manual (Manual) is to describe the qualifications for, and services to be provided by, the County of Monterey's GET Program. The Manual is subject to updates and revisions as approved by the Cannabis Committee.

A. Qualifications

1. Initial Program Eligibility: To be considered for GET eligibility, applicants must the following qualifications:
 - a) Applicant is not applying for a cultivation license for a premises that exceeds one acre of total canopy for outdoor cultivation, or 22,000 square feet for mixed-light or indoor cultivation.
 - b) Business must be in the unincorporated area of Monterey County.
2. Primary Program Eligibility: To be considered for GET eligibility, in addition to the criteria in Section 1 above, applicants must meet three of the following four criteria:
 - a) Convicted of a non-violent, cannabis-related offense.
 - b) An individual from a historically oppressed group.
 - c) Household income is below the 100% Lower Living Standard Income Level.
 - d) A primary resident of Monterey County for at least five years.

B. Services

Services which may be provided by the GET Program may include, depending on need and availability of funds from grants or other sources:

1. Direct payment on the applicant's behalf of deposits and permitting/licensing fees for Monterey County, such as
 - a) Administrative or Coastal Administrative Permit required by the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department pursuant of Chapter 20/21.67 and 20/21.69 of Monterey County Code.
 - b) Cannabis Business Permit required by the Program pursuant of Chapter 7.90 of Monterey County Code.
 - c) Annual Business License required by the Treasurer-Tax Collector Department pursuant of Chapter 7.02 of Monterey County Code.
2. Direct payment on the applicant's behalf of fees by the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office for Weights and Measures, for sealing and annual registration of scales used in cannabis licensed businesses, or fees associate with Pesticide Applicator requirements.
3. Direct payment on the applicant's behalf of fees to agencies and/or professionals offering direct technical assistance related to:
 - a) Small business development assistance, including but not limited to formation of a business entity, business planning, loan application preparation, site location services, human resource management, capital procurement services, bookkeeping and accounting practices and systems.
 - b) Educational curriculum pertaining to the licensed cannabis industry, including but not limited to, an overview of state license types, supply chain dynamics, the California Cannabis Track and Trace system, and state and local taxation assessment methods and remittance.
4. Direct grants to applicants, not to exceed \$17,000 per grant, which will be dispersed in proportional installments based on applicant progress:
 - a) 25% when a business entity has been established with the California Secretary of State.
 - b) 25% when the applicant has submitted applications for the administrative permit, cannabis business permit, and annual business license.
 - c) 25% when a property eligible for the commercial cannabis activities identified within the administrative permit and cannabis business permit applications has been purchased or leased.
 - d) 25% when an initial site inspection has been conducted.

C. Program Administration

1. Administration and service coordination shall primarily be performed by Program staff.
 2. Program staff shall monitor and report on all program services provided through the GET Program, at least annually and more frequently as directed by funding agencies, the Board of Supervisors, state law or regulation.
 3. Program staff shall receive and review all eligibility verification documents of potential GET participants.
 4. Program staff shall receive and review all equity program applications.
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5. Program staff shall administer awards to all equity program grantees.

D. Provision of Services

1. Program staff serves as the liaison between GET recipients and the agencies providing eligible services.
2. Program may enter into an agreement on behalf of the County with qualified external agencies capable of providing the services described in this Manual.

E. Budget Allocation

Available GO-Biz CEG funds shall be allocated for Program Services specified in Section B, above, as follows:

Grants	80%
Direct technical assistance	10%
Administration	10%