



Tighter Oversight and Medical Focus on Cannabis

The Ministry of Public Health is advancing a new draft ministerial regulation aimed at strengthening regulatory oversight of cannabis in Thailand, with an emphasis on medical use and consumer protection amid a significant decline in commercial cannabis outlets.

The draft regulation, titled “Ministerial Regulation on Permits for Research, Export, Sale, or Processing of Controlled Herbs for Commercial Purposes,” has received Cabinet approval and is currently under review by the Office of the Council of State prior to final enactment. Once effective, it will replace the 2016 ministerial regulation, which is considered inadequate for the current regulatory landscape.

The draft introduces targeted controls on the commercial export, sale, and processing of cannabis to safeguard public health and mitigate community impact. Key requirements include:

- **Restricted sales venues:** Commercial sales will be limited to medical facilities (with physician prescriptions and supervised dispensing), the pharmacies, herbal product outlets, and licensed traditional Thai medicine practitioner premises.
- **Staffing requirements:** At least one employee certified by the Department of Traditional and Alternative Medicine must be present during operating hours.
- **Operational standards:** Businesses must implement effective odor and smoke control systems, operate from legally owned or possessed premises, and maintain dedicated storage areas with controlled temperature and humidity, proper separation, and no direct floor contact.
- **Transitional provisions:** Existing licences remain valid until expiry; however, all renewals, new applications, and pending applications must comply with the new standards.

The Ministry of Public Health has confirmed that there are sufficient qualified medical professionals nationwide to support this framework and has assured continued access to cannabis for patients through hospital-based prescriptions.

Businesses operating in or entering the cannabis sector should closely monitor the finalisation of this regulation and assess compliance readiness in anticipation of its implementation.