

# THE CANNABIS CONTROL BILL, 2020

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Bill No.:</b>	House of Representatives Bill 12 of 2020
<b>Introduced in:</b>	House of Representatives
<b>Introduced by:</b>	The Honourable Faris Al-Rawi, Attorney General
<b>Introduced on:</b>	14-Oct-2020
<b>Published in Gazette on:</b>	22-Oct-2020, Vol. 59, No. 181

The Cannabis Control Bill, 2020 was introduced to provide regulatory control of the handling of cannabis for certain purposes, authorize the establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Cannabis Licensing Authority, and other connected matters. The Bill was drafted to include nine (9) parts as follows:

- Commencement and Interpretations;
- The establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Licensing Authority;
- Financial Provisions;
- Licensing Provisions;
- Medicinal Cannabis;
- Cannabis for religious purposes;
- Registers;
- Inspections; and
- Miscellaneous items.

### **The Trinidad and Tobago Licensing Authority**

The Bill has provided for the establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Licensing Authority, managed by a Board of Directors, appointed by the President. The Authority has been given the mandate of advising the Ministry on the development of national policies and conducting customary regulatory control on the handling of cannabis such as issuing licences, managing the terms and conditions of these licences, maintaining a record of licence holders, engaging in education and training programmes, and other key responsibilities.

## Who is eligible to apply for licences?

There are eight (8) licences which can be granted. These include:

- **Cultivator Licence:** issued to allow the growing, harvesting, drying, trimming, curing or packaging of cannabis.
- **Research and Development Licence:** issued to allow scientific research for the purpose of improving or further developing cannabis.
- **Laboratory Licence:** issued to allow testing and analytical services for the purpose of improving or further developing medicinal cannabis.
- **Processor Licence:** issued to allow activities relating to the processing of cannabis material and the production of medicinal cannabis, including but not limited to, edibles and other derivatives.
- **Retail Distributor Licence:** issued to allow the operation of a dispensary for the dispensing of medicinal cannabis to patients.
- **Import Licence:** issued to allow the importation of cannabis from any country where it is legal so to do.
- **Export Licence:** issued to allow the exportation of cannabis to any country in keeping with the laws of any such country.
- **Transport Licence:** issued to allow the transport of cannabis.

As cited in the Bill, applicants must be 18 years or older and citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, permanent residents of Trinidad and Tobago or citizens of a CARICOM Member State other than Trinidad and Tobago. Companies, firms and cooperative societies can also apply, however, at least 30% of the organisation must be 18 years or older, citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, permanent residents of Trinidad and Tobago or citizens of a CARICOM Member State.

Companies, firms and cooperative societies aren't eligible for Research and Development or Laboratory Licences.

The Bill has included provisions for Controllers of religious organisations, registered under the Non-Profit Organisations Act 2019, to apply for five (5) licences, once supporting documents confirming that the cannabis is required for religious purposes are presented. These licences include:

- **Cultivator (Religious) Licence:** issued to allow the growing, harvesting, drying, trimming, curing or packaging of cannabis.
- **Dispensary (Religious) Licence:** issued to allow the storage and dispensation of cannabis.
- **Import (Religious) Licence:** issued to allow the importation of cannabis from any country where it is legal so to do.
- **Export (Religious) Licence:** issued to allow the exportation of cannabis to any country in keeping with the laws of any such country.
- **Transport (Religious) Licence:** issued to allow the transport of cannabis.

The Bill has also introduced the use of medicinal cannabis, however, a person who has engaged in the use of medicinal cannabis without a prescription or recommendation from a medical practitioner will be subject to conviction upon indictment.

**As of June 9, 2021, the Committee Report was laid where the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Honourable Faris Al-Rawi, presented the Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Cannabis Control Bill, 2020.**