

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Brian Schweitzer  
GOVERNOR

Anna Whiting Sorrell  
DIRECTOR

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## STATE OF MONTANA

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www.dphhs.mt.gov

PO BOX 4210  
HELENA, MT 59604-4210  
(406) 444-5622  
FAX (406) 444-1970

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### **\*Important Notice About Changes to the Montana Medical Marijuana Law\***

Dear Patient:

The Montana Legislature passed a new law that changes Montana's Medical Marijuana Program. The best resource to find out about the changes to the program, and what they mean for patients, is the Department of Public Health and Human Services medical marijuana website at: [www.dphhs.mt.gov/medicalmarijuana](http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/medicalmarijuana). New frequently asked questions, definitions and a copy of the new law, SB423, are available on the website now. New registration forms, information about the new application process and new registration fees will be posted on the website by June 20, 2011.

This letter includes a summary of how the new law will affect currently registered patients.

#### **Currently Registered Patients:**

- Individuals must be a Montana resident to be a registered patient.
- Patient cards will remain valid and will expire on the expiration date printed on the card.
- Patients may renew cards 30 days before the card expiration date. Anyone with an expiration date later than July 20, 2011 must renew under the new program. The department will stop accepting old forms on June 20, 2011.
- Patients must carry their medical marijuana patient card with them at all times, along with a picture ID.

#### **Currently Registered Patients Growing for Themselves:**

Patients growing their own medical marijuana may continue to do so, but should be aware of the new plant limitations:

- Patients can have 12 seedlings, 4 mature flowering plants, and 1 ounce of usable marijuana.
- Patients cannot grow marijuana or produce marijuana infused products at a location that is shared with, rented to or leased by another cardholder, unless individuals are related by the second degree of kinship.

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### **Currently Registered Patients with an Assigned Caregiver:**

Registered patients receiving medical marijuana from a caregiver will have no caregiver effective July 1, 2011. Starting on July 1, patients may:

- Begin growing medical marijuana for their personal use. Visit the Department's website for links to internet sites that may help patients get started at [www.dphhs.mt.gov/medicalmarijuana](http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/medicalmarijuana); OR
- Patients can find a person willing to become a registered provider and provide medical marijuana to them *at no cost*. People interesting in becoming providers should visit the website for more information.
- Once a patient has named a provider the patient can no longer grow their own marijuana.

### **Currently Registered Patients with a Chronic Pain Diagnosis:**

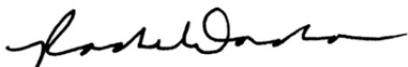
- Patients *DO NOT NEED APPROVAL FROM TWO DOCTORS IF*, upon renewal the patient's primary doctor states, on forms provided by the Department, that the pain is persistent and severe and can be proven by necessary and relevant x-ray or MRI.
- As an alternative, a second physician, after conducting a physical examination of the patient, is required to confirm the chronic pain diagnosis; if the primary care physician has not completed the relevant and necessary diagnostic testing.

The Department will continue to work hard to ensure all applications, renewals and change forms are processed as quickly as possible. *All completed application or renewal forms received by, June 20, 2011, will be processed and valid registration cards will be issued during the transition period.*

The current registration, change request and renewal forms will remain available on the DPHHS website at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/medicalmarijuana/index.shtml>. After June 20, 2011, all old registration forms received will be returned to the sender.

The Department is committed to assisting patients with the changes between the current law and the new program. If you have questions you may contact the Department by phone at 406-444-2676. Please leave a message with your question and your contact information. Program staff will return calls as soon as possible, in the order they are received.

Sincerely



Rachel Donahoe  
Medical Marijuana Program Manager  
Quality Assurance Division/ Licensure Bureau  
PO Box 202953  
Helena, MT 59620-2953