



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

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Beverley Eckensweiler, *President*
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Beverley Eckensweiler, President

SUBJECT: **Cannabis Store Locations and Buffer Zone to Schools**

Further to OCSTA's memo of October 17, 2018, on Wednesday November 14, 2018 the Government of Ontario announced its decision in respect of the buffer zone between licensed cannabis retail stores and schools that will form regulations under Bill 36 *an Act to enact a new Act and make amendments to the various other Acts respecting the use and sale of cannabis and vapour products in Ontario, 2018*.

On the buffer zone, the regulations will establish a minimum distance of 150 metres (approximately 500 feet) between cannabis retail stores and schools, including private and federally-funded First Nation schools off-reserve. The application process for private cannabis retail store licenses will begin on December 17, 2018.

Other new strict regulations established by the Ontario Government include:

- Retailers will not be permitted to allow anyone under the age of 19 to enter their stores. Specific instances in which applicants will be denied a licence, including cannabis-related criminal offences.
- Notably, illegal cannabis retailers who were operating after October 17, 2018 are not eligible for Ontario cannabis sales licenses.
- A prohibition on the issuance of a licence to any individual or organization who has an association with organized crime.
- Requirement that individuals or entities applying for an operator licence demonstrate their tax compliance status to show that they are in good standing with the government.
- A requirement for all private recreational cannabis retail storefronts to be stand-alone stores only.

- Individuals with a store authorization, cannabis retail managers and all retail employees will be required to complete the approved training to ensure that any individual who works in the cannabis retail market is trained in the responsible sale of cannabis.

Next Steps

OCSTA will continue to advocate our position on the buffer zone distance between schools and cannabis retail outlets. In addition, we will liaise with the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario to establish a stakeholder consultation process on licensing conditions for these retail establishments. We would also encourage boards to discuss their concerns about the location of cannabis retail stores with their local municipality since they have by law, authority to establish further restrictions on the consumption of cannabis near schools.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Andrews at sandrews@ocsta.on.ca.