Merced County Public Health Department
Medical Marijuana Identification Card Program

Requirements to be a Primary Caregiver

A primary caregiver is a person who has consistently assumed responsibility for a qualified patient's housing, health or safety and has been designated to receive a Medical Marijuana Identification Card on behalf of a qualified patient. The qualified patient or his/her legal representative must apply for the identification card for the caregiver.

A primary caregiver must

1. Be at least 18 years of age (unless the primary caregiver is an emancipated minor, the parent of a minor child who is a qualified patient or has consistently assumed responsibility for the housing, health or safety of a qualified patient).

2. Be designated by the qualified patient applicant or his/her legal representative to be a primary caregiver.

3. Have consistently assumed responsibility for the housing, health or safety of a qualified patient.

4. Reside in the same city or county as the qualified patient. Individuals may be designated as the primary caregiver for more than one qualifying patient as long as the designated caregiver lives in the same county.

   A primary caregiver may reside in a different county as the qualified patient. However, individuals living in a different county cannot be designated as a primary caregiver by more than one person; they are limited to being designated for only one qualified patient.

5. The owner or operator of a facility providing medical care or supportive services may be designated as a primary caregiver of a qualified patient.

   Up to three employees of a licensed facility may be designated as primary caregivers on behalf of a qualified patient. A qualified patient may not have more than three designated primary caregivers at any time. If more than one primary caregiver is designated, they must be employees of a licensed health facility.

Applications

Only a qualified patient may apply for an identification card for his/her primary caregiver. The person designated as a primary caregiver must accompany the qualified patient at the time of submitting an application for the caregiver. A legal representative of a qualified patient may apply for an identification card as a primary caregiver.

Change in Primary Caregiver

A qualified patient must notify the Public Health Department of a change in caregiver designation. The identification card of an authorized individual that will no longer be designated as a primary caregiver will be invalidated. A new application is required when a new primary caregiver is being designated.

Identity and Residency Verification

The identity and residency of a designated primary caregiver will be verified at the time of application.

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