



CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF<sup>TM</sup>

# CANNABIS REGULATION

## SPARK Report



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## Acronyms

Acronym	Description
City	City of Los Angeles
CRC	Cannabis Regulation Commission
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DCR	Department of Cannabis Regulation
DVBE Program	Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Program
EMMDs	Existing Medical Marijuana Dispensaries
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
KJLH	Kindness, Joy, Love, and Happiness (Radio Station)
MBI	MBI Media
PCN	Notice of Public Convenience or Necessity
Pre-ICO	Pre-Interim Control Ordinance
SEA's	Social Equity Applicants
SEP	Social Equity Program
SEED Program	Social Equity Entrepreneur Development Grant Program

## **1. Program Overview**

Following California's legalization of cannabis for adults 21 and older, in March of 2017, local Measure M passed by over 80% of voters, granting the City of Los Angeles the authority to regulate cannabis-related activity within the City. With that authority, the Department of Cannabis Regulation (DCR) and Cannabis Regulation Commission (CRC) was established by ordinance on July 30, 2017.

DCR administers the cannabis business license application process, makes determinations related to licensing, and administers the rules and regulations of businesses engaged in commercial cannabis activity in the City of Los Angeles. Commercial cannabis activities licensed and regulated by DCR include retail sales, cultivation, manufacturing, distribution, laboratory testing, delivery and/or the sale of cannabis or cannabis products in the City. DCR is also responsible for the implementation and administration of the City's Social Equity Program. DCR and the CRC are also responsible for advising the City of Los Angeles on its cannabis laws and programs.

This report details stakeholder feedback collected by MBI Media on behalf of DCR, to assist DCR in making stakeholder-informed recommendations to the Commission and City Council regarding stakeholder-identified priorities and to take action related to these priorities.

## **2. Program Purpose**

Through DCR's efforts, the City has begun, for the first time, to license and thereby legally authorize cannabis businesses operations across the industry's supply chain from indoor cultivation to retail and delivery. Furthermore, through efforts led by DCR, the City is actively developing and implementing business and workforce programming available through the City's Social Equity program to promote equitable ownership and employment opportunities in the cannabis industry in order to decrease disparities in life outcomes for marginalized communities, and to address the disproportionate impacts of the War on Drugs in those communities.

Though these efforts are underway, DCR recognizes that there are still many questions and concerns about cannabis in the community and also recognizes that current laws about cannabis continue to have significant impacts on communities and issues that are important to communities like - community health and safety, safe access to cannabis and cannabis products and racial and economic equity and these laws and policies continue to have wide ranging impacts on Angelenos, especially on marginalized communities.

To better meet the needs of the local community and cannabis related stakeholders and their respective interests, DCR tasked MBI Media, experts in community outreach, with designing

and implementing SPARK, a stakeholder engagement initiative, aimed at collecting stakeholder feedback and addressing stakeholder feedback regarding the City's Licensing and Social Equity Program, as well as corporate social responsibility, community impact and other priorities identified by local stakeholders.

### **3. Program Design and Administration**

Specifically, DCR tasked MBI Media with the following deliverables established to collect, analyze, and report on stakeholder feedback.

- Developing and administering programming to collect and analyze stakeholder input through a variety of methodologies
- Developing a detailed report regarding program purpose, methodologies used, stakeholder input and related analysis
- Developing a video highlighting program, methodologies used, stakeholder input and related analysis

The SPARK program was categorized and administered in five phases:

- Collecting Feedback
- Analyzing Feedback
- Creating a report that details Stakeholder Feedback
- Developing Recommendations based on Stakeholder Feedback, and
- Action by City Council Committees and City Leadership

#### **3.1 Program Coordination and Communication**

Coordination and communication between DCR and MBI was crucial to the success of this program. MBI provided program management oversight on key outreach deliverables and activities. In addition, technical review, strategic oversight, and quality control for the outreach materials was provided. The MBI project leaders consisted of:

- Senior Project Manager, Matthew Maldonado
- Project Manager, Pamela Tyus-Smith
- Deputy Project Manager, Laura Hernandez
- Account Coordinator, Jocelyn Roman

MBI had a dedicated multimedia consultant on-hand for support needed for graphic design, website updates, and video production.

Coordination and communication between DCR and MBI included regular meetings to provide updates regarding program status, schedule, and related issues. In addition, frequent correspondence took place among DCR, tracking detailed outreach status, schedule, and



other outreach-related issues. In addition, an approval method was factored into the turnaround time for reviewing all materials before materials were distributed to stakeholders. It was critical that these protocols were followed to ensure messaging stayed consistent throughout all outreach milestones.

In conjunction with DCR, a thorough quality assurance and quality control process was implemented by MBI, to comply with the City's standards on all collateral materials, reports, and additional items intended for stakeholder distribution. The quality assurance and quality control process included documentation of materials reviewed, comments made, commenters, final document version and date approved. This documentation was housed by MBI and provided to the City and DCR upon request.

Review periods required for the quality assurance and quality control process were incorporated into the schedules of all stakeholder outreach deliverables and for all stakeholder outreach activities. The schedule included review time for each deliverable, initiated by MBI with DCR, and within the City. The detailed work-back schedule was maintained as major milestones and deliverables were planned throughout the engagement to meet critical deadlines.

### **3.2 Program Accessibility**

As an ongoing commitment since the inception of the project, DCR and MBI aimed to establish equitable, accessible, informative, and transparent community engagement opportunities that were considerate and engaging to under-resourced and/or under-funded communities. These engagement opportunities were done in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 along with the offering of free language assistance services.

Due to COVID-19, all in-person stakeholder meetings were limited by federal, state, and local guidelines. As a result, programming was designed to be completely digital. All digital assets, including access to comment box and recordings of SPARK Sessions were made available online, at the DCR website and Virtual Meeting Room. SPARK programming also included engagement facilitated through Zoom, a teleconference platform that includes accessibility and call-in features.

### **3.3 Program Design**

In order to administer the program, MBI utilized four methods to meet the purpose of the program, these included:

- Design, administer and analyze On-Screen Facilitated Stakeholder Discussions
- Develop, administer, and analyze Stakeholder Surveys
- Review and analyze Stakeholder Comments
- Design, administer and analyze One-on-One On-Screen Stakeholder Interviews

Prior to the launch of any programming, DCR and MBI developed dedicated landing pages on the DCR website and a SPARK Virtual Meeting Room. The Virtual Meeting Room housed the various elements of the SPARK program.

First, MBI Media designed, administered, and analyzed on-screen facilitated stakeholder discussions regarding stakeholder-identified priorities as well as policy and programming needed to repair the harms of past cannabis policies and its enforcement, the equitable development and implementation of cannabis policy reform and equity within the cannabis industry.

Next, MBI Media developed, administered, and analyzed stakeholder surveys regarding stakeholder-identified priorities as well as policy and programming needed to repair the harms of past cannabis policies and its enforcement, the equitable development and implementation of cannabis policy reform and equity within the cannabis industry.

MBI also established a stakeholder comment 'collection tool' and a period of time for stakeholders to submit comments to DCR regarding stakeholder-identified priorities as well as policy and programming needed to repair the harms of past cannabis policies and its enforcement, the equitable development and implementation of cannabis policy reform and equity within the cannabis industry.

Lastly, MBI designed, administered, and analyzed Stakeholder Interviews regarding stakeholder-identified priorities as well as policy and programming needed to repair the harms of past cannabis policies and its enforcement, the equitable development and implementation of cannabis policy reform and equity within the cannabis industry.

### **3.4 Program Outreach**

MBI developed an outreach strategy to engage stakeholders across the City. MBI coordinated stakeholder outreach activities as directed by DCR.

#### **3.4.1 Identifying Target Audiences**

The first step in the outreach process was to establish the target audiences for the program. MBI primarily targeted communities who are under-resourced and/or under-funded in the City of Los Angeles including minority groups and people affected in the past by the disparate enforcement of cannabis prohibition. Based on these communities, stakeholders were categorized using the following audience groups:

- Elected Officials and Public Agency Staff (e.g., state, county, City officials)
- Businesses (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement Districts, business owners, major employers, etc.)

- Community Organizations (e.g., Neighborhood Councils, senior citizen groups, non-governmental agencies, Non-political Social groups etc.)
- Cannabis professionals (cannabis educators, researchers, lawyers, advocacy groups regulatory groups, dispensaries, retailers, and cannabis media outlets)
- Universities and Community Colleges
- Healthcare providers

### 3.4.2 Program Messaging

Target audiences were defined and confirmed by DCR, and program messaging was developed by DCR. MBI evaluated potential community issues to help establish a basis of understanding and aid in the mindful development of appropriate messaging to stakeholders. These messages were used in stakeholder engagement meetings and collateral materials for as many stakeholder groups as required. Key messages were communicated to DCR as talking points, Fact Sheets, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and e-blasts.

In addition, messaging remained transparent to the community and provided the most current information. This process began early in the communication process to ensure the preparedness of any upcoming outreach events and was a critical step in the overall communication process, as it ensured consistency in messaging and established cohesion throughout the program.

Engagement Points:

- Commercial Cannabis Licensing and Regulation
- City's Social Equity Program
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Community Impact
- Youth Access and Prevention
- Medical and Adult Use
- Community Relations
- Compliance and Enforcement

### 3.4.3 Outreach Measurement

The program's outreach efforts sought to center connection and effective communication, which can be difficult to measure in quantifiable terms. However, consistently tracking several variables can enable identification of trends to help determine the effectiveness of outreach efforts. Evaluating the effectiveness and results of outreach methods ensured the process achieved DCR's goals. Measurement of the effectiveness of DCR's outreach efforts entailed three main components: awareness, involvement, and attitude.

Awareness was determined by how many people knew about the program and the meetings, as well as the composition of the audience, which ensured that the audience reflected key stakeholders and the local community. This assessment increased the effectiveness of the notification process to ensure stakeholders were made aware of events and DCR information.

Measurement included the number of stakeholders contacted, involved, and assessed the general understanding of the program.

Involvement measures the amount of stakeholder participation at outreach events, as well as on the DCR website and social media pages. This measurement provides insight into the level of community interest and indicates whether they are decreasing, plateau, or increasing, which will aid in refining the outreach approach. This category will factor in the number of attendees, number of comments, website visits, and activity on social media.

Public attitude enabled assessment of stakeholders' general response and acceptance of the program. This measurement helped shape the messaging and collateral material development. This attitude provided the assessment of stakeholders throughout one-on-one interactions, as well as the perceived tone from written responses.

### **3.4.4 Defining Outreach Tools**

The stakeholder database and established messaging was used to determine and design the most effective and appropriate tool for community outreach. MBI considered stakeholder and community awareness, involvement, and attitude to determine the best outreach tools for stakeholder engagement. MBI coordinated closely with DCR to design, produce, and disseminate information.

#### **Website**

Between the launch of the SPARK on April 20, 2021, and the end of the 'feedback collection period' which ended on July 16, 2021, over 2,600 stakeholders visited the "About" page of the SPARK website. 1,209 visitors began at the "About" page and spent an average of 3 minutes and 5 seconds before clicking through to another portion of the website, with an average bounce rate of about 60%, implying the page was an effective starting point, encouraging visitors to click through to the rest of the SPARK website. The exit rate for the "About" page was only a few percent higher than its bounce rate.

Of the various SPARK Sessions, Session #3, held on May 12, 2021, regarding Licensing and Regulation, was the most viewed over time on the SPARK website between 4/20/21 and 10/31/21 with 231 views, while Session #1 received the most views during the stakeholder comment period with 85 views. During this time, Session #6 received the lowest amount with 49 views.

#### **MailChimp**

A total of 9 emails were sent, via Mailchimp, to a stakeholder database of about 7,772 recipients, on average, with two emails being directed to smaller, more curated audiences representing those more interested in the Social Equity and the Corporate Social Responsibility topics within the SPARK Initiative.

Table 1. Mailchimp Email Data

Email Subject	Date	Stats
Department of Cannabis Regulation (DCR) Launches SPARK!	4/20/21	7,851 recipients 3,359 unique opens 6,799 total opens 567 clicks
DCR Hosts First SPARK Session! RSVP for First Social Equity Program Webinar and Learn about SEED Grant Program!	4/30/21	7,812 recipients 2,259 unique opens 5,050 total opens 536 clicks
RSVP to SPARK a Conversation About Cannabis - In Zoom Breakout Rooms!	5/24/21	7,790 recipients 2,455 unique opens 4,889 total opens 250 clicks
RSVP: We've Extended the SPARK Sessions - More Time in Breakout Rooms!	6/1/21	7,736 recipients 2,059 unique opens 3,811 total opens 107 clicks
Join Us for our LAST TWO SESSIONS to SPARK a Conversation about Cannabis in the Community	6/7/21	7,714 recipients 1,999 unique opens 3,378 total opens 120 clicks
DCR Still Needs Your Help to SPARK a Conversation Around Cannabis in the Community	6/25/21	7,689 recipients 2,174 unique opens 3,877 total opens 155 clicks
Help shape the future of cannabis policy in Los Angeles!	6/28/21	95 recipients 32 unique opens 112 total opens 9 clicks
Help shape the future of cannabis policy in Los Angeles!	6/28/21	59 recipients 27 unique opens 88 total opens 21 clicks
SPARK Surveys and Comment Box Close THIS FRIDAY!	7/13/21	7,817 recipients 2,123 unique opens 3,429 total opens 133 clicks

## Bitly

Shortened, customized links to the SPARK website and SPARK Surveys were used to better identify links and provide a more consistent experience for stakeholder engaging with SPARK outreach.



Table 2. Bitly Link Data

Link	Link performance
bit.ly/DCRSPARK	258 clicks
bit.ly/SPARKEmails	25 clicks
bit.ly/SPARKSessionsRSVP	1,164 clicks
bit.ly/SPARKComment2021	70 clicks
bit.ly/DCRSPARKSurvey1	72 clicks
bit.ly/DCRSPARKSurvey2	47 clicks
bit.ly/SPARKSurvey4	379 clicks
bit.ly/SPARKSurvey3	169 clicks

## Virtual Meeting Room

In response to COVID-19 safety regulations, the format of the SPARK Sessions and most of the SPARK Stakeholder one-on-one interviews were virtual. A virtual meeting room (VMR) with stations was developed to simulate an in-person meeting room. The VMR was used in conjunction with the SPARK Sessions to allow an interactive experience. The program stations included materials such as virtual events, comments, surveys, and informational collateral. These materials allowed attendees to participate and obtain specific study information at each station at their own convenience and allowed participants to provide DCR with feedback and input that would help shape the future of cannabis policy and programs in Los Angeles. Each station was divided into the following SPARK stations:

- SPARK Sessions: A series of virtual events led by local leaders and stakeholders focused on different topics each session. Topics include Licensing and Regulation, the Social Equity Program, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Community Impact.
- SPARK Resource: Information stations that include relevant Fact Sheets and FAQs about DCR, our programs, policies, and general cannabis activity information.
- SPARK Surveys: Substantive surveys will provide us with direct feedback from all of you on current policies and programs and ways we can improve upon certain services.
- SPARK Comment Box: A community comment box that allows anyone to provide feedback on 'all things cannabis' in the community.

Between the launch of the SPARK on April 20, 2021, and the end of the 'feedback collection period' which ended on July 16, 2021, the VMR received 6,259 pageviews from 464 different users across 774 sessions, indicating that approximately 80.5% of pageviews came from repeat visitors to the VMR. Pageviews peaked during the launch window of the SPARK Initiative, with a steady decline through the period ending July 16, 2021. The VMR was hosted on the DCR website and remains active. See Appendix A for images of the VMR.

## Fact Sheets

Fact Sheets (hard copy and electronic copy) were developed and available for all SPARK Sessions on the DCR website and VMR. The overall purpose of the Fact Sheet was to inform stakeholders, agencies, and the public of DCR's key messages. This collateral included a brief

history of the program, engagement goals and an overview of DCR's authority and responsibilities. Fact Sheets were created for the following topics:

- What to Know About Legal Cannabis Retailers?
- Submitting Complaints About Unlicensed Commercial Cannabis Activity

Fact sheets can be found in Appendix B.

## **FAQs**

A document with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about DCR initiatives was developed and made available to stakeholders for all SPARK Sessions on the DCR website and VMR. The FAQs addressed specific questions or areas of concern expressed by stakeholders. This included information regarding business licensing, the social equity program resources for more information (i.e., DCR website). FAQs were provided for the following topics:

- Commercial Cannabis Activity in the City of Los Angeles
- Personal Cannabis Activity Use in the City of Los Angeles

FAQs can be found in Appendix C.

## **Presentation Boards**

MBI developed presentation boards that contained detailed information about DCR, potential subject areas, stakeholder-identified priorities, policy, programming, and regulatory update materials. The presentation boards were available in the VMR.

In addition, a collection of white boards created during the SPARK Sessions were displayed for stakeholder reference.

## **4. Program Outreach Implementation**

Stakeholders were invited to engage with SPARK programming through a range of outreach strategies based on the program's design methodology.

### **4.1 SPARK Sessions Outreach**

SPARK Sessions were promoted to stakeholders through multiple mediums.

Radio promotion was a key outreach method used to promote the SPARK program and sessions. Promotion was sent to various stations such as:

- 102.3 KJLH (Kindness, Joy, Love, and Happiness)
  - Streaming: approximately 111,731 impressions across 100 spots
  - On-Air: approximately 2,187,400 impressions across 228 spots
  - Facebook: approximately 100,034 impressions

- Eblast: approximately 1908 opens
- Power 106/ 93.5 KDAY / Cali 93.9 (Meruelo Group)
  - Twitter: approximately 5136 impressions across 3 posts
  - Facebook: approximately 7908 impressions across 6 posts
  - Instagram: approximately 14,874 impressions across 3 posts
  - Instagram Stories: approximately 7488 impressions across 3 posts

Promotions included spots, interviews, live reads, social media/website advertisements, and newsletters. Promotional materials can be found in Appendix D.

Table 3. Radio Promotion Schedule- 102.3 KJLH

Promotion Package	Date	Time(s)
Interview	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	6:30 a.m.
Spots	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	5:30 a.m., 5:44 a.m., 6:55 a.m., 8:55 a.m., 10:18 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 12:16p.m., 1:12 p.m., 3:19 p.m., 6:46 p.m., 7:45 p.m., 9:15 p.m.
	Wednesday, April 21, 2021	5:45 a.m., 6:27 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 12:16 p.m., 3:14 p.m., 8:15 p.m., 9:15 p.m.
	Thursday, April 22, 2021	5:45 a.m., 6:58 a.m., 7:09 a.m., 12:12 p.m., 2:12 p.m., 2:45 p.m., 5:42 p.m., 8:47 p.m.
	Friday, April 23, 2021	5:44 a.m., 6:19 a.m., 7:56 a.m., 3:48 p.m., 5:13 p.m., 7:44 p.m.
Live Reads	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	6:55 a.m., 6:55 a.m., 2:12 p.m., 5:12 p.m.
	Wednesday, April 21, 2021	6:16 a.m., 3:12 p.m.
Social Media/Web	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	Banner ad on site, Mentions on streaming services
	Wednesday, April 21, 2021	Banner ad on site, Mentions on streaming services
	Thursday, April 22, 2021	Banner ad on site, Mentions on streaming services
	Friday, April 23, 2021	Banner ad on site, Mentions on streaming services

Table 4. Radio Promotion Schedule- Power 106

Promotion Package	Date	Time(s)
Interview	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	9:24 a.m.
Live Reads	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	6:20 a.m. – 5:20p.m. (mentioned at :20 after the hour) Top of the Hour “Live reads”
Social Media/Web	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	Inclusion on all social media sites, Banner on web. Mentions on streaming services

Table 5. Radio Promotion Schedule- Cali 93.9

Promotion Package	Date	Time(s)
Interview	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	8:38 a.m.
Live Reads	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	6:20 a.m. – 5:20p.m. (mentioned at :20 after the hour) Top of the Hour “Live reads”
Social Media/Web	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	Inclusion on all social media sites, Banner on web. Mentions on streaming services

## 4.2 SPARK Surveys Outreach

SPARK Sessions were promoted to stakeholders through multiple mediums including print promotions and digital promotions.

Table 6. LA Sentinel News Group

Date	Time	Platform(s)/Creative	Company
Thursday, June 24, 2021	9:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twitter</li> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Instagram</li> </ul>	LA Sentinel LA Watts LA Soul

Table 7. LA Weekly

Date	Time	Platform(s)/Creative	Company
Tuesday, June 29, 2021	N/A	<b>Newsletter:</b> “ <i>Help SPARK Change in Your Community</i> ”	LA Weekly
Tuesday, July 13, 2021	N/A	<b>Newsletter:</b> “ <i>Let Your Voice Be Heard!</i> ”	LA Weekly

Table 8. Radio: Power 106/KDAY/KLLI

Date	Time	Platforms/Creative	Stations
Friday, June 25, 2021	3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	<b>FB</b> – Survey Demi Video Survey (KLLI)	KDAY/KPWR/KLLI
Monday, June 28, 2021	12:00 – 2:00 p.m.	<b>IG</b> - Survey	KDAY/KPWR/KLLI
Wednesday, June 30, 2021	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	<b>IG Story</b> – Survey Demi Video	KDAY/KPWR/KLLI
Friday, July 2, 2021	3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	<b>FB</b> - Survey	KDAY/KPWR/KLLI
Wednesday, July 14, 2021	2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Twitter</b> - Demi Video	KDAY/KPWR

Date	Time	Platforms/Creative	Stations
Wednesday, July 14, 2021	2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	FB - Survey	KLLI

### 4.3 SPARK Comment Box Outreach

The SPARK Comment Box was promoted to stakeholders through multiple mediums including print promotions and digital promotions.

Table 9. Comment Box Promotion

Date	Time	Platforms/Creative	Stations
Wednesday, June 23, 2021	3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Twitter - Comment Box	KDAY/KPWR/KLLI

## 5. Program Findings

Summarized in Table 10 is feedback collected from stakeholders through SPARK. Please note: This table is a summarized compilation of selected feedback and comments submitted by stakeholders. Many comments have been consolidated by general topic and therefore may not represent each individual comment received.

Table 10. Program Findings

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
Licensing and Regulation	License Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased transparency in the business license application process</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased transparency in business license application process timelines</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to Expedited business license application processing</li> </ul>
	Public Information, Engagement and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to information regarding the business license application process</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to assistance regarding the business license application process</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for quicker responses from DCR staff regarding questions about the business license application process</li> </ul>



Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for quicker responses from DCR staff regarding questions about business license application status</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for improved Customer Service</li> </ul>
	Property Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders shared experiences regarding scarcity of locations compliant with City's requirements</li> <li>Stakeholders shared experiences regarding exploitation by Property-Owners</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Access to Property (Location's Compliant with City's Requirements)</li> </ul>
	Expanding Licensing Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to cultivation licensees</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to event licenses</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to onsite consumption licenses</li> </ul>
	Social Equity Program Resources and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for Equity Centered Cannabis Policies and Programs that address the impacts of the war on drugs</li> </ul>
<b>Social Equity Program</b>	Social Equity Program Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that prioritizes local residents</li> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that includes relatives of individuals disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs</li> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that considers diversity</li> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that considers Racial Equity</li> </ul>

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
	Social Equity Program Resources and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for continued Priority Application Processing for Social Equity Program participants</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded access to Technical Assistance</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded access to Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded access to Pro Bono Legal Services</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for the evaluation and expansion of the Social Equity Program</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for the implementation of Tier 3 Requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility</b>	Responsible Business Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for establishment of Corporate Social Responsibility Requirements</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility Requirements</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for the implementation of Workforce and Hiring Requirements</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Community Engagement from Cannabis Industry</li> </ul>
<b>Community Impact</b>	Public Information, Engagement and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to information regarding Personal Cannabis Activity</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to public information regarding Commercial Cannabis Activity</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Community Engagement from DCR</li> <li>• Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the establishment of Stakeholder Working Group</li> </ul>

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire to establish efforts to monitor community impact</li> </ul>
	Cannabis Revenue Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Transparency regarding Cannabis Tax Revenue</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Transparency regarding the City's Use of Cannabis Tax Revenue</li> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for decreased Tax Rate</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for the establishment of a Community Reinvestment Fund</li> </ul>
	Enforcement and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Transparency regarding Cannabis Enforcement Data</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded Efforts to Address Unlicensed Commercial Cannabis Activity</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for improved Complaint Management</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Industry Oversight &amp; Compliance Enforcement</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for the prioritization of Public Health in Cannabis Regulation</li> </ul>

## 6. Program Details

### 6.1 SPARK Sessions

SPARK Sessions were virtual, facilitated discussions where stakeholders were able to obtain information on the SPARK initiative and share their thoughts.

Once the SPARK Sessions were conducted, a summary report was written to include awareness, involvement, and attitude measurements. See Table 11 to see a list of SPARK Sessions held.

Table 11. SPARK Sessions Calendar

Date	Stakeholder Comments	Time	Topic
Wednesday, April 28, 2021	N/A	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	General Session
Saturday, May 8, 2021	9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Social Equity Program
Wednesday, May 12, 2021	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Licensing and Regulation
Saturday, May 15, 2021	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Community Impact
Wednesday, May 26, 2021	9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Licensing and Regulation
Thursday, June 3, 2021	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	6:00 – 7:30 p.m.	Corporate Social Responsibility
Tuesday, June 8, 2021	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	6:00 – 7:30 p.m.	Social Equity Program
Saturday, June 12, 2021	9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Community Impact

To attend SPARK Sessions, stakeholders were asked to RSVP by using the feature located in the Virtual Meeting Room. During the RSVP process, stakeholders had the opportunity to submit questions prior to the session. The complete log of questions can be referenced on Appendix E.

### 6.1.1 Session #1 – General Session

On Wednesday, April 28, 2021, MBI hosted SPARK Session #1, from 6:00 to 7:15 p.m. through Zoom Webinar. This session was the first of eight SPARK Sessions.

The meeting consisted of a general presentation where DCR provided a background on the City of Los Angeles' Cannabis Policy along with the current roles of the DCR and the CRC (Cannabis Regulation Commission). During the meeting, updates were provided on the status of the Licensing Program and the Social Equity Program; attendees were then briefed on the SPARK Program. The presentation detailed the program's purpose, goals, and related resources found on the DCR website. Following this was an overview of the several methods stakeholders could submit program-related comments and questions, including the Virtual Meeting Room, the SPARK Comment Box, SPARK Surveys, and other SPARK Sessions. The presentation then addressed questions submitted by attendees during the session. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

SPARK Session #1 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation (DCR), Executive Director
- Dr. Imani Brown, Social Equity Program, Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Robert Ahn, Cannabis Regulation Commission (CRC), President
- Thryeris Mason, CRC, Vice President
- Rocky Wiles, DCR, Compliance and Operations Manager
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media, Project Manager

A total of 50 stakeholders joined the session. Of the 50 attendees, there were 47 video attendees and three (3) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting consisted of community organizations, current social equity applicants/licensees, prospective social equity applicants, current general applicants/licensees, prospective general applicants, cannabis patients and/or consumers, individuals arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, and residents of the City of Los Angeles. The full attendee list is provided in Appendix F.

### Stakeholder Comments

During SPARK Session #1, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix G.

### Session Summary

During SPARK Session #1, DCR and MBI were able to inform stakeholders on new department updates and the overall launch of the **SPARK initiative**. In addition, stakeholders provided comments that will aid the department in presenting recommendations to the CRC. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- Stakeholders indicated that it was important that DCR provide clear communication on specific requirements needed to open retail stores. They requested information such as: minimum square footage required, explanation of the plan and timeline of processing business modification requests.
- Stakeholders also stressed the importance and need for DCR to focus on expediting/removing the backlog of approving licenses, business modifications, etc. instead of focusing on the SPARK Program. Stakeholders also wanted to know the “SPARK initiative” effect over current regulations/ordinances and the opportunity to create more spaces where stakeholders are given the opportunity to speak.
- They also wanted clarification on the SEP process for previously arrested/convicted individuals, and the most efficient way to expedite application modification requests. Additional SEP information requested was to see if applicants that meet the program’s original requirements still be valid Social Equity Qualified.
- Stakeholders were interested in information about the department potentially granting extensions and/or providing additional resources to business owners



obtaining licenses that have yet to pass their final inspections and the possibility of minority groups receiving additional resources to successfully enter the cannabis industry.

- There were requests made to receive the following information:
  - Status updates on the Community Reinvestment Act introduced by Councilman Harris-Dawson in 2018. Reports on Corporate Social Responsibility or the Social Equity and Transitional Worker Mandates should be published.
  - Clarification on how the social equity program ensures equality and equal access for all individuals, or if this term promotes inequality by discriminating or preferencing certain citizens.
  - Pro-bono legal services should be available for social equity applicants

Additionally, this feedback was used to reshape the format of later SPARK Sessions. This first SPARK Session encouraged MBI and DCR to include more participation during the meetings to promote further feedback. Future meetings integrated polling questions, stakeholder comments, and breakout rooms with facilitated discussion questions.

### **6.1.2 Session #2 – Social Equity Program**

On Saturday, May 8, 2021, MBI hosted SPARK Session #2 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. through Zoom Webinar. This session was the first meeting that incorporated stakeholder comments. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. The session then proceeded with a presentation covering the department's Social Equity Program. Poll questions were integrated throughout the presentation as a new, interactive feature to garner more feedback. The poll questions utilized in this session focused on the Social Equity Program. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

SPARK Session #2 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Dr. Imani Brown, Social Equity Program, Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Michelle Garakian, DCR, Assistant Executive Director
- Rita Villa, CRC, Commissioner
- Victor Narro, CRC, Commissioner
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media Project Manager

A total of 60 stakeholders joined the session. Of the 60 attendees, there were 54 video attendees and six (6) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included prospective social equity applicants, current social equity applicants or licensees, prospective general applicants, current general applicants/licensees, neighborhood council members, cannabis patients and/or consumers, individuals arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, and residents of the City of Los Angeles. A full transcription is supplied in Appendix H of this summary report.

## Stakeholder Comments

During SPARK Session #2, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix I.

## Poll Results

SPARK Session #2 included five (5) polling questions for attendees. The polling questions were relative to the following topics:

- Barriers of entering the Cannabis Industry
- Verified Social Equity Applicants
- Additional Topic-Specific Information
- Grant Type Preference
- SEP Services and Programs

Attendees responded positively to the introduction of the polling feature. This allowed a more interactive experience for those in attendance. About half of the attendees participated in polls during this session. The official poll report can be referenced in Appendix J.

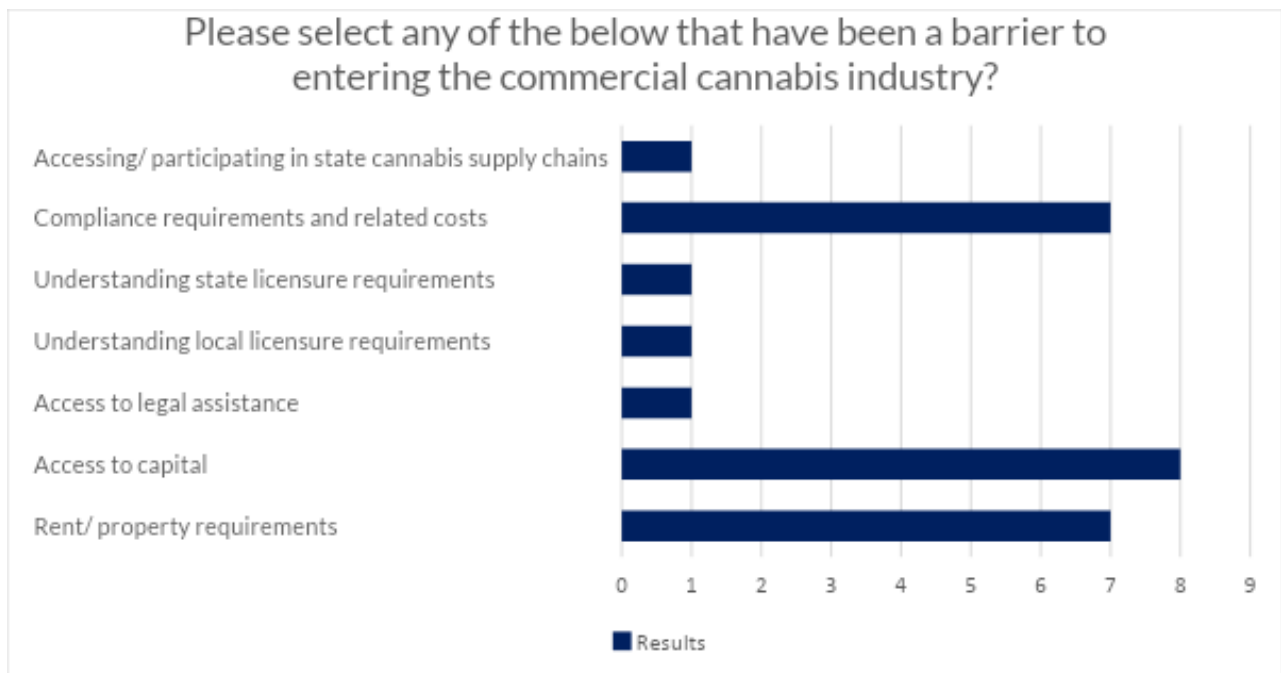


Figure 1. Poll Results- Barriers of Entering Cannabis Industry

A total of 26 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 1. According to the results, the top three (3) barriers stakeholders face when entering the cannabis industry

are access to capital, rent/ property requirements, and compliance requirements and related costs.

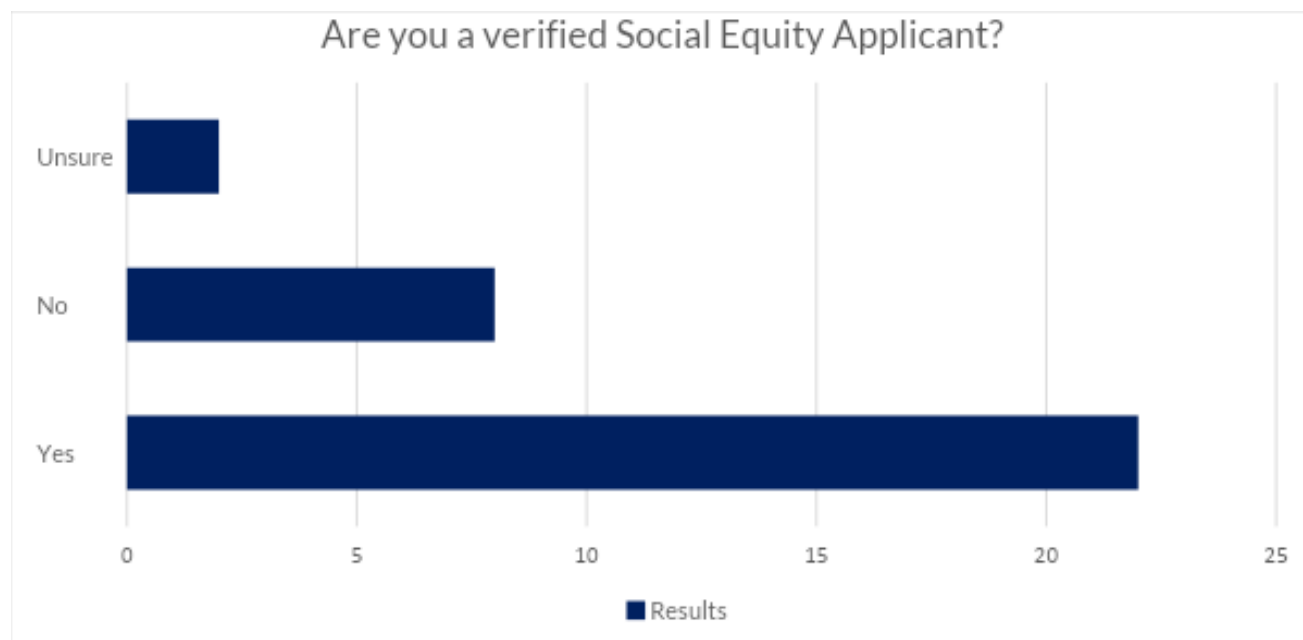


Figure 2. Poll Results- Verified Social Equity Applicants

A total of 32 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 2. According to the results, the majority of attendees were verified as Social Equity Applicants.

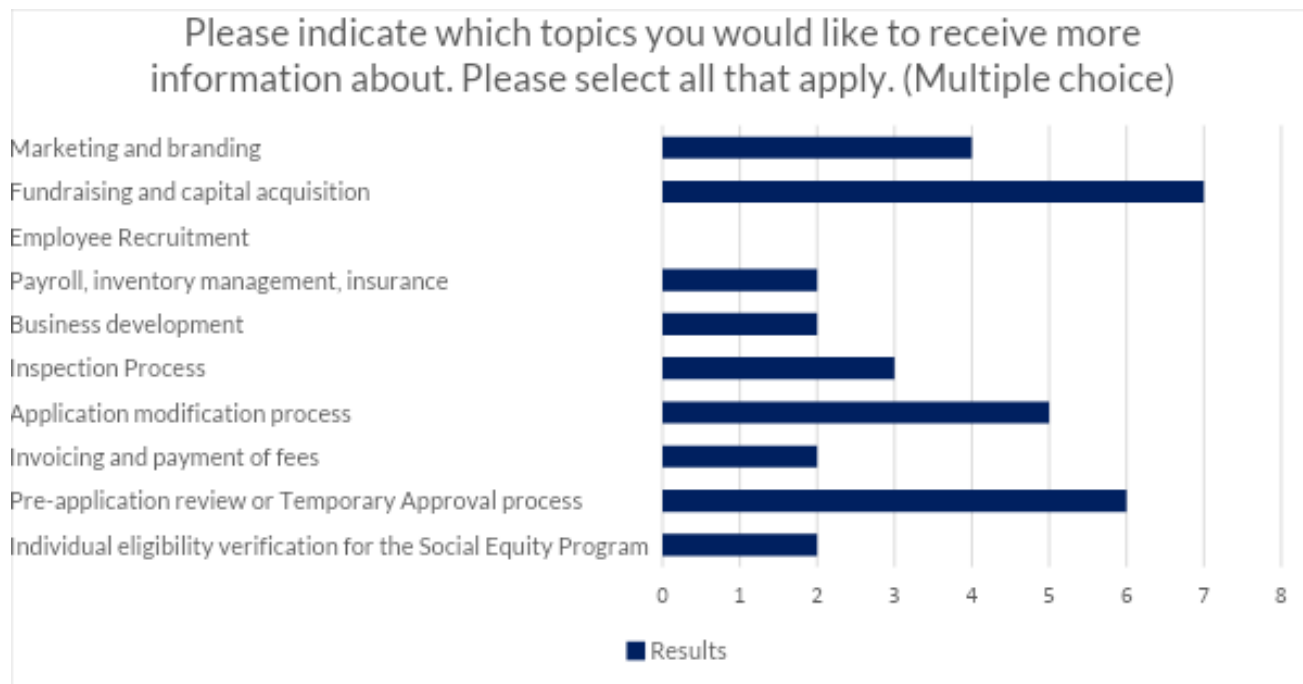


Figure 3. Poll Results- Additional Topic-Specific Information

Attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 3. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, the top three (3) topics attendees

would like to receive more information about consist of fundraising and capital acquisition, pre-application review or temporary approval process, and application modification process.

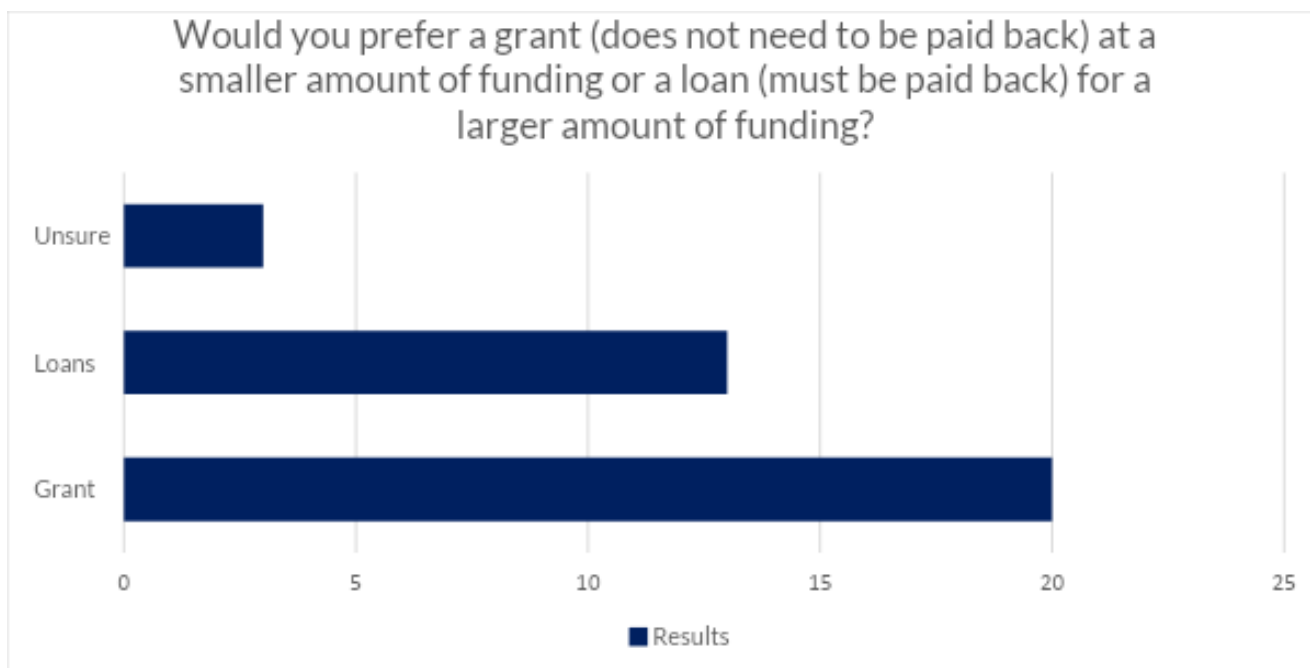


Figure 4. Poll Results- Grant Type Preference

Attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 4. According to the results, the majority of attendees would prefer to receive a grant at a smaller amount of funding over a loan for a larger amount of funding.

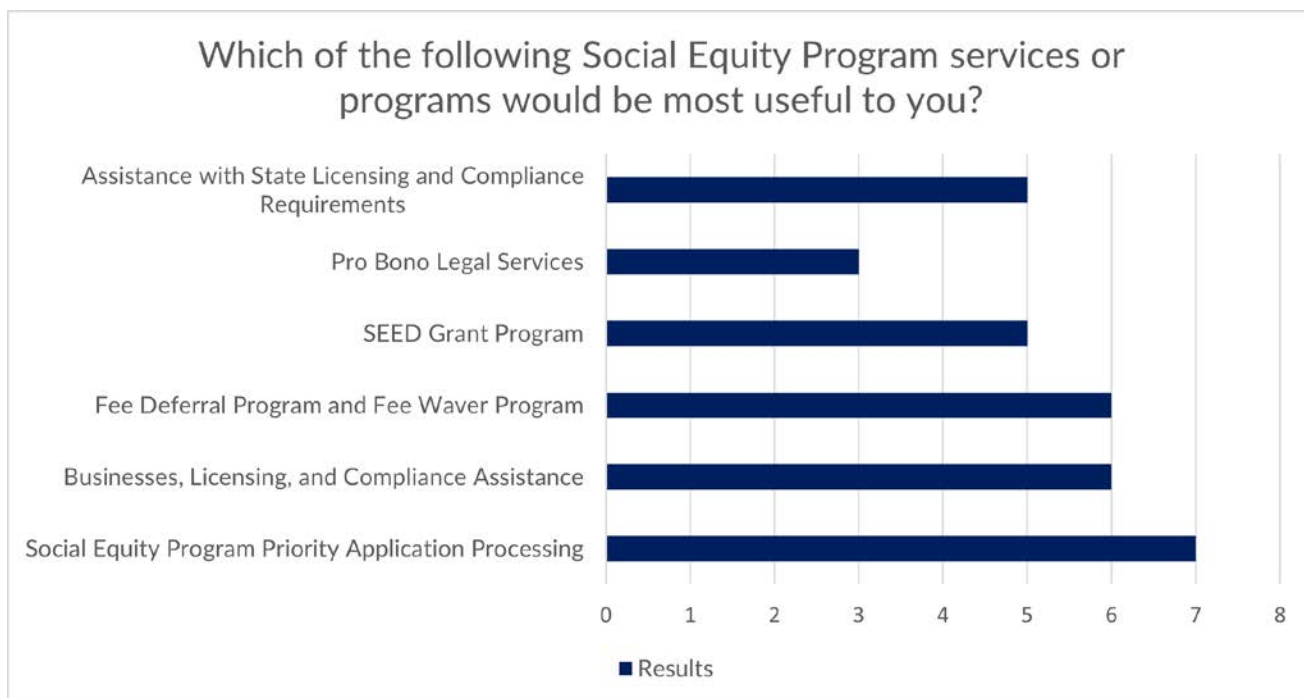


Figure 5. Poll Results- Social Equity Program Services

Attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 5. According to the results, the top three (3) programs attendees believe are the most useful for themselves are the Social Equity Program and application processing; business, licensing, and compliance assistance; and the Fee Deferral Program and Fee Waiver Program.

## Session Summary

During SPARK Session #2, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on the department's current **Social Equity Program**. In addition, stakeholders provided comments on the program and input on how the program can be improved. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- One of the main concerns during this session revolved around the need for DCR to provide more communication and assistance for the first 200 applicants, and that these applicants should be moved through the application process at a quicker pace. DCR also should supply applicants with contact information of who they should contact if their assigned analyst cannot answer their questions. Another idea brought up by stakeholders: the creation of a personalized plan for applicants, with the help of a DCR representative, to obtain a license.
- DCR should provide Social Equity applicants a list of cannabis-friendly landlords and provide more rent assistance.
- Social Equity Applicants applying for a delivery license should not have to have an official location and they want to be informed on how to handle additional rental insurance costs, while entering the industry.
- Additional requests heard during SPARK Session #2 included:
  - More assistance offered to Social Equity Applicants in opening business accounts/aid in other financial set up.
  - Status inquiries for the Community Stakeholders Equity Working Group.
  - DCR needs to enforce Social Equity/ Transitional Workers reporting from license and temporary approval holders.
- Stakeholders requested clarification on whether donations raised towards an organization be used as a tax write off.
- Regarding revenue and taxes, as pertaining to cannabis, here are a few comments that were received:
  - Use the state of New York's commitment to a high percentage of tax dollars going to their Social Equity fund as an example.
  - Access to capital is highly important for minorities
  - DCR should support Social Equity Applicants' needs for tax credits, using the City of Oakland's Tax Rebate Program as an example.
  - The addition of fee waivers or fee deferrals added retroactively.
  - Model a loan program after the Jewish Free Loan Association.
- DCR should reach out to the Bureau of Cannabis Control regarding individuals with "limited immunity" being eligible to operate compliantly.
- DCR should utilize the federal Mentor-Protégé Program as an example for corporations, limited liability companies, and partnerships.



### **6.1.3 Session #3 – Licensing and Regulation**

On Wednesday, May 12, 2021, MBI hosted SPARK Session #3, from 5:00 to 7:15 p.m. through Zoom Webinar. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. The session included an overview of licensing and regulation. The session also provided eight interactive polling segments. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

SPARK Session #3 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Robert Ahn, CRC, President
- Thryeris Mason, CRC, Vice President
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media, Project Manager

A total of 50 stakeholders joined the session. Of the 50 attendees, there were 42 video attendees and eight (8) call-In attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included community organizations, business organizations, and individual stakeholders. The full transcription is provided in Appendix K of this summary report.

#### **Stakeholder Comments**

During SPARK Session #3, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix L.

#### **Poll Results**

The session included eight (8) polling questions for attendees. The polling questions were relative to the following topics:

- Attendee Type
- Familiarity with Personal Cannabis Activity Laws
- Familiarity with Identification of Licensed Cannabis Businesses
- Familiarity with Laws Related to Commercial Cannabis Activity
- Cannabis Business in the Community
- Participation in Programming Designed to Promote Community Engagement and Community Service
- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses
- Interest in More Information

The official poll report can be referenced in Appendix M.

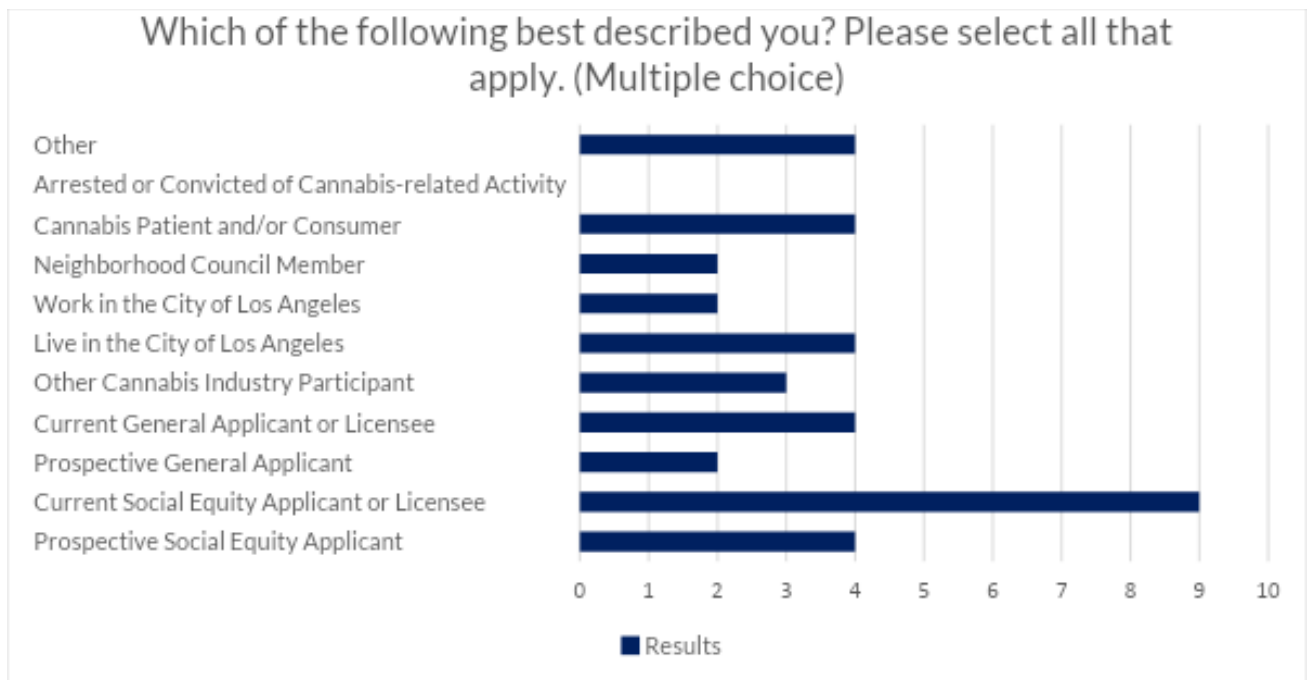


Figure 6. Poll Results- Attendee Type

A total of 38 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 6. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, the category that best described the attendees was: current social equity applicant or licensee.

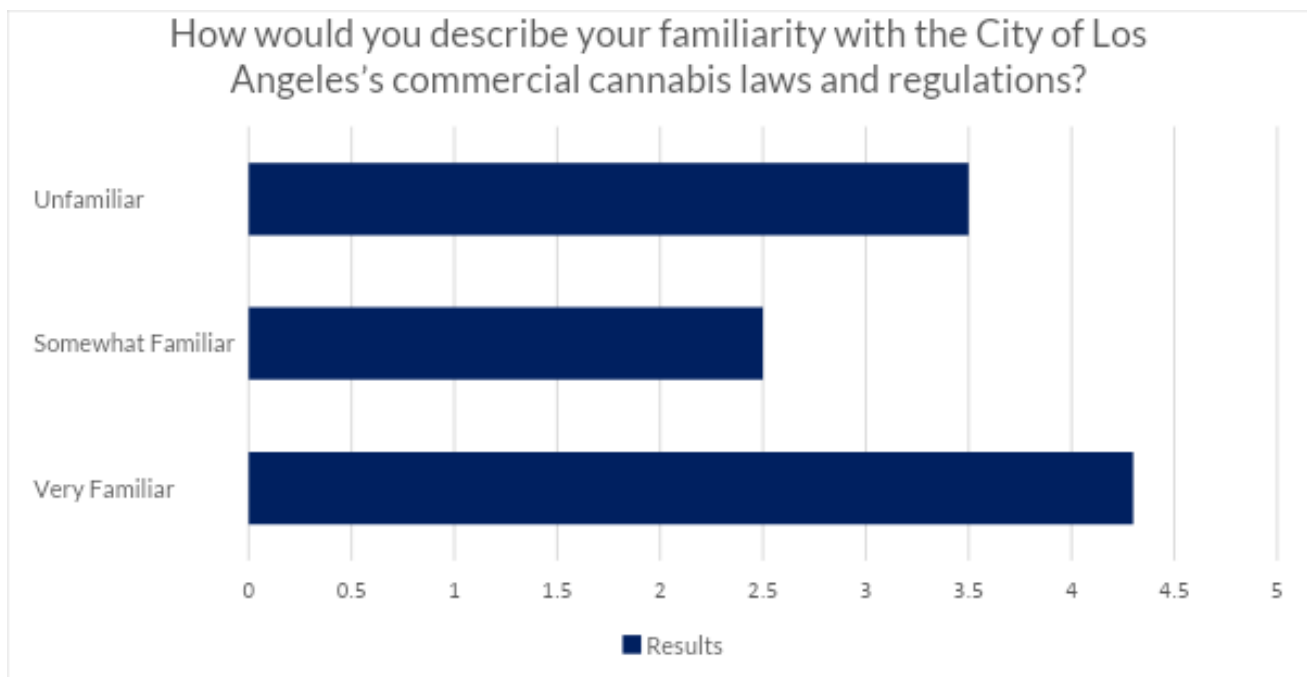


Figure 7. Poll Results- Cannabis Laws & Regulations

A total of 24 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 7. According to the results, 57% of the attendees were very familiar with cannabis laws & regulations in Los Angeles.

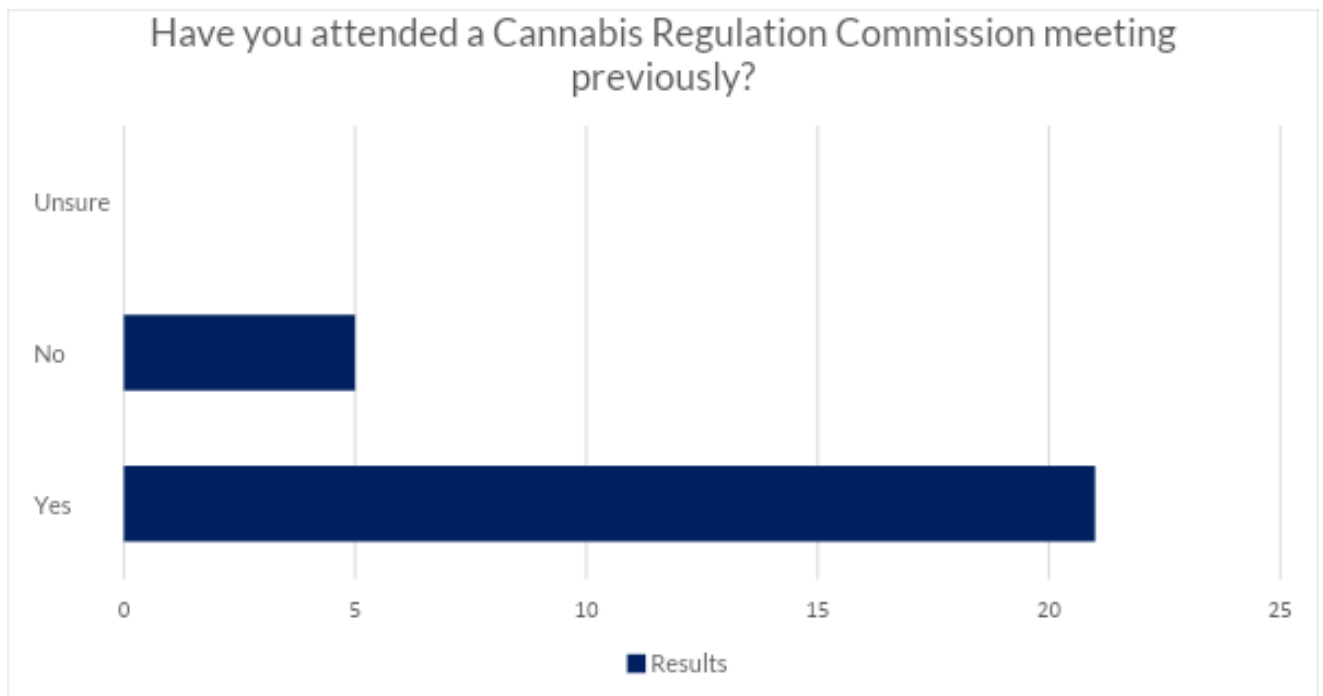


Figure 8. Poll Results- Cannabis Regulation Meeting Attendance

A total of 26 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 8. According to the results, 81% of the attendees have attended a Cannabis Regulations Commission Meeting.

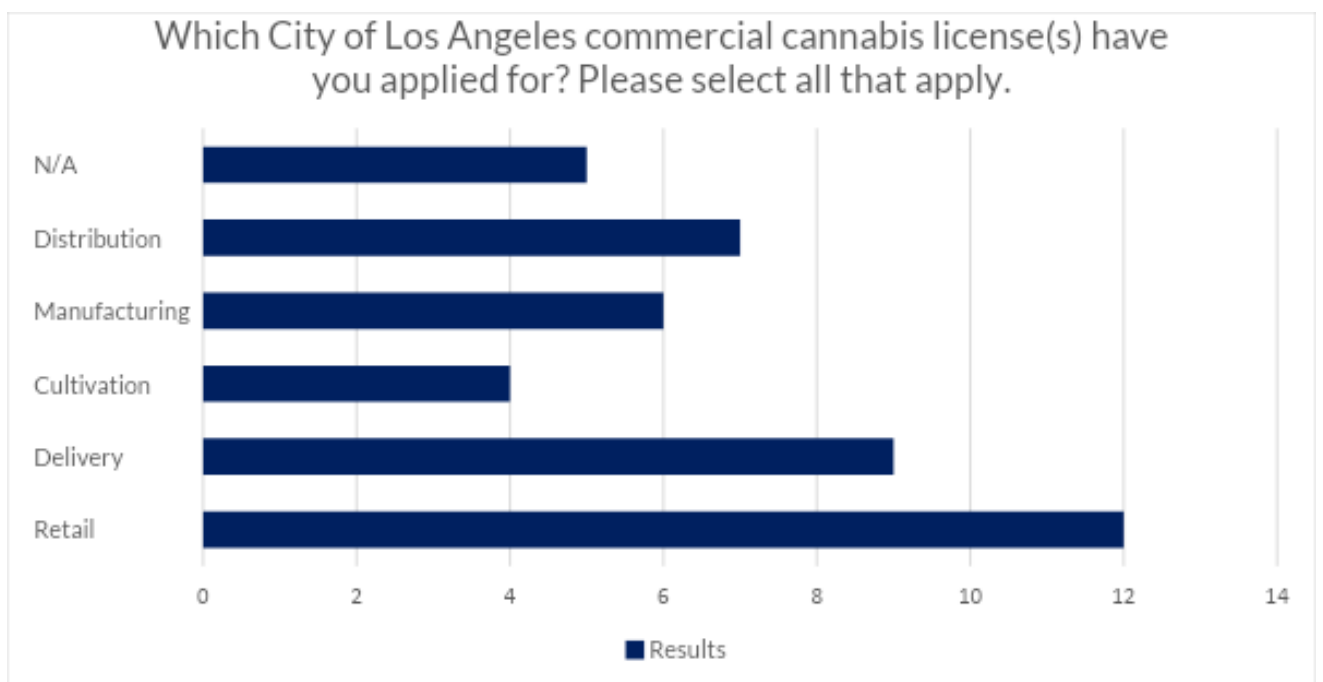


Figure 9. Poll Results- Cannabis License(s)

A total of 43 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 9. According to the results, 12 of the attendees have applied for a cannabis license(s).

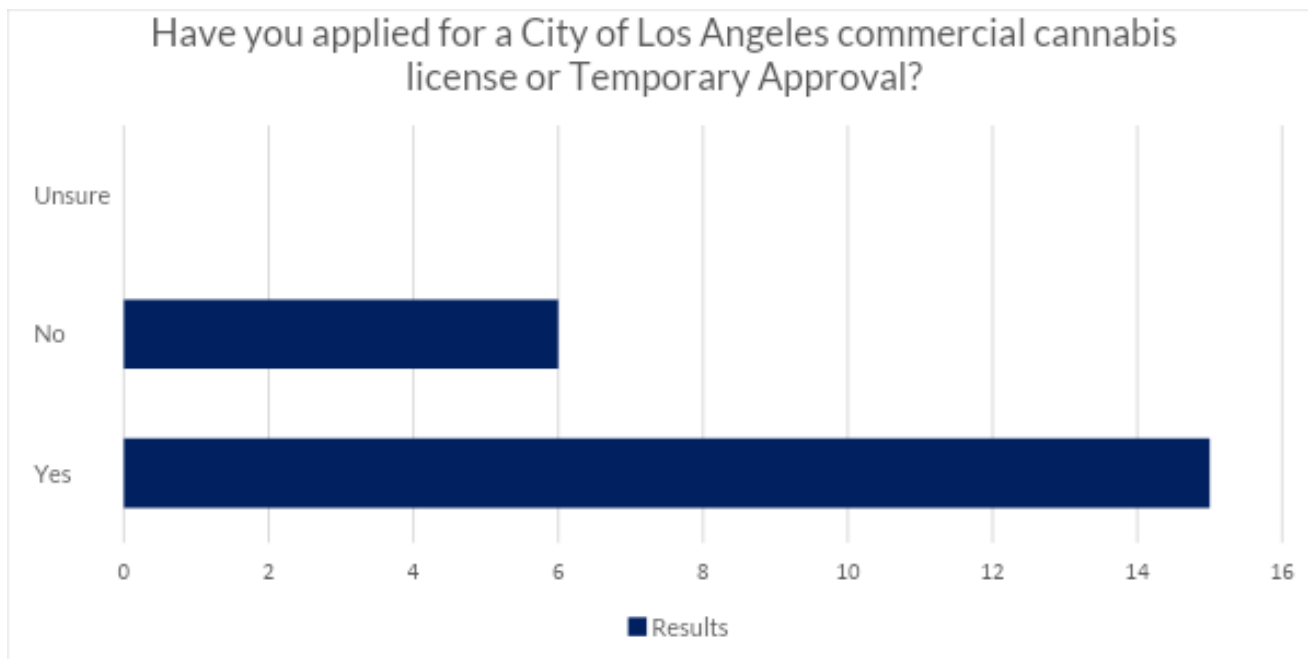


Figure 10. Poll Results- Cannabis License(s) or Temporary Approval

A total of 21 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 10. According to the results, 15 of the attendees have applied for a cannabis license(s) or Temporary Approval.

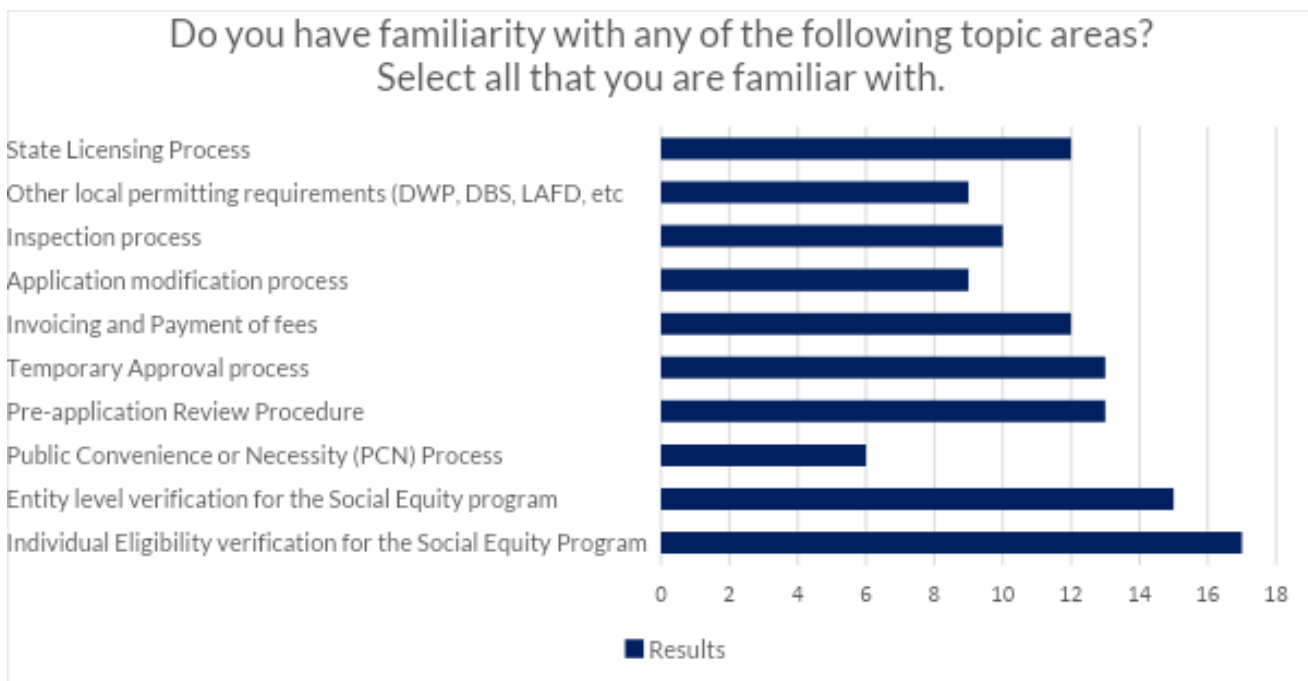


Figure 11. Poll Results- Topic Familiarity

A total of 17 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 11. According to the results, 80% familiarity with Individual Eligibility verification for the Social Equity Program.

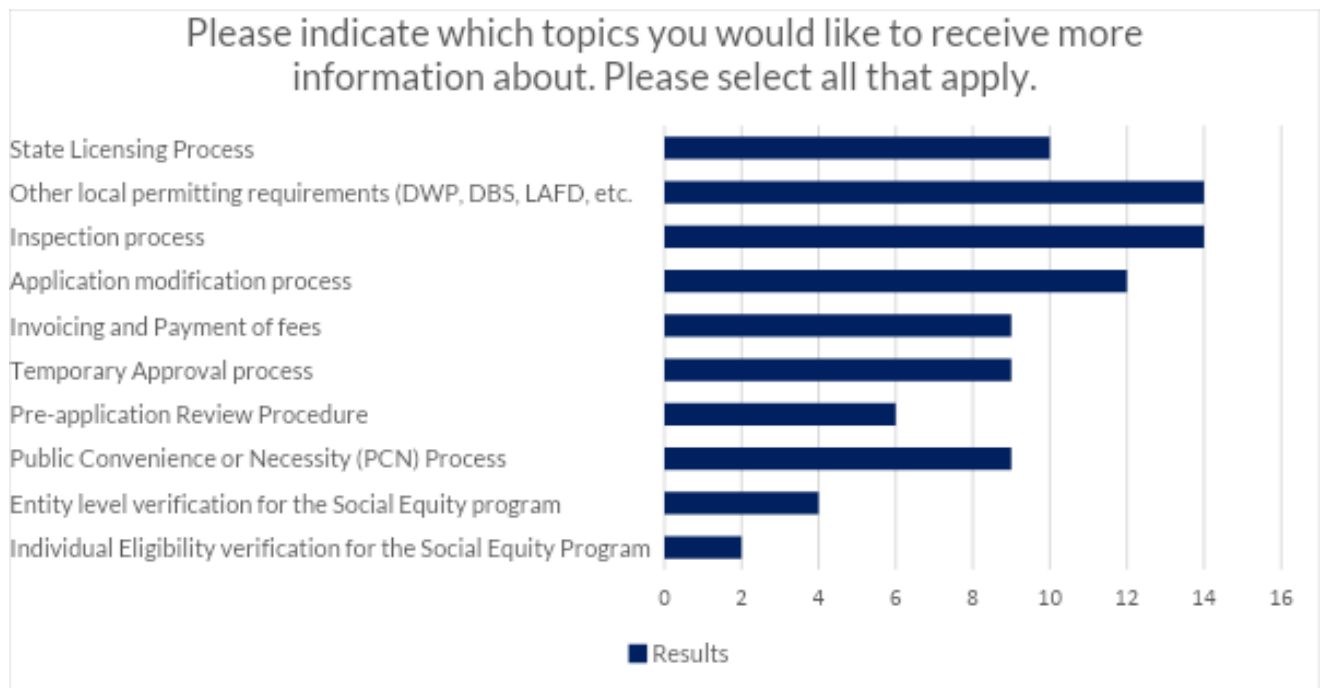


Figure 12. Poll Results- Topics to Receive from DCR

A total of 17 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 12. According to the results, the attendees would like to receive more information about the Inspection Process and Other local permitting requirements as a tie.

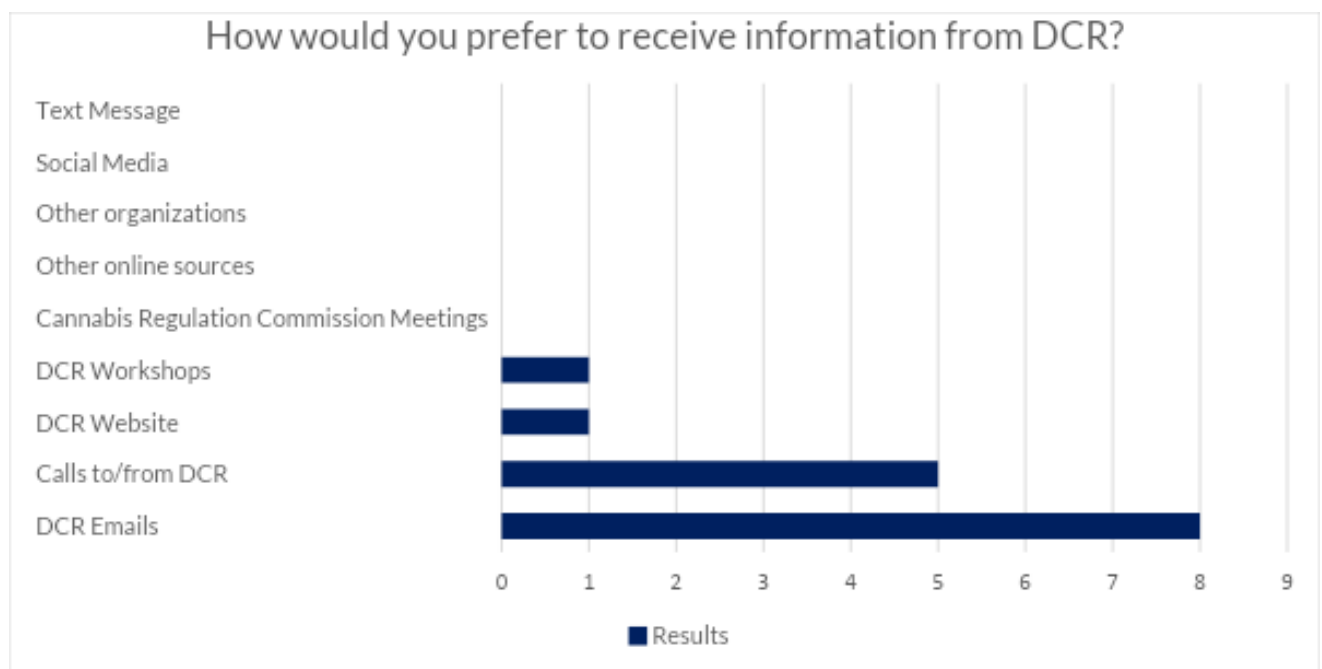


Figure 13. Poll Results- Notifications

A total of 15 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 13. According to the results, 53% would like to receive information via DCR emails.

## Session Summary

During SPARK Session #3, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on the City of Los Angeles' **Licensing and Regulatory Program**. In addition, stakeholders provided comments on the program and input on how the program and current operations can be improved. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- Stakeholders felt that sensitive use restrictions should be lowered for retail cannabis businesses.
- DCR should have retail owner/applicants be replaced when their assigned representative is unavailable.
- DCR's role in the modification of the request stage of the application process is not progressing. The department should create an application modification where the period is shortened to 30 days instead of the current 120-day period.
- DCR should prioritize Social Equity applicants, increase funds provided to licensees, and engage/ take more interest in community activities.
- Phase 3 licensees should receive the same priority treatment as pre-ICO's. If a location has been deemed compliant, grant them temporary approval to conduct business. Minor details in the modification process hold back many businesses to start operating.
- DCR should prioritization the initial 200 applicants from 2017 and expedite Phase 3 temporary approvals with the same process used for EMMD's.
- DCR analysts do not have the correct information to accurately answer application questions and responses are not received in a timely manner. Analysts should provide more frequent application process updates and City officials, Director Packer, and Dr. Brown should communicate frequently with stakeholders.
- Comment time should be increased during commission meetings.
- Measure M tax dollars should be allocated to the communities affected by the War on Drugs. Reintroduce the Cannabis Reinvestment Act.
- The City of Oakland and the state of New York should be used as an example. Oakland adopted tax rebates for social equity that also addresses incentives for general license holders who operate with Social Equity License holders. New York's allocation of 40% of funds for community/ social equity, and 40% for education in communities affected by the War on Drugs.
- Business owners should have a 5% tax or less, for the first year of operation. Taxes could be increased based on business success.
- There should be a reintroduction of the Harris-Dawson Bill (CRA) Cannabis Reinvestment Act.
- There needs to be a loan program modeled after the Jewish Free Loan Association. Startup capital is crucial.
- DCR should recommend attorneys for the beginning stages of obtaining a retail license. Social Equity applicants need 50 hours funded of legal assistance.
- Recommendations from the Federal Mentor Protégé Program should be used.
- Language for the Annual Distribution of Profits should be adopted from the DVBE program.
- DCR needs a grassroots outreach campaign to interact with communities affected by the War on Drugs and open more cultivation space for social equity applicants to apply



for. A large majority of cultivation is owned by non-social equity license holders. Current Phase 2 Social Equity Applicants should be able to apply for a cultivation license.

- DCR should increase access to low interest loans. Some stakeholders prefer a larger loan at a lower interest rate over a small grant.

#### **6.1.4 Session #4 – Community Impact**

On Saturday, May 15, 2021, MBI held SPARK Session #4, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. through Zoom Webinar. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. The session provided an overview of the department’s role with community impact. DCR and MBI also engaged with the stakeholders through eight (8) interactive polling segments throughout the session. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

SPARK Session #4 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Thryeris Mason, CRC, Vice President
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media Project Manager

A total of 30 stakeholders joined the session. Of the 31 attendees, there were 28 video attendees and three (3) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included social equity applicants and licensees, Los Angeles residents and employees, cannabis patients and consumers, prospective social equity and/or general applicants, community members arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, and neighborhood council members. The full transcriptions are provided in Appendix N of this summary report.

#### **Stakeholder Comments**

During the SPARK Session #4, stakeholders provided questions and comments and a complete log can be referenced in Appendix O.

#### **Poll Results**

The session included eight (8) polling questions for stakeholders. The polling questions were relative to the following topics:

- Attendee Type
- Familiarity with Personal Cannabis Activity Laws
- Familiarity with Identification of Licensed Cannabis Businesses
- Familiarity with Laws Related to Commercial Cannabis Activity
- Cannabis Business in the Community

- Participation in Programming Designed to Promote Community Engagement and Community Service
- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses
- Interest in More Information

The official poll report can be referenced in Appendix P.

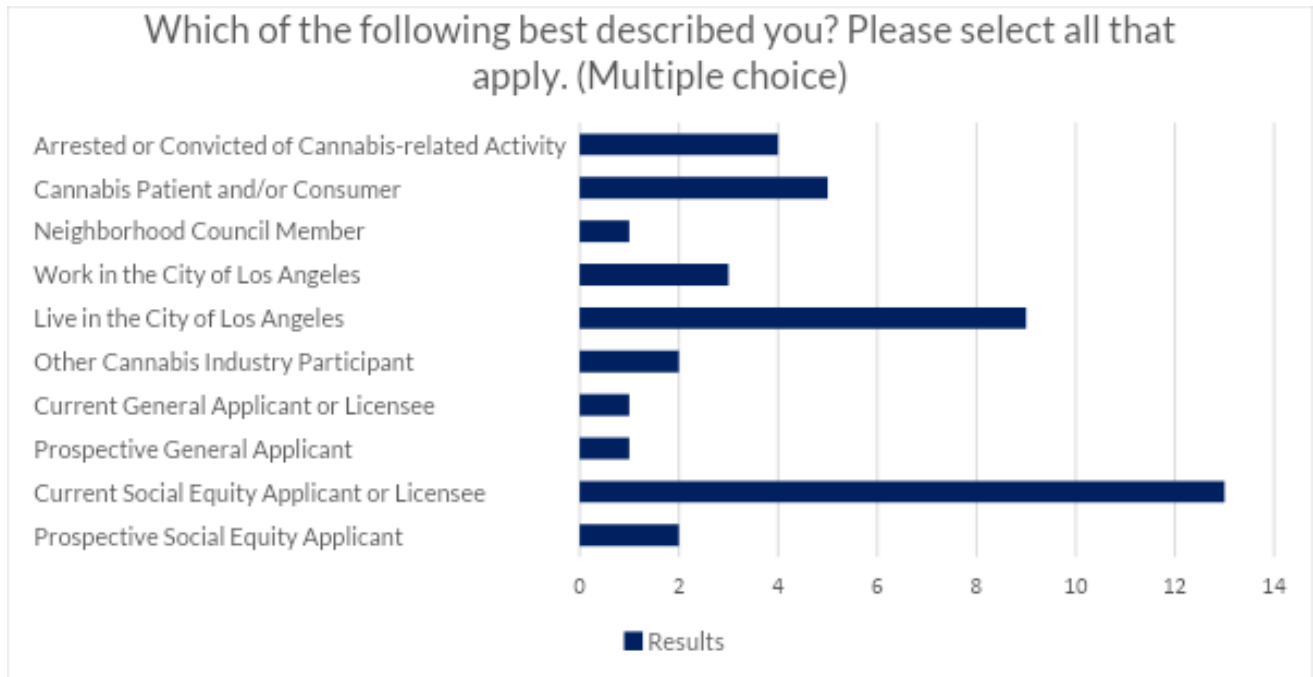


Figure 14. Poll Results- Attendee Type

A total of 16 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 14. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, the top three (3) reasons that best described the attendees were: current social equity applicant or licensee; resident of the City of Los Angeles; and cannabis patient and/or consumer.

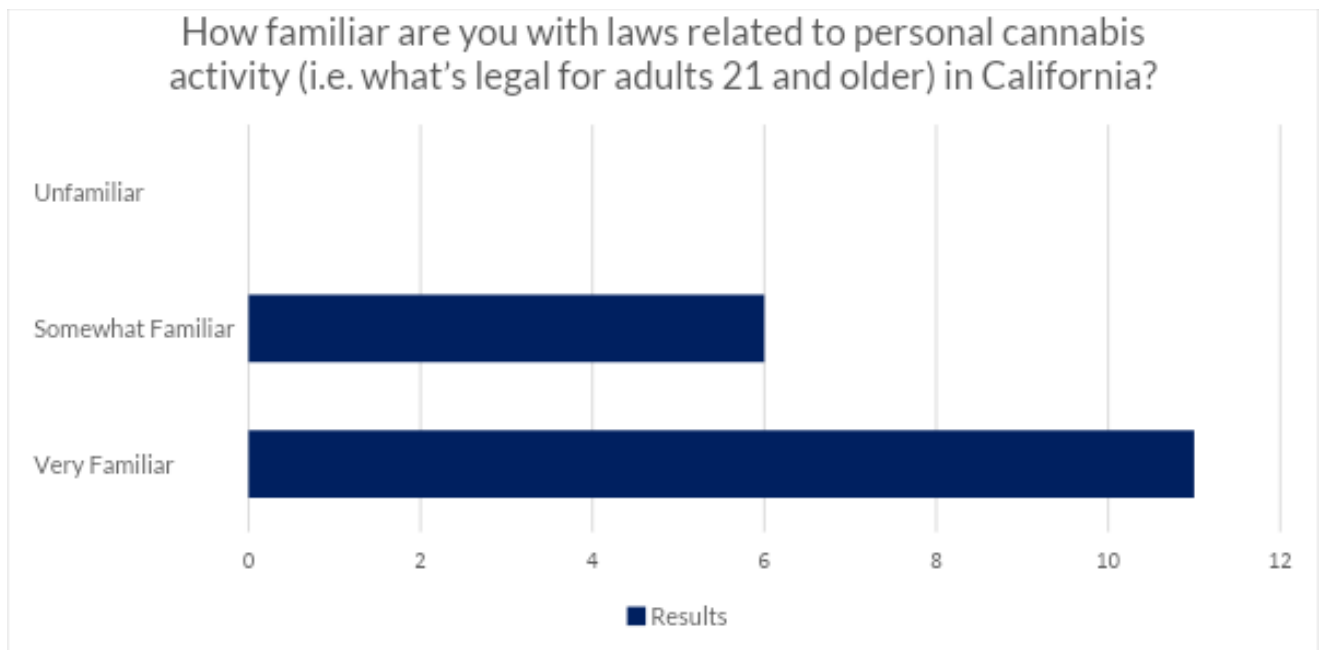


Figure 15. Poll Results- Familiarity with Personal Cannabis Activity Laws

A total of 17 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 15. According to the results, 65% of the attendees are very familiar with laws related to personal cannabis activity in California.

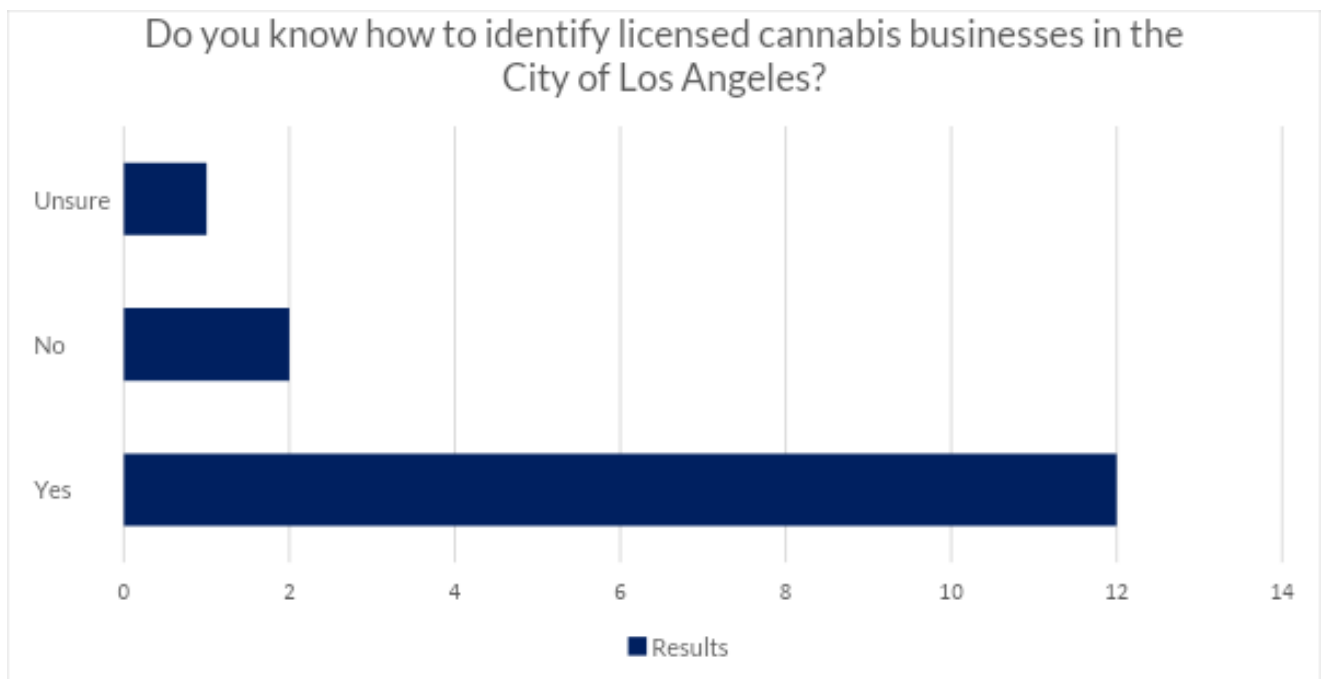


Figure 16. Poll Results- Familiarity with Identification of Licensed Cannabis Businesses

A total of 15 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 16. According to the results, 80% of the attendees know how to identify licensed cannabis businesses in the City of Los Angeles.

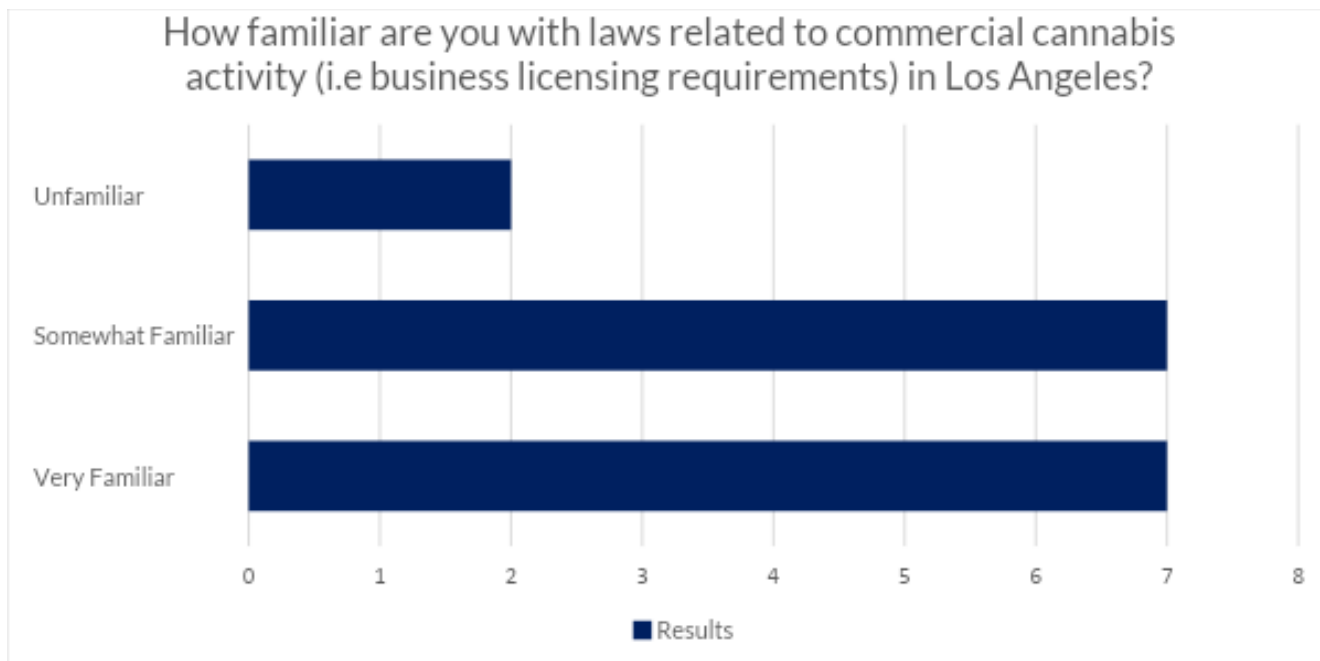


Figure 17. Poll Results- Familiarity with Laws Related to Commercial Cannabis Activity

A total of 16 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 17. According to the results, 44% of the attendees are very familiar or somewhat familiar with the laws related to commercial cannabis activity in the City of Los Angeles.

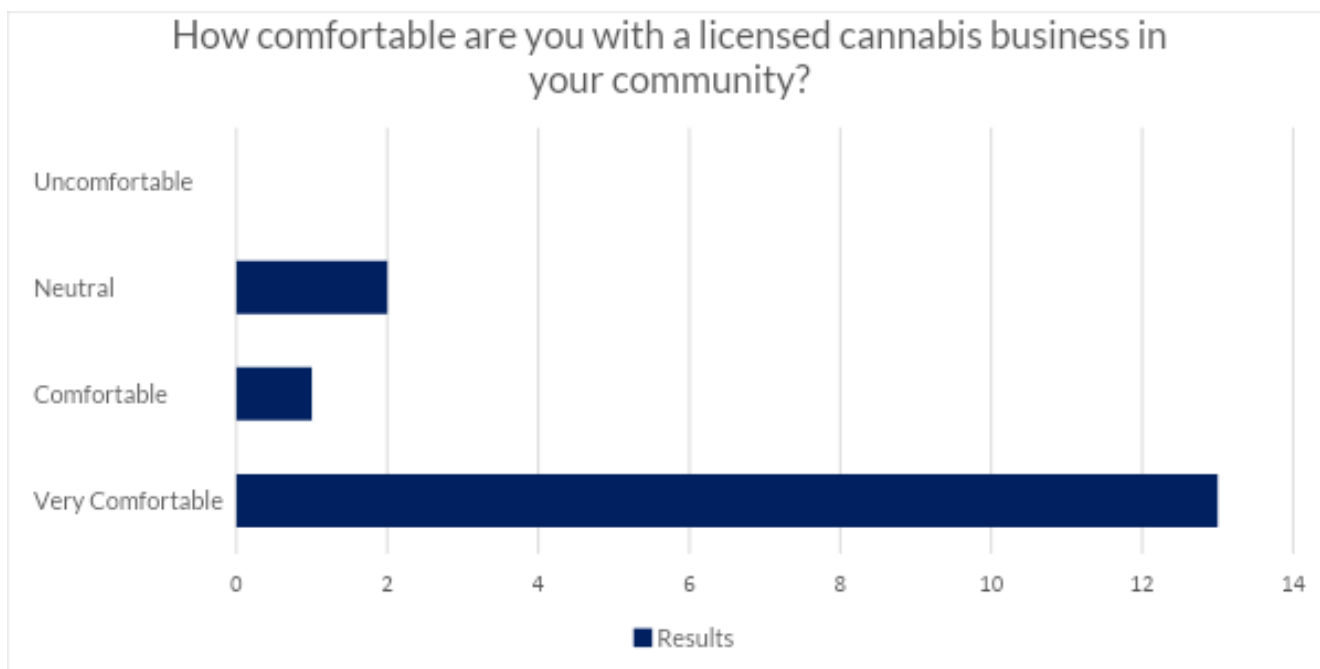


Figure 18. Poll Results- Cannabis Business in the Community

A total of 16 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 18. According to the results, 82% of the attendees are very comfortable with licenses cannabis businesses in their community.

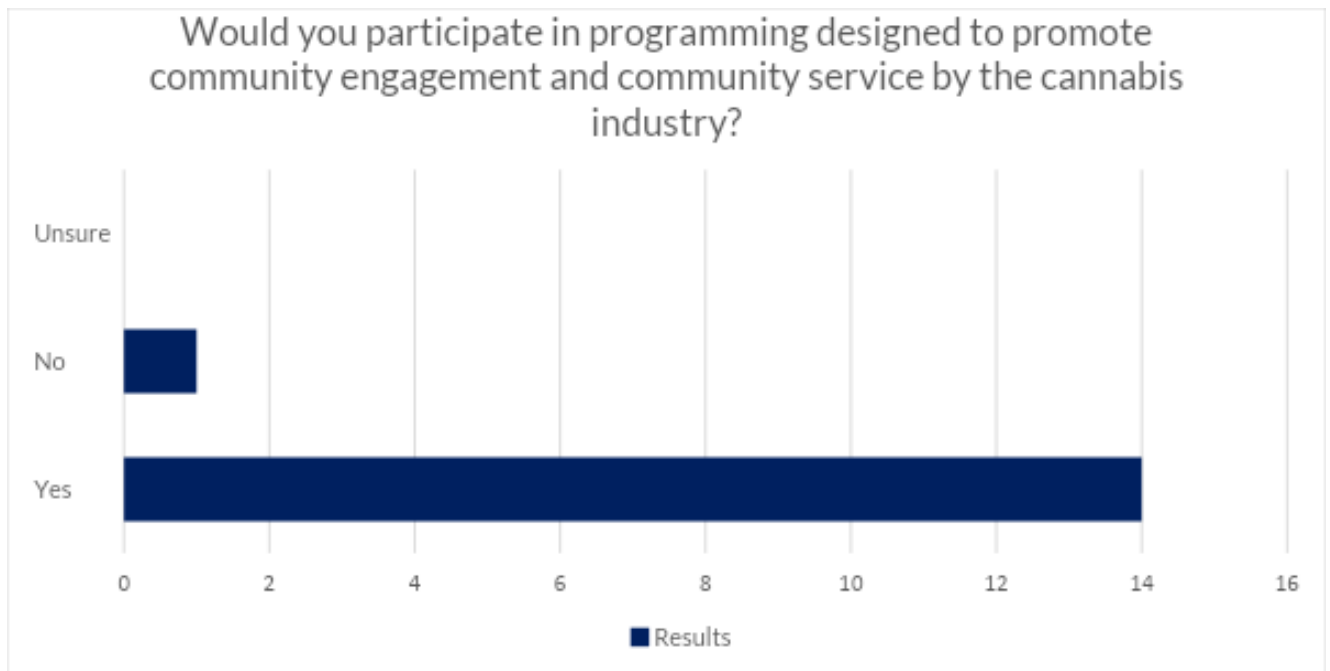


Figure 19. Poll Results- Participation in Programming Designed to Promote Community Engagement and Community Service

A total of 15 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 19. According to the results, 94% of the attendees would participate in programming designed to promote community engagement and community service by the cannabis industry.

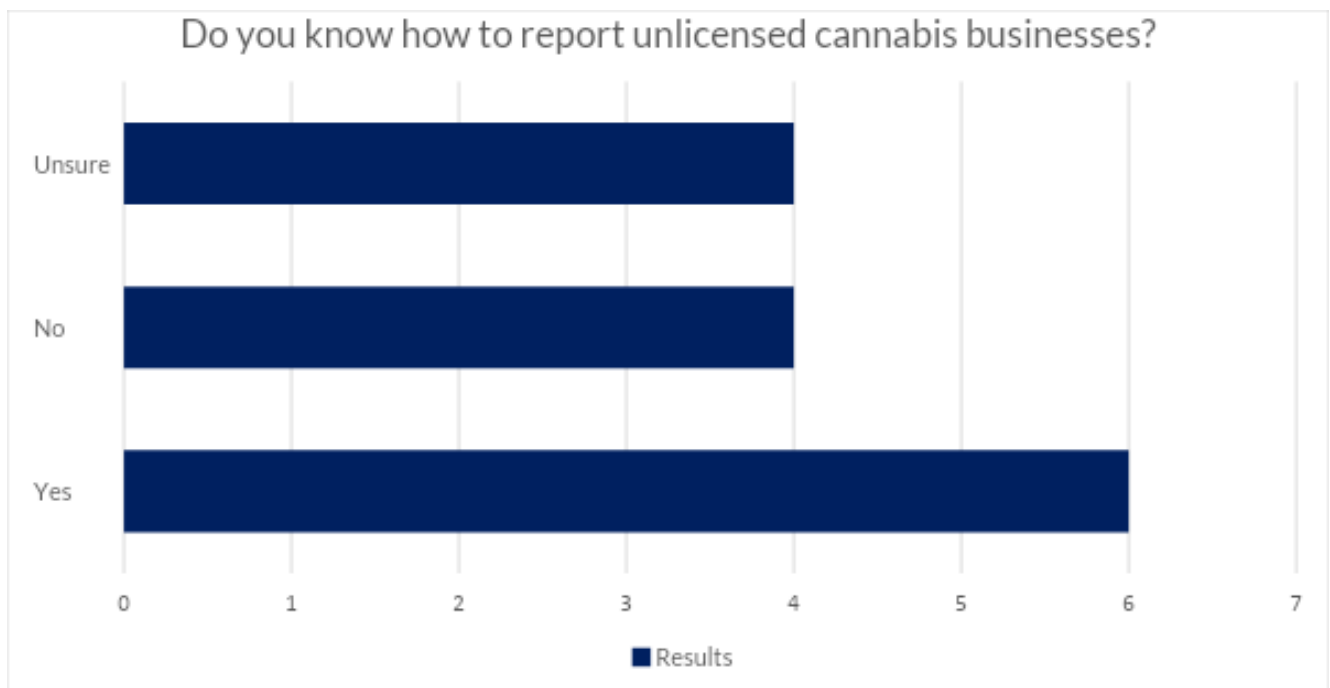


Figure 20. Poll Results- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses

A total of 15 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 20. According to the results, 43% of the attendees know how to report unlicensed cannabis businesses, while 43% either don't know or are unsure of the reporting process.



Figure 21. Poll Results- More Information

A total of 13 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 21. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, the top four (4) topics attendees would like to receive more information about include information about Corporate Social Responsibility in the legal cannabis industry, cannabis businesses in your community, public health and health equity, and youth prevention.

## Session Summary

During SPARK Session #4, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on **Community Impact**. In addition, stakeholders provided comments on the program and input on how to improve community involvement and increase funding to aid applicants, especially social equity applicants. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- Stakeholders recommended that the Social Equity Analysis structure be used, with recommendations to model after Oakland's Equity Department structure.
- Stakeholders should participate in the selection process of the commissioners
- Taxes should be modeled after the Oakland's Tax rebate program
- The Cannabis Reinvestment Act should be reintroduced and funded by the City of Los Angeles' cannabis tax revenues. Reintroducing this act would fulfill the promise of Measure M.
- Expedite the Application Modification from 120 days to 30 days for Phase 3 Round 1 applicants to relieve the financial hardships incurred due to the delays.
- Stakeholders requested for the Community Stakeholders Equity working group (that the Rules Committee instructed to be formed in 2019) to be reinstated.
- Stakeholders requested to have community council more involved in the processes.

- Due to the economic hardships incurred from delays in process and funding for the SEP, the moratorium should be extended for an additional three years until 2028.

### **6.1.5 Session #5 – Licensing and Regulation**

On Wednesday, May 26, 2021, DCR held SPARK Session #5, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. through Zoom Webinar. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. The session provided the opportunity to engage through facilitated conversation about the department's role with Licensing and Regulation. MBI used the whiteboard Zoom feature, which allowed stakeholders the opportunity to give their comments and feedback pertaining prompts. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

SPARK Session #5 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media, Project Manager

A total of 74 stakeholders joined the session. Of the 74 attendees, there were 70 video attendees and four (4) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included social equity applicants and licensees, Los Angeles residents and employees, cannabis patients and consumers, prospective social equity and/or general applicants, community members arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, and neighborhood council members. The full transcription is provided in Appendix Q of this summary report.

### **Stakeholder Comments**

During the SPARK Session #5, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix R.

### **Whiteboards**

The session included five (5) prompt questions for attendees facilitated by MBI. The prompts included:

- Social Equity Program
- Licensing Types
- Location Restrictions
- App Process
- Tax Rates

Attendees were separated into two breakout rooms which allowed stakeholders to interact with one another and participate in the conversations. Whiteboard results can be found in Appendix S.



## Session Summary

During SPARK Session #5, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on **Licensing and Regulation**. In addition, stakeholders provided comments on the program's current process. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- Current tax rates are unsustainable for businesses, especially startups. Stakeholders believe the current rates should be reevaluated and the Oakland model should be followed. Stakeholders do not wish to be taxed for indoor cultivation
- Stakeholders provided various ideas on licenses for cultivation, consumption lounges, and cultivation. These include event licenses and consumption lounges exclusively for Social Equity, the extension of the Social Equity Program for another three years, and PCN for Social Equity Cultivation.
- Stakeholders shared that business owners should prioritize social equity applicants by providing them with exclusivity for event licenses and consumption lounges.
- The application process should be kept open to Los Angeles residents only and those who have been affected by the war on drugs.
- Consumption Allowance Lounges should be only for Social Equity Applicants
- Stakeholders discussed the impact of having a seven-hundred-foot buffer. Some stakeholders agreed that this buffer can limit and hurt businesses, while others disagreed.
- Stakeholders suggested that taxes should be lowered to landlords only if there is a visible list of landlord names for applicants to review and choose from. They also discussed the faults of the applicant verification system, which allows candidates to "game the system", by not paying taxes and filing for low amounts of money.
- Stakeholders urged that social equity needs to be made a priority and expedited processing is needed immediately. They want the same expedited process for temporary approvals that is used to expedite the application process of EMMD's.
- Stakeholders would like DCR to have more control over the license documentation or at least provide applicants with temporary documentation.

### 6.1.6 Session #6 – Corporate Social Responsibility

On Thursday, June 3, 2021, MBI held SPARK Session #6, from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. through Zoom Webinar. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. The session provided the opportunity to engage through facilitated conversation about the department's role with Corporate Social Responsibility. DCR and MBI decided to extend the session by thirty minutes to allow more time for stakeholders to participate in the facilitated conversations. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

SPARK Session #6 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Rita Villa, CRC, Commissioner
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media Project Manager

A total of 38 stakeholders joined the session. Of the 38 attendees, there were 38 video attendees and four (4) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included social equity applicants and licensees, Los Angeles residents and employees, cannabis patients and consumers, prospective social equity and/or general applicants, community members arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, and neighborhood council members. The full transcription is provided in Appendix T of this summary report.

### **Stakeholder Comments**

During SPARK Session #6, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix U.

### **Poll Results**

The session included eight (8) polling questions for attendees. The polling questions were relative to the following topics:

- Familiarity with Corporate Social Responsibility
- Importance of Corporate Social Responsibility
- Corporate Social Responsibility Policy
- Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives
- Corporate Social Responsibility Policy Influence

The official poll report can be referenced in Appendix V.

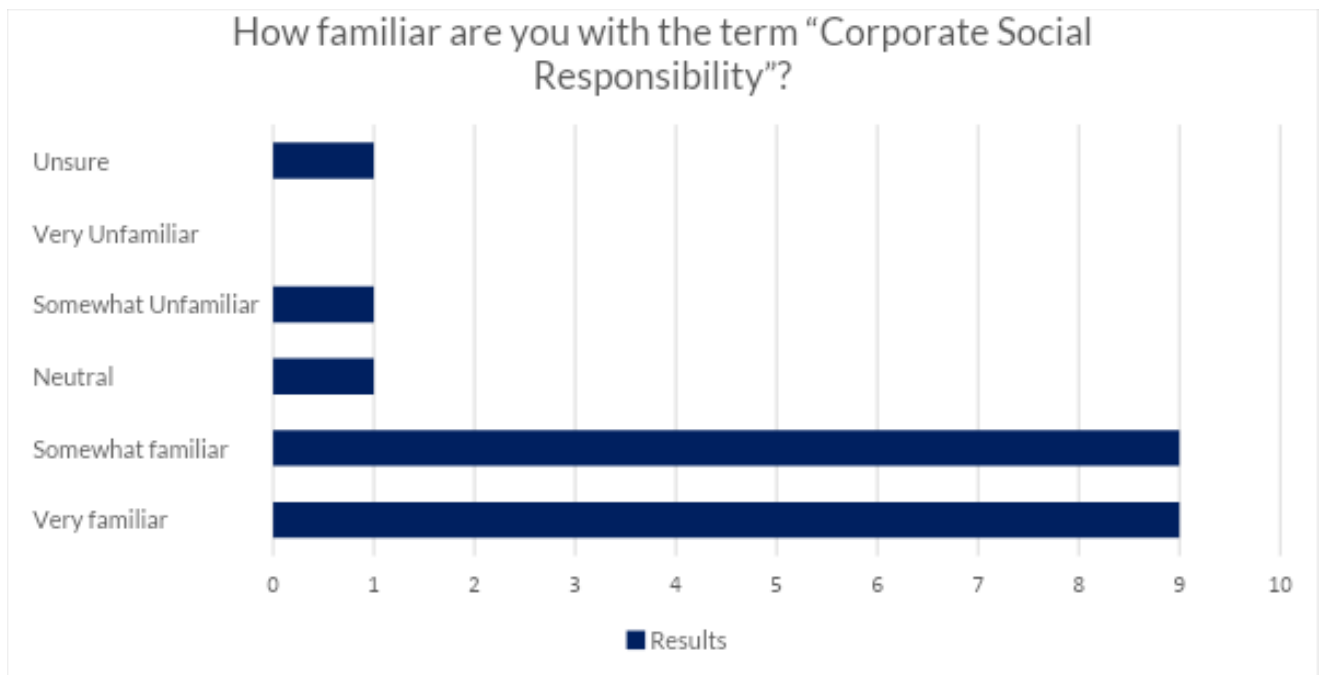


Figure 22. Poll Results- Corporate Social Responsibility

A total of 21 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 22. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, attendees were very familiar and somewhat familiar with the term Corporate Social Responsibility.

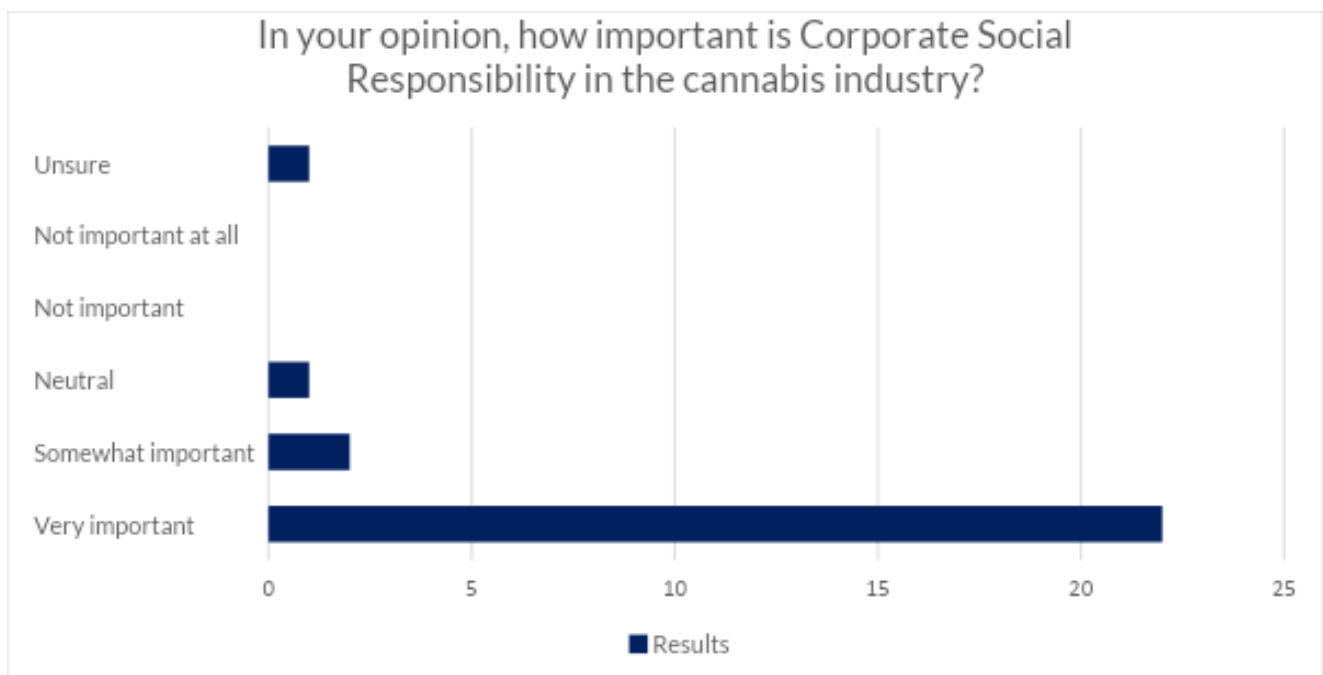


Figure 23. Poll Results- Corporate Social Responsibility Importance

A total of 26 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 23. According to the results, 85% of the attendees find Corporate Social Responsibility very important to the cannabis industry.

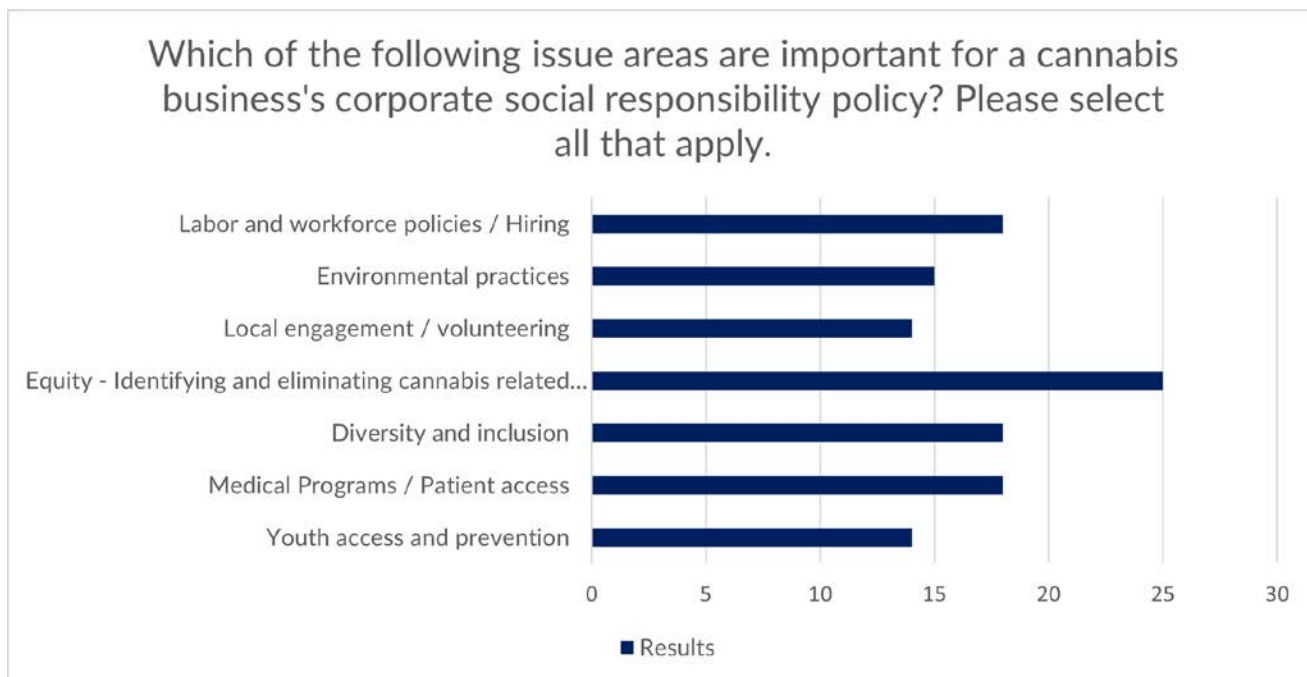


Figure 24. Poll Results- Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

A total of 29 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 24. According to the results, 86% of the attendees believe equity is the most important issue regarding corporate social responsibility policy.

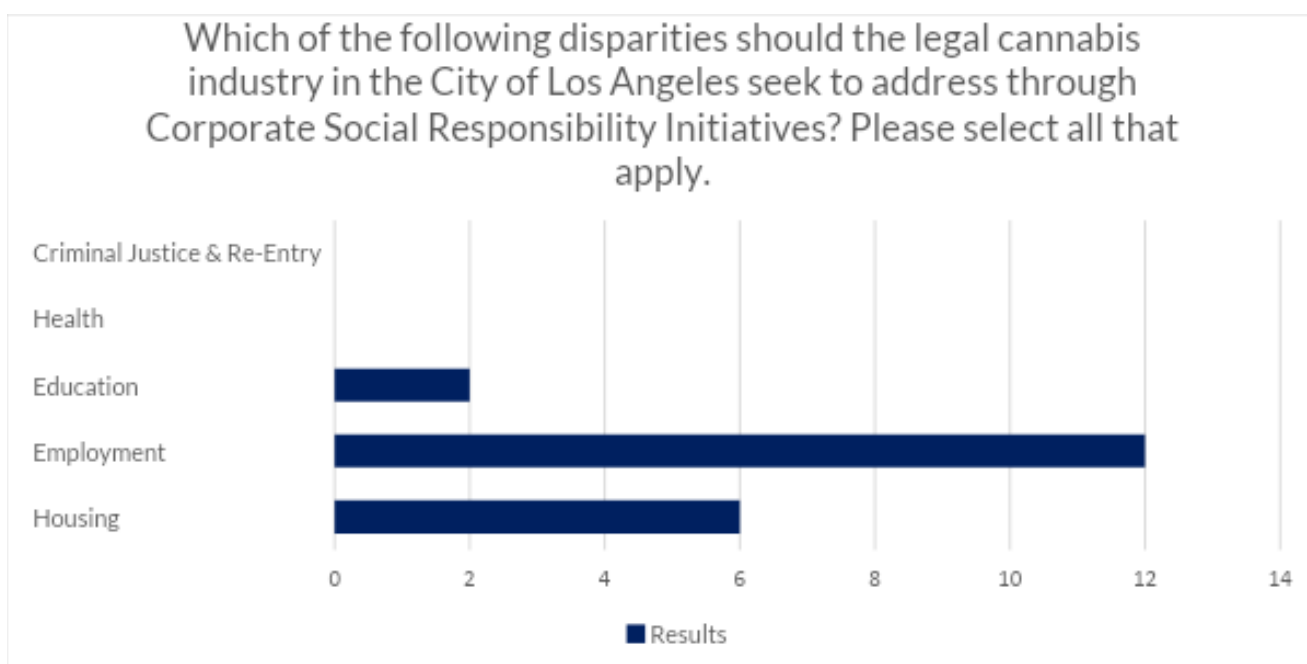


Figure 25. Poll Results- Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives

A total of 15 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 25. According to the results, employment and housing are the main disparities the legal cannabis industry in the City of Los Angeles should seek to address through Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives.

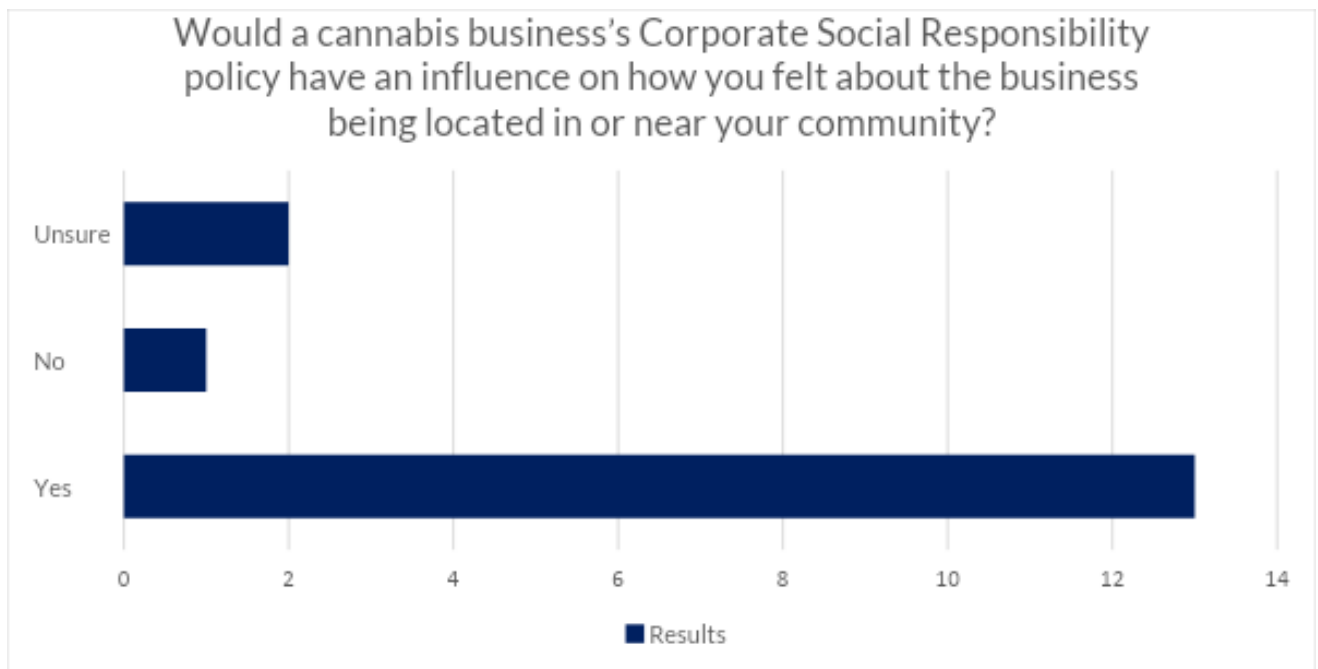


Figure 26. Poll Results- CSR Policy Influence

A total of 16 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 26. According to the results, 82% of the attendees are agree that cannabis business's Corporate Social Responsibility policy have an influence on how they felt about the business being in or near your community.

## Whiteboards

The session included five (5) prompt questions for attendees facilitated by DCR and MBI. The topics included:

- Corporate Social Responsibility Policy
- Corporate Social Responsibility Report
- Development & Submission of Corporate Social Responsibility Report
- Corporate Social Responsibility Report
- Corporate Social Responsibility Incentivization

Attendees were separated into two breakout rooms which allowed stakeholders to interact with one another and participate in the conversations. Whiteboard results can be found in Appendix W.

## Session Summary

During SPARK Session #6, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on **Corporate Social Responsibility**. In addition, stakeholders provided comments on the importance of implementing Corporate Social Responsibility. During this session stakeholders

shared feedback that included the following:

- Stakeholders want enforcement of existing CSR for EMMD's and wish for businesses to have an on-going relationship with a non-profit within the City.
- Policies and reports should have clear goals and outcomes for businesses and their reports should be posted on the DCR website. If there is no proof of CSR, licenses should be revoked
- Community engagement standards should include good work incentives such as health insurance, sick days, bonus programs and by giving back by working with probation programs, nonviolent offenders and by training youth and others affected by the war on drugs.
- The CSR report should be detailed with what a business has done for the community.
- Stakeholders suggested a list should be provided to businesses, so they know which communities/charities/nonprofits are approved to contribute to.
- L.A.'s Cannabis industry and policies should prioritize black and brown communities as was promised through Measure M.
- Stakeholders wish to expand the criteria for the social equity individual applicant verification. This expanded criterion includes: if an applicant lost a family member in the war on drugs, prior conviction sentence to prison or California Youth Authority or if the applicant lived in Los Angeles through the war on drugs.
- Stakeholders believe those who should get the most credit for being responsible are those who run compassion programs since charities often cannot accept money from cannabis organizations.

### **6.1.7 Session #7 – Social Equity Program**

On Tuesday, June 8, 2021, DCR held SPARK Session #7, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. through Zoom Webinar. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. After the comments, the session included a brief introduction to the Social Equity Program, followed by breakout rooms. Breakout rooms provided an overview of the department's social equity program and its different components. During breakout rooms, attendees were able to actively participate throughout the presentation providing input on each prompt. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

Attendees' comments were captured on the whiteboard function. DCR and MBI also engaged with the stakeholders through three (3) interactive polling segments throughout the session.

SPARK Session #7 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media Project Manager

A total of 112 attendees joined the session. Of the 112 attendees, there were 104 video attendees and eight (8) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included

prospective social equity applicants, current social equity applicant or Licensee, prospective general applicant, current general applicant/licensee, neighborhood council member, cannabis patient and/or consumer, arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, resident of the City of Los Angeles. The full transcription is provided in Appendix X of this report.

## Stakeholder Comments

During the SPARK Session #7, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix Y.

## Poll Results

The session included three (3) polling questions for attendees. The polling questions were relative to the following topics:

- Attendee Type
- Familiarity with Social Equity Topics
- More Information about Social Equity Topics

The official poll report can be referenced in Appendix Z.

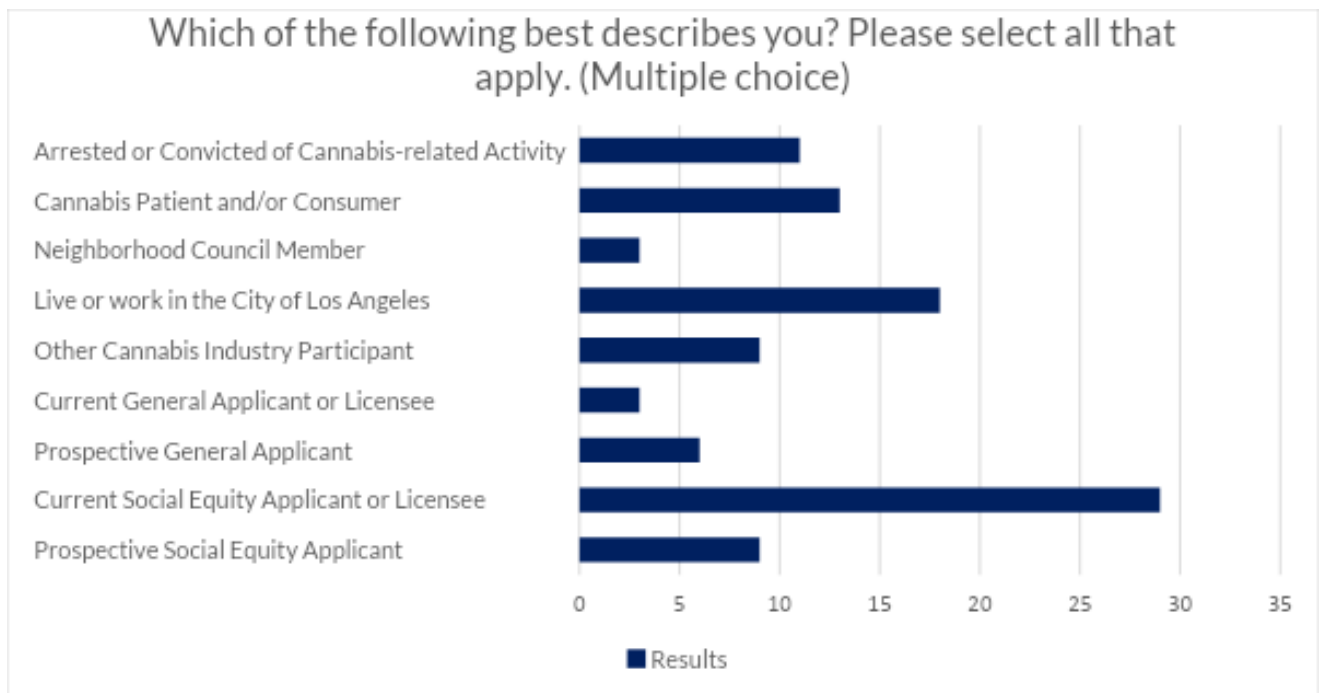


Figure 27. Poll Results- Attendee Type

A total of 47 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 27. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, the top three (3) reasons that best described the attendees were: current social equity applicant or licensee; resident or works in the City of Los Angeles; and cannabis patient and/or consumer.



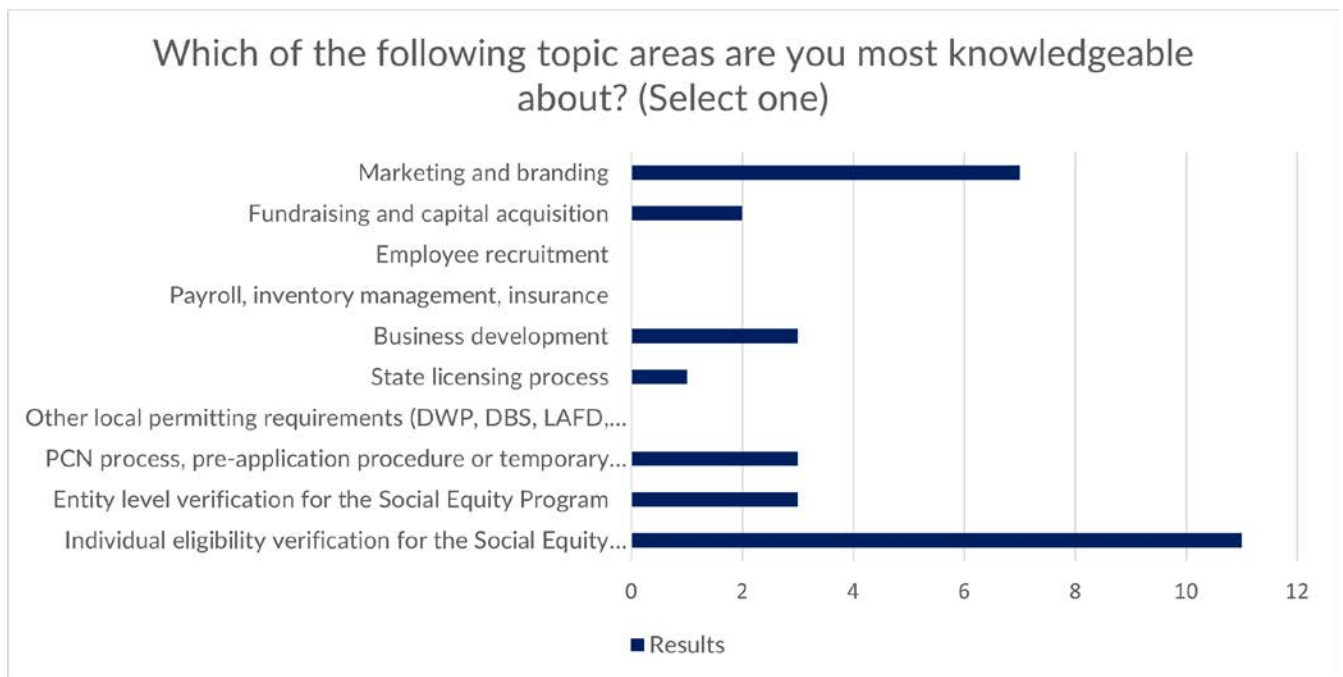


Figure 28. Poll Results- Familiarity with Social Equity Topics

A total of 31 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 28. According to the results, the top five (5) topics the attendees are most knowledgeable about are: individual eligibility verification for the Social Equity Program, marketing and branding, entity level verification for the Social Equity Program, PCN process, pre-application procedure or temporary approval procedure and business development.

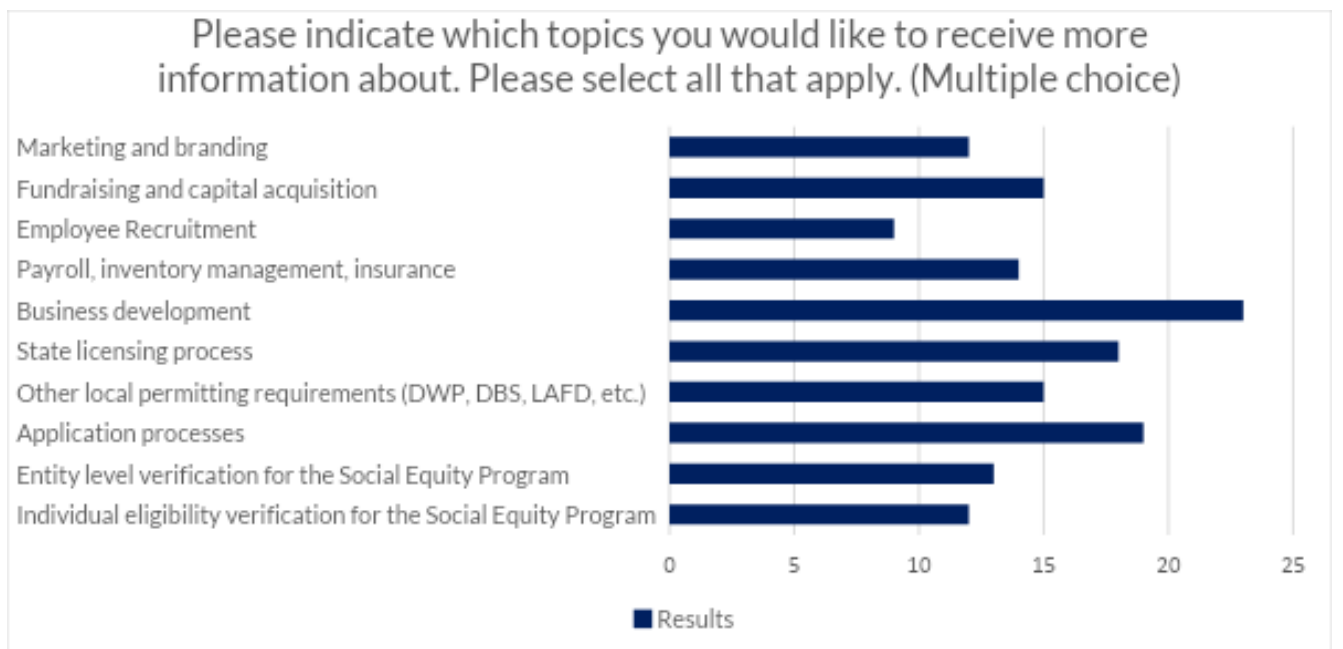


Figure 29. Poll Results- More Information about Social Equity Topics

A total of 34 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 29. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, the top three (3)

topics attendees would like to receive more information about include information about business development, application processes and state licensing process.

## Whiteboards

The session included three (3) prompt questions for attendees facilitated by DCR and MBI. The topics included:

- Social Equity Program Eligibility Verification, Individual Eligibility Verification and Entity Verification
- Priority Application Processing
- Social Equity Program Overview
- Social Equity Program Overview Fee Deferral and Fee Waiver
- SEED Grant Program

Attendees were separated into two breakout rooms which allowed stakeholders to interact with one another and participate in the conversations. Whiteboard results can be found in Appendix AA.

## Session Summary

During the SPARK Session #7, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on the department's current **Social Equity Program**. In addition, attendees provided comments on the program and input on how the program can be improved from a social equity perspective. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- The need for transparency during the application process, as many applicants have not received updates on their application status and have not received any benefits from the SEP. Delays in the licensing process make it difficult to find potential investors and in result, hurting these businesses. SEP processes should be improved and expedited. This includes revisiting prequalified applicants and move forward with their process.
  - The social equity department should have a large staff dedicated strictly to reviewing and processing equity applications, offering a one-on-one support with assigned case managers, pro-bono attorneys and periodic needs assessments to identify the resources needed to guarantee the success of all social equity applicants and licensees.
  - Workshops and educational videos explaining the program's processes are needed to guarantee all applicants are knowledgeable during each phase of the process.
- In support of Measure M, it was recommended to use all comments collected through the SPARK Sessions to draft new policies that are in line with equity goals, including

redefining transitional workers, social equity businesses and their roles and restructuring licensing fines,

- Program qualifications and parameters should be redesigned, including improving the vetting process, implementing race as part of the criteria, and narrowing the group to strictly Los Angeles residents so DCR can guarantee that applicants are victims of the War on Drugs.
- Eligibility should be expanded to also include direct family members of those arrested or those affected by the war on drugs, and only to the areas that were disproportionately impacted. San Francisco, Oakland and Sacramento laws and policies can be used as a guide.
- Stakeholders are interested in DCR providing a list of cannabis-friendly and social equity landlords, attorneys, and business contacts.  
It is important that DCR engage the public and inform them of the department role in cannabis business and the different opportunities and grants the department offers. Because of lack of knowledge, there are many unlicensed businesses that may not be informed of the processes and protocols to be licensed in Los Angeles and are affecting businesses during their licensing process.
- Protection from predatory investors is needed for all the program's applicants
- Cannabis events should be a great low-cost way for social equity folks to get into the industry to make an impact and grow quickly.
- Verified applicants should be allowed to be incubated by current Tier 3 social equity corporations.
- Deadlines should be extended beyond 2025.
- Education is key to set up social equity applicants and licensees for success. Education programs would include business management courses, exploration of other license types, mentorship programs and networking among all applicants.
- A large amount of grant money that allows spending flexibility is favored over application fee deductions.

### **6.1.8 Session #8 – Community Impact**

On Saturday, June 12, 2021, DCR held SPARK Session #8, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. through Zoom Webinar. Stakeholders were provided a period to comment during the first hour of the session. Each attendee was allowed two (2) minutes to provide a comment. After the comments, the session included a brief introduction about cannabis in the Los Angeles community and the current laws about cannabis continue to have significant impacts. After the introduction, the main group was separated into breakout rooms. Breakout rooms provided an overview of the department's social equity program and its different components. During breakout rooms, attendees were able to actively participate throughout the presentation providing input on each prompt. The session concluded with details on the other upcoming SPARK Sessions and closing remarks.

Attendees' comments were captured on the whiteboard function. DCR and MBI also engaged with stakeholders through three (3) interactive polling segments throughout the session.

SPARK Session #8 presenters included:

- Cat Packer, Department of Cannabis Regulation, Executive Director
- Rayna Plummer, SPARK Project Manager
- Victor Navarro, CRC, Commissioner
- Pamela Smith, MBI Media, Project Manager

A total of 20 attendees joined the session. Of the 20 attendees, there were 16 video attendees and four (4) call-in attendees. Stakeholders who attended the meeting included prospective social equity applicants, current social equity applicant or Licensee, prospective general applicant, current general applicant/licensee, neighborhood council member, cannabis patient and/or consumer, arrested or convicted of cannabis-related activity, resident of the City of Los Angeles. The full transcription is provided in Appendix BB of this summary report.

## Stakeholder Comments

During the SPARK Session #8, stakeholders provided questions and comments. A complete log can be referenced in Appendix CC.

## Poll Results

The session included four (4) polling questions for attendees. The polling questions were relative to the following topics:

- Licensed Cannabis Business in your Community
- Unlicensed Cannabis Business Impact
- Identification of Licensed Cannabis Businesses in Los Angeles
- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses

The official poll report can be referenced in Appendix DD.

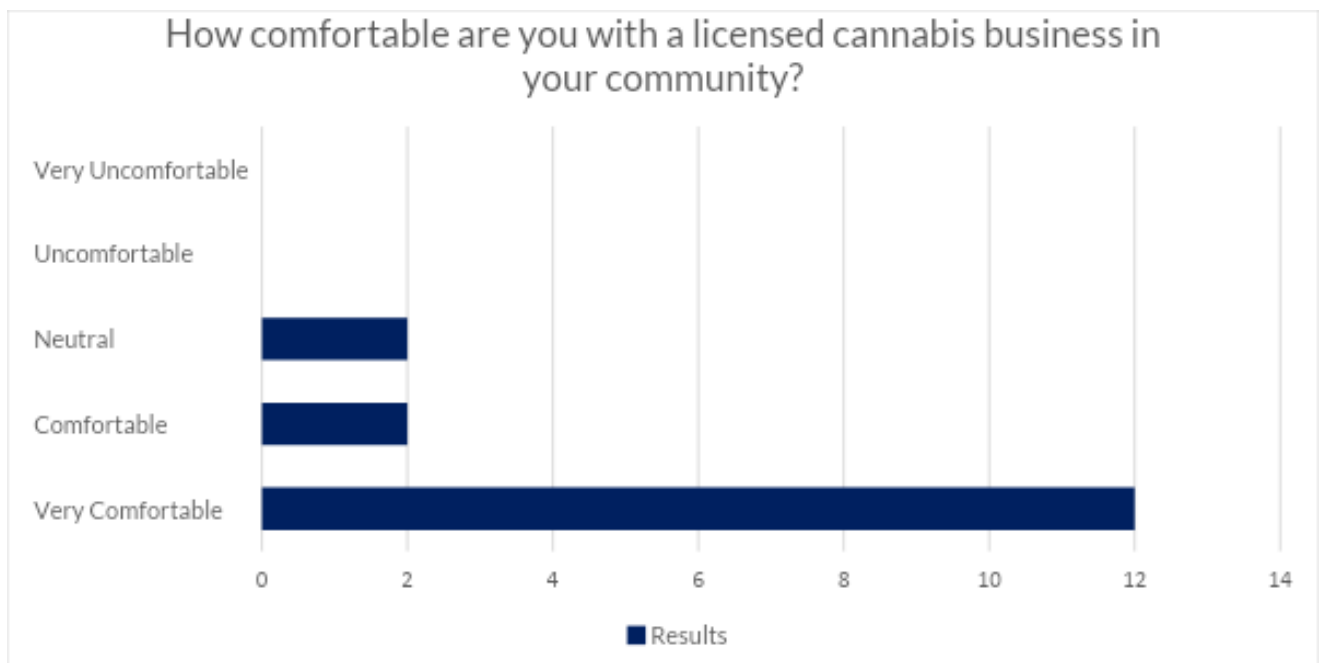


Figure 30. Poll Results- Licensed Cannabis Business in your Community

A total of 16 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 30. Attendees were allowed to choose all options that applied. According to the results, 75% of the attendees feel very comfortable with licensed cannabis business in their community.

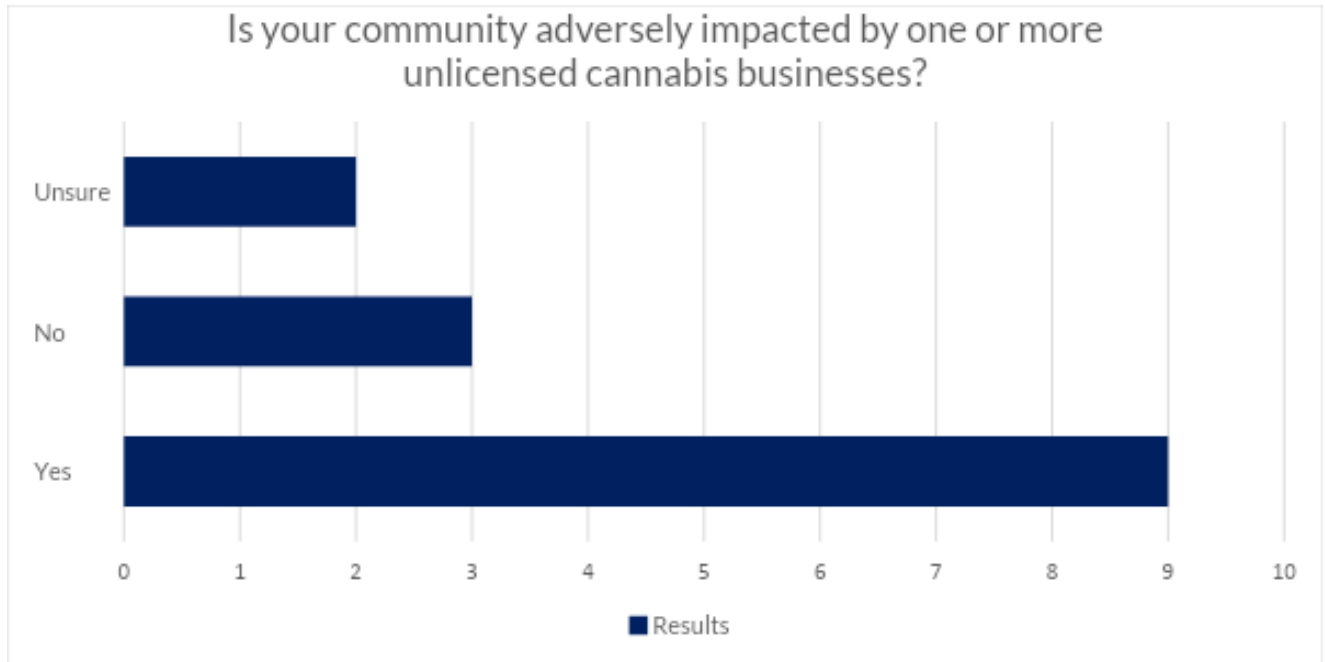


Figure 31. Poll Results- Unlicensed Cannabis Business Impact

A total of 14 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 31. According to the results, 64% of the attendees are adversely impacted by one or more unlicensed cannabis businesses.

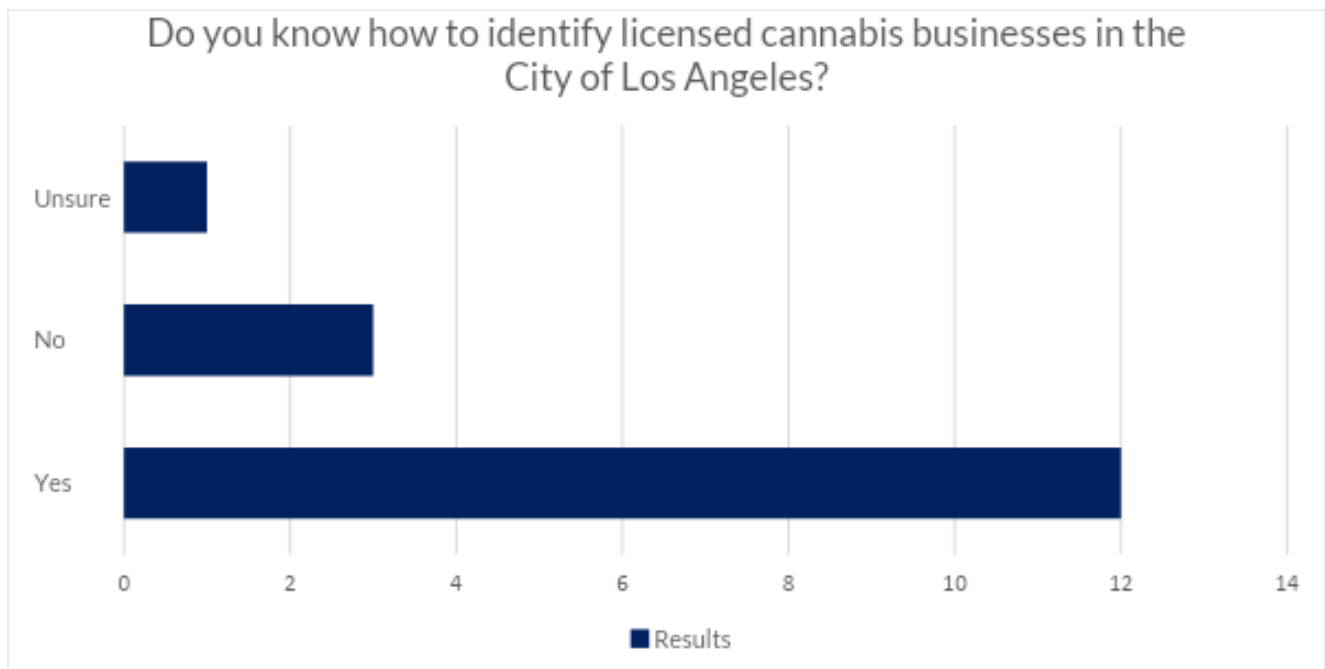


Figure 32. Poll Results- Identification of Licensed Cannabis Businesses in Los Angeles

A total of 16 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 32. According to the results, 75% of the attendees know how to identify licenses cannabis businesses in the City of Los Angeles.

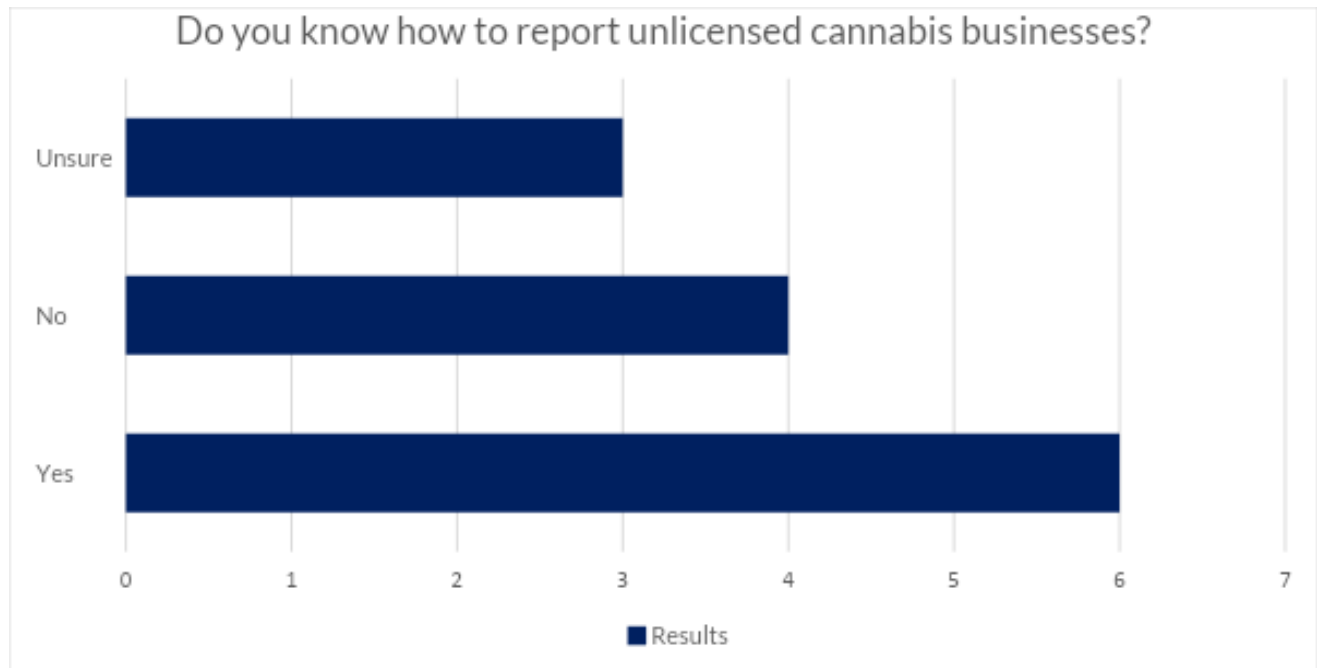


Figure 33. Poll Results- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses

A total of 13 attendees responded to the polling question referenced in Figure 33. According to the results, 46% of the attendees know how to report unlicensed cannabis businesses. The remaining 54% of the attendees do not know how to report unlicensed cannabis businesses or are unsure of the process.

## Whiteboards

The session included six (6) prompt questions for attendees facilitated by DCR and MBI. The topics included:

- Cannabis Prohibition and Enforcement Impact
- Recommendations for Resources
- Tax Rate Impact and Amendment Recommendations
- Community Reinvestment Program Recommendations
- Purpose of Forums, Working Groups and Elected Officials
- Corporate Social Responsibility Report

Attendees were separated into two breakout rooms which allowed stakeholders to interact with one another and participate in the conversations. Whiteboard results can be found in Appendix EE.

## Session Summary

During the SPARK Session #8, DCR and MBI were able to inform and educate stakeholders on the program's approach to **Community Impact**. In addition, attendees provided comments on employment rights, housing rights, educational opportunities, and access to healthcare. During this session stakeholders shared feedback that included the following:

- DCR should define and introduce a new social equity tier to make accommodations for those who meet a broader group of social equity criteria and include residents with a proven history of social and economic oppression and residents with employment barriers, people adversely impacted by agents of the state and those who have suffered prolonged systemic racism and discrimination
- DCR should engage more with the community by responding to emails, calls and acting upon the established processes and protocols communicated to the applicants at the beginning of the process.
- The current reality is that landlords are charging cannabis tax and increasing the rent by 4-10 times the amount of a market rate with some of the zoning laws that are in place. DCR to provide list of 420 friendly landlords and develop an incubator program where dispensaries partner with social equity applicants to offer employment opportunities and the possibility to develop partnerships to expand the business in the future.
- Social equity business classification and allowances for businesses that offer their transitional workers' shares of the company's profits based on receipts and hours worked.
- There has been a disparate treatment of cannabis compared to alcohol and tobacco and its prohibition has affected mainly the Black and Brown community and negatively impacted this community when wanting to rebuild their lives.
- There is a need for a safe operating environment for people who go through the licensing process by utilizing their power at the state level to provide banking and civil enforcement and preventing a new War on Drugs.
- Tax on transaction for social equity applicants should be eliminated. If there are social equity anchors, there should be greater incentives for businesses and taxes should be based on profits as opposed to receipts. Cannabis businesses are currently subject to a high number of regulations and taxes that put them in disadvantage with the unlicensed cannabis business market.
  - The goal is to reinvest tax revenue to rebuild affected communities by the War on Drugs through non-profits and programs.
- Invest funds in social equity applicants to guarantee success through educational resources such as books about maintaining a license, employment laws and regulations, special educational events, legal assistance programs and hands-on social equity working groups to build relationships with other social equity business owners
- Communities need access to information and resources related to personal and commercial cannabis activity including public health and safety information. A good way to do this is through nonprofits and social justice organizations in the City that can help provide information about cannabis to begin to build a positive public perception about cannabis and public health. In addition, presenting the topic of cannabis cultivation through hydroponic gardening projects to emphasize the importance of



growing fresh produce using science, technology, engineering, and math to teach people the importance of gardening and cultivation as a better approach to embrace cannabis within communities.

- Amendments to the Cannabis Reinvestment Act to include:
  - Social equity tax credit in proportion to funding donated to their community plan,
  - Business tax credit for any cannabis employee that lives or works in a disproportionately impacted community neighborhood councils should be able to give their advisory recommendations on the use of funds that best suit their neighborhood
  - Increase access to reduce costs for early childhood education and after school programs, establish neighborhood health fund.
  - Community reinvestment efforts that support greater social equity development and other areas of the private sector, through programs audited by DCR that directly benefit the community such as:
    - Compassion programs that allow underserved communities receive free therapeutic relief from cannabis through a weekly care package.
    - Visiting hours at the dispensaries to help people gain knowledge about the use of cannabis in conjunction with other medications to benefit their health.
    - Lyft and Uber rides to the dispensaries in underserved communities
    - Reinvest in schools, kids affected by the War on Drugs.
- Cannabis businesses should be required to make real impact through CSR, with measurable outcomes in schools and should create a real pathway for businesses who have been negatively impacted by the War on Drugs.
- Cannabis arrests have impacted and disrupted families for generations. The City should collect information from stakeholders within the community to identify the needs of the communities.
- A resource guide should be available for all applicants, which should include a detailed, comprehensive layout about expectations during the application process through the City and through the state inspection with the fire department. The guide should also layout information about cultivation, manufacturing, and retail.
- Tax rate is high for legal cannabis businesses and the ideal situation is if taxes were cut in half.
  - A tax tier system should be created where taxes are reduced during the first and second year. After the second year, the tax rate would slowly increase to match the regular rate. In addition, royalties should be reinvested into the affected communities in different projects like low-income housing.
  - Social equity businesses should have a 10-year moratorium on taxes
- A social responsibility report should be developed every four to six months to measure progress. Community stakeholders should be involved in the process because they are knowledgeable of the community needs.
- The legalization of cannabis was a hostile takeover to the entrepreneurs of cannabis in the minority communities because it brought people into affected communities that did not live there. Corporate responsibility should mean partnering with social equity applicants. Current dispensaries should have the opportunity to people from the application process to train them and work in their stores with the goal of eventually running the business in a management position. At the end, they can work together and collaborate to opening another location together where the social equity guidelines

come into play. That is the only way that corporations can expand and grow in the cannabis industry.

## **6.2 Stakeholder Surveys**

SPARK provided stakeholders the opportunity to share additional feedback in the VMR by completing the survey. The surveys were announced at each SPARK Session to drive traffic. After eight SPARK Sessions DCR promoted the surveys via radio, social media, and newsletters. The following accounts helped reach a new audience outside of the SPARK stakeholders. Radio 93.9 KDAY, Power 106, Cali 93.9, LA Sentinel, LA Watts, Taste of Soul, and LA Weekly.

Surveys were created with the following topics:

- City of Los Angeles Cannabis Licensing Program & Social Equity Program
- Cannabis, Community Impact & Corporate Social Responsibility in the City of Los Angeles

Across the four surveys, approximately 248 stakeholders responded, providing feedback on the topics, including testimonials of their experiences navigating the DCR licensing application process, their experiences with the Social Equity Program, and their thoughts on the community impact cannabis has had within their respective communities and what corporate social responsibility means to them.

The surveys closed on July 16, 2021.

Complete survey results can be found in Appendix FF.

### **6.2.1 Survey 1 Results- City of Los Angeles Cannabis Licensing Program and Social Equity Program**

If you do not wish to participate in this survey, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

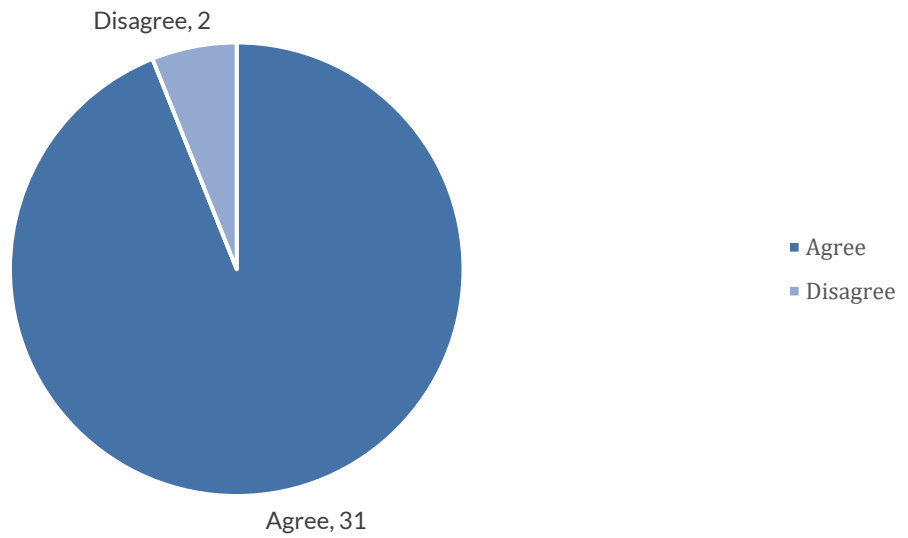


Figure 12. Survey 1- Survey Participation Agreement

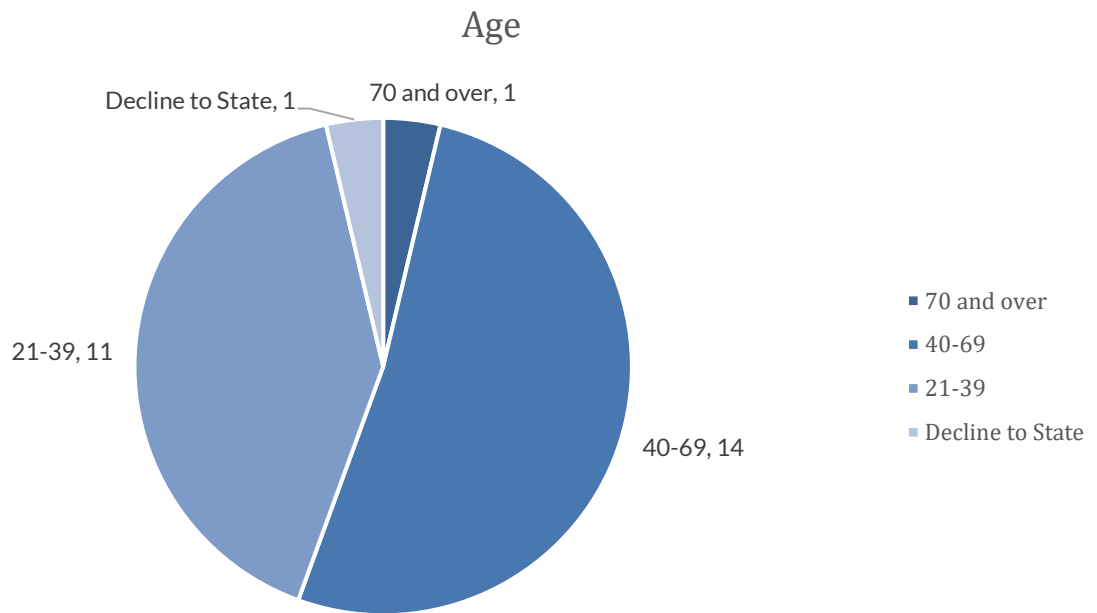


Figure 13. Survey 1- Age

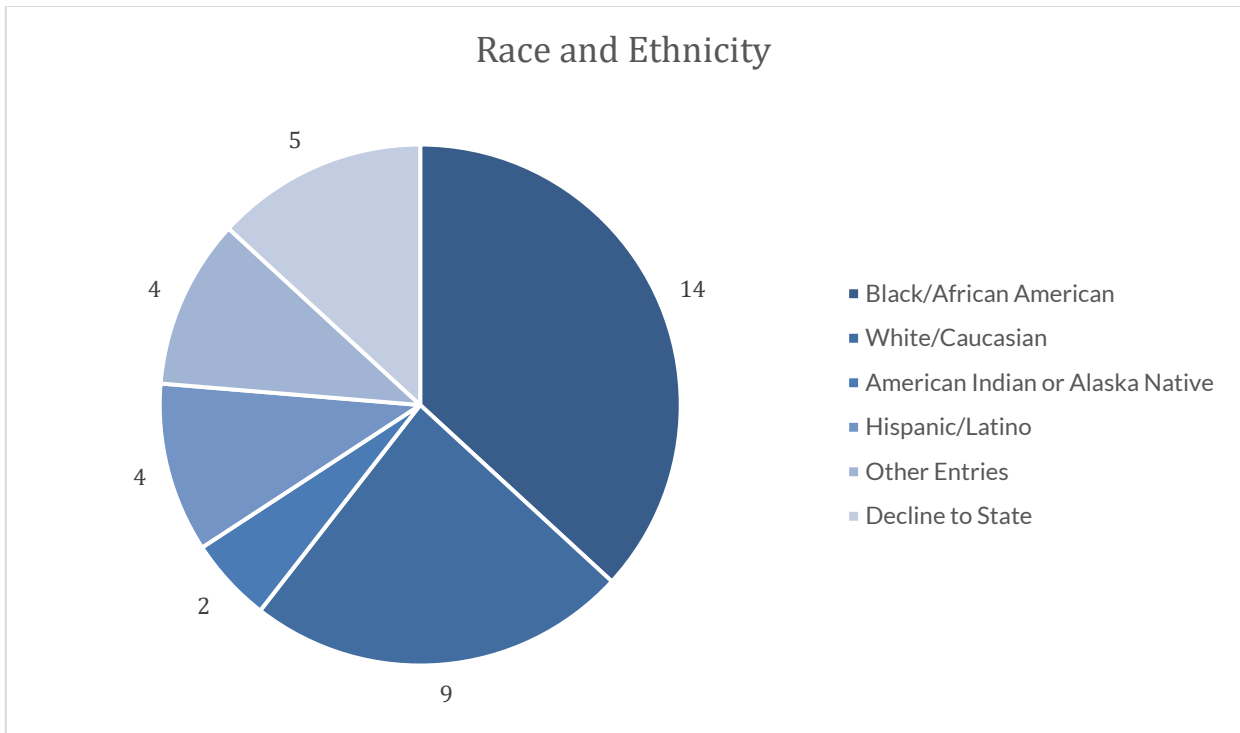


Figure 14. Survey 1- Race and Ethnicity

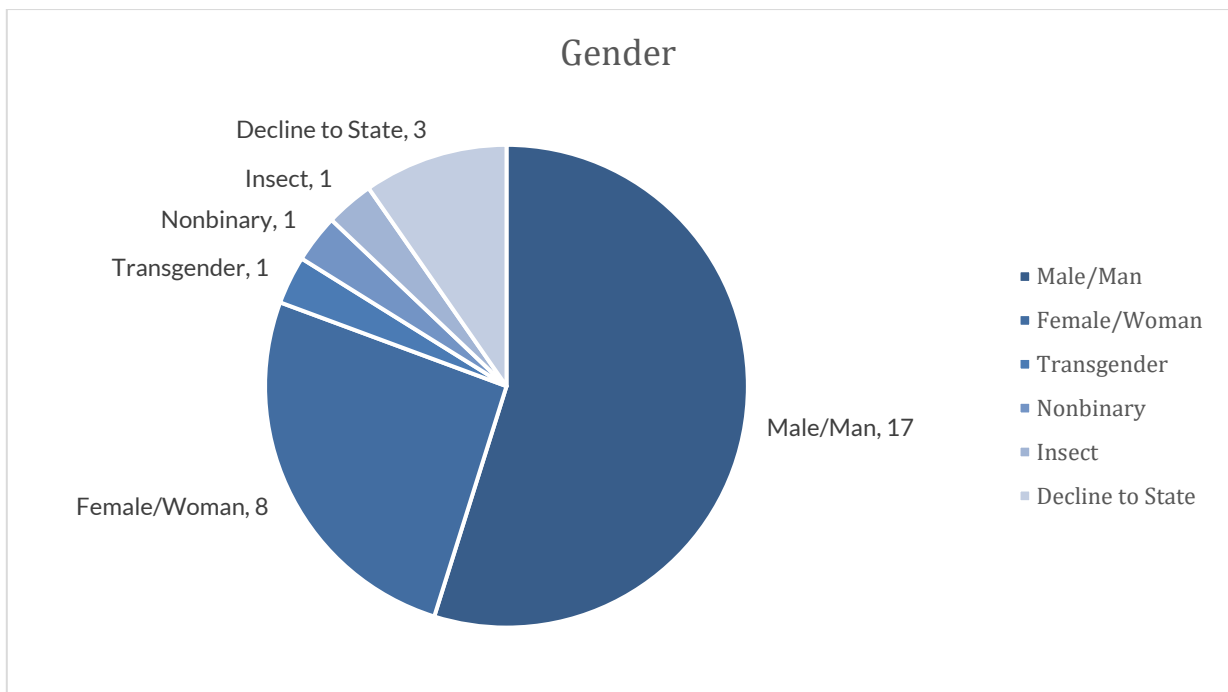


Figure 15. Survey 1- Gender

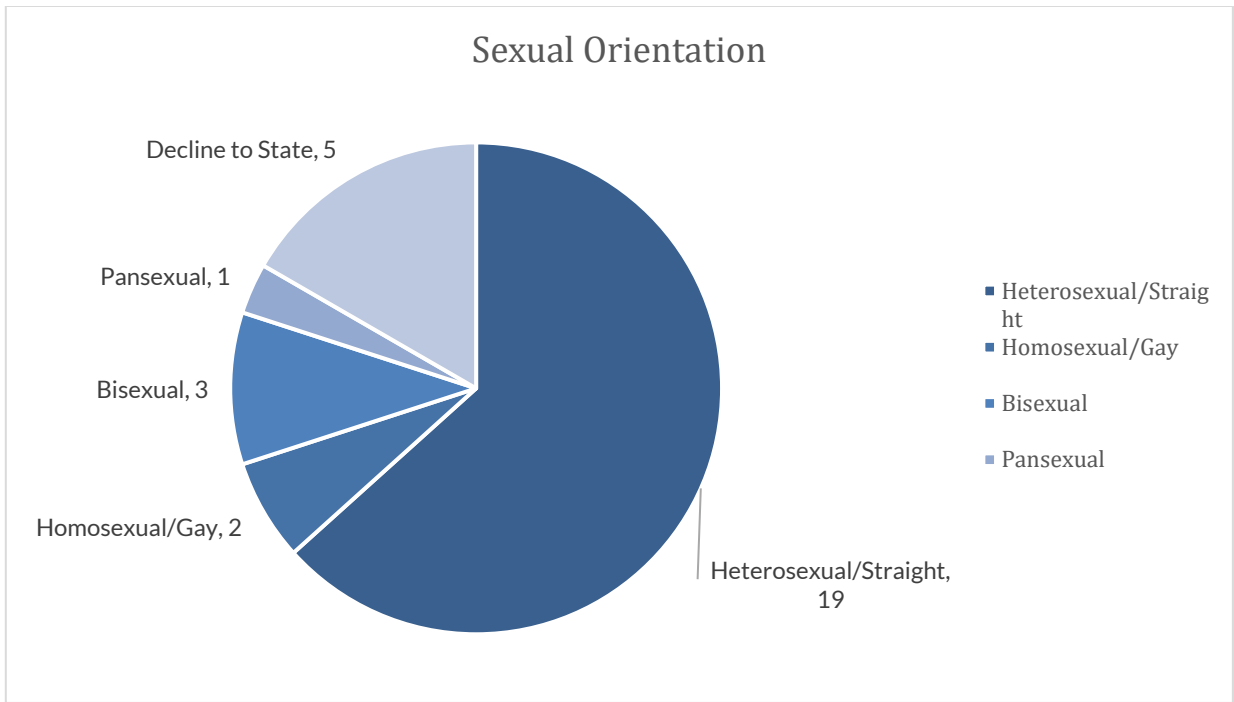


Figure 16. Survey 1- Sexual Orientation

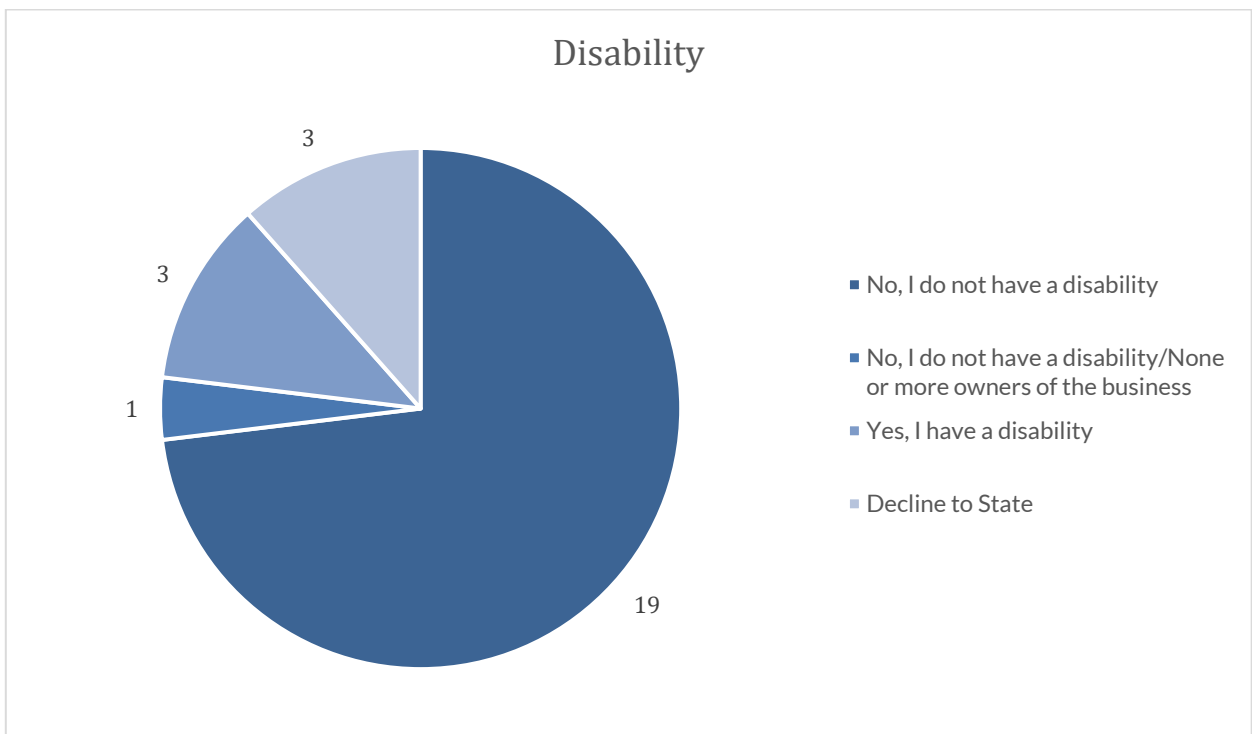


Figure 17. Survey 1- Disability

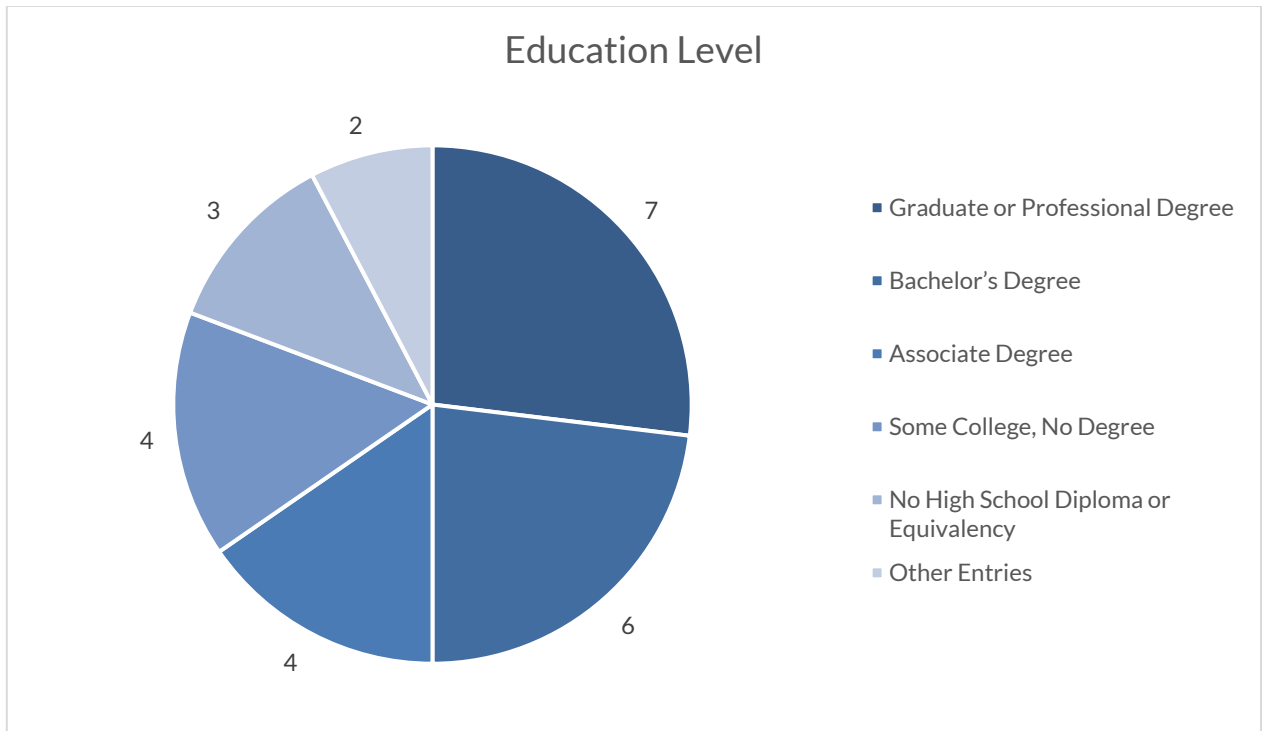


Figure 18. Survey 1- Education Level

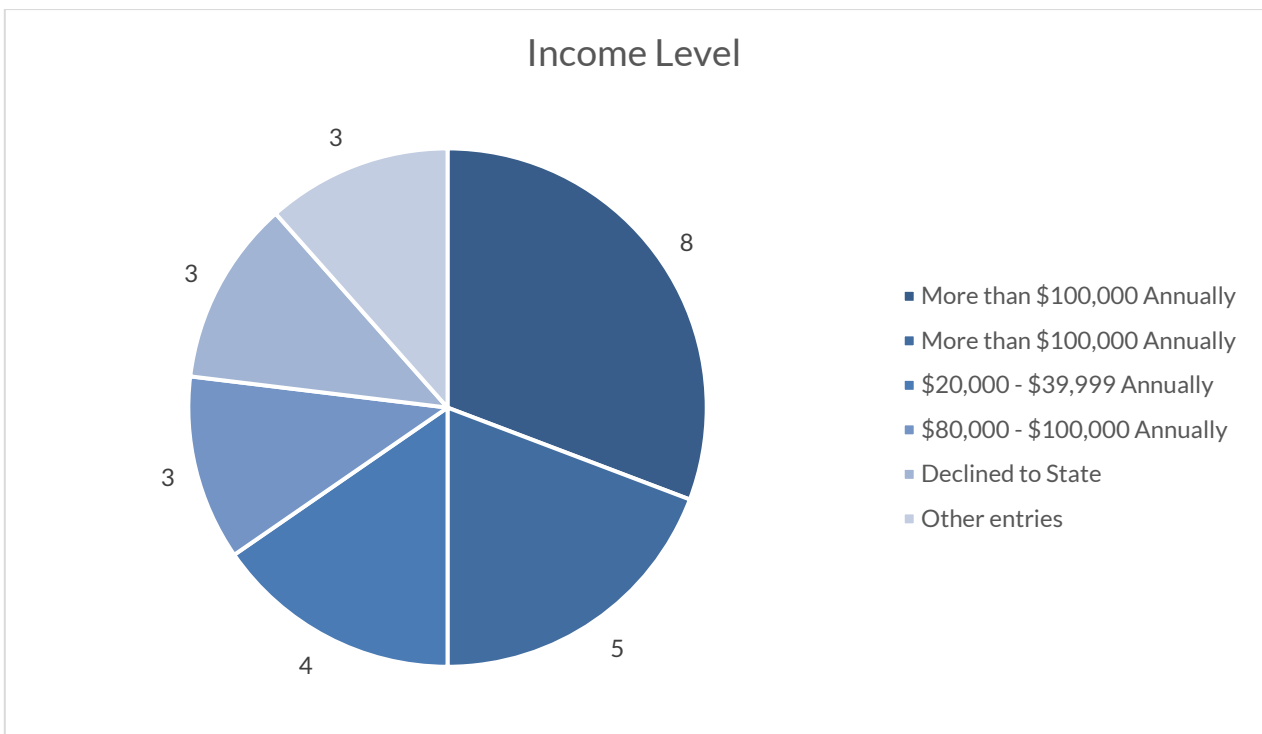


Figure 19. Survey 1- Income Level

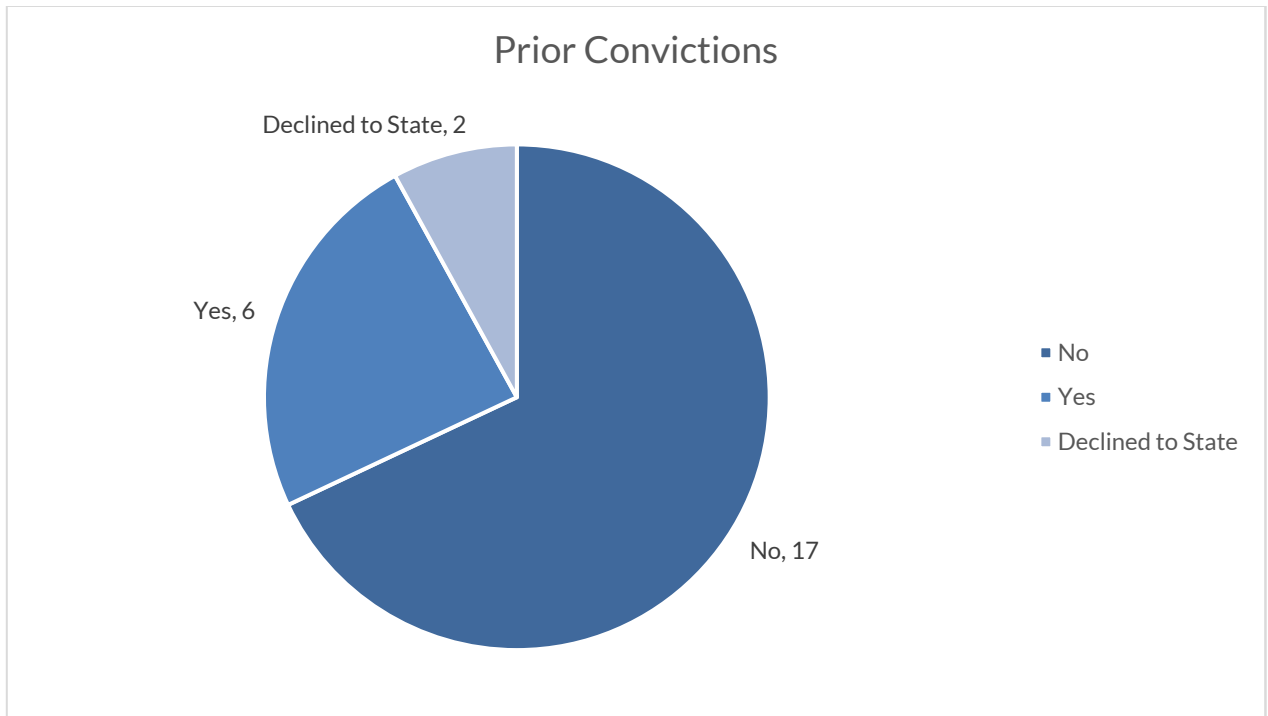


Figure 20. Survey 1- Prior Convictions

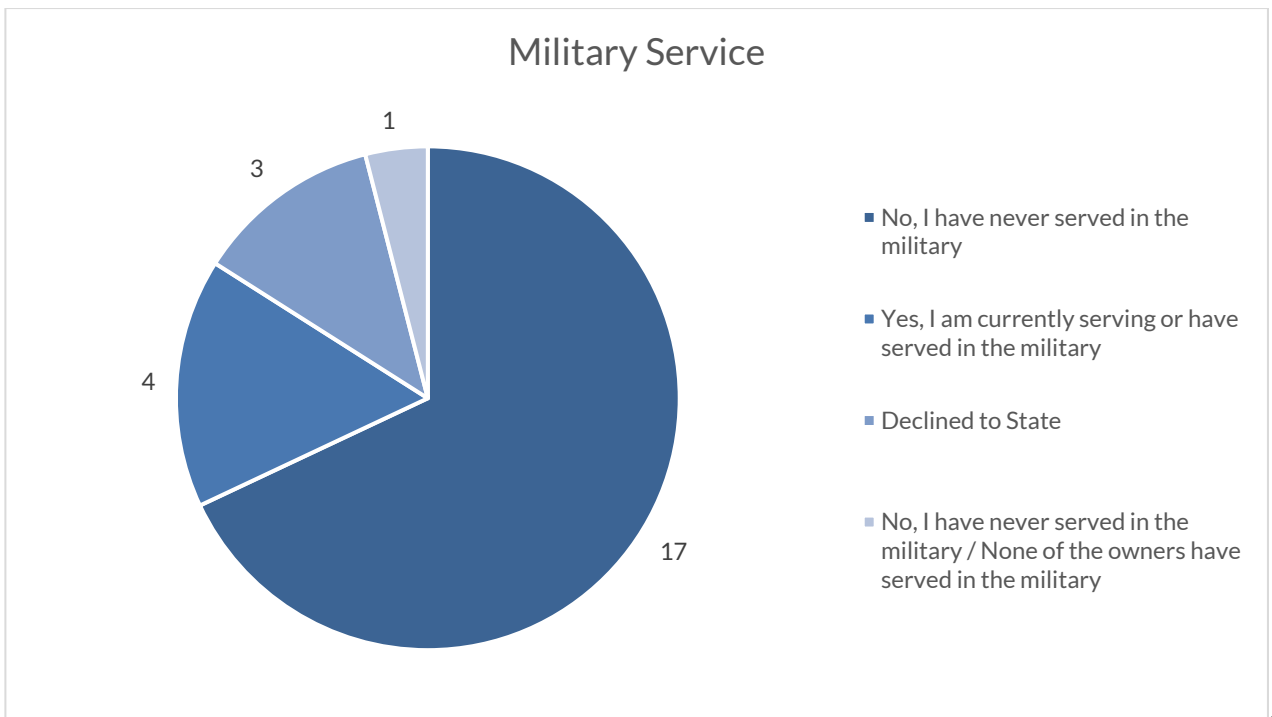


Figure 21. Survey 1- Military Service

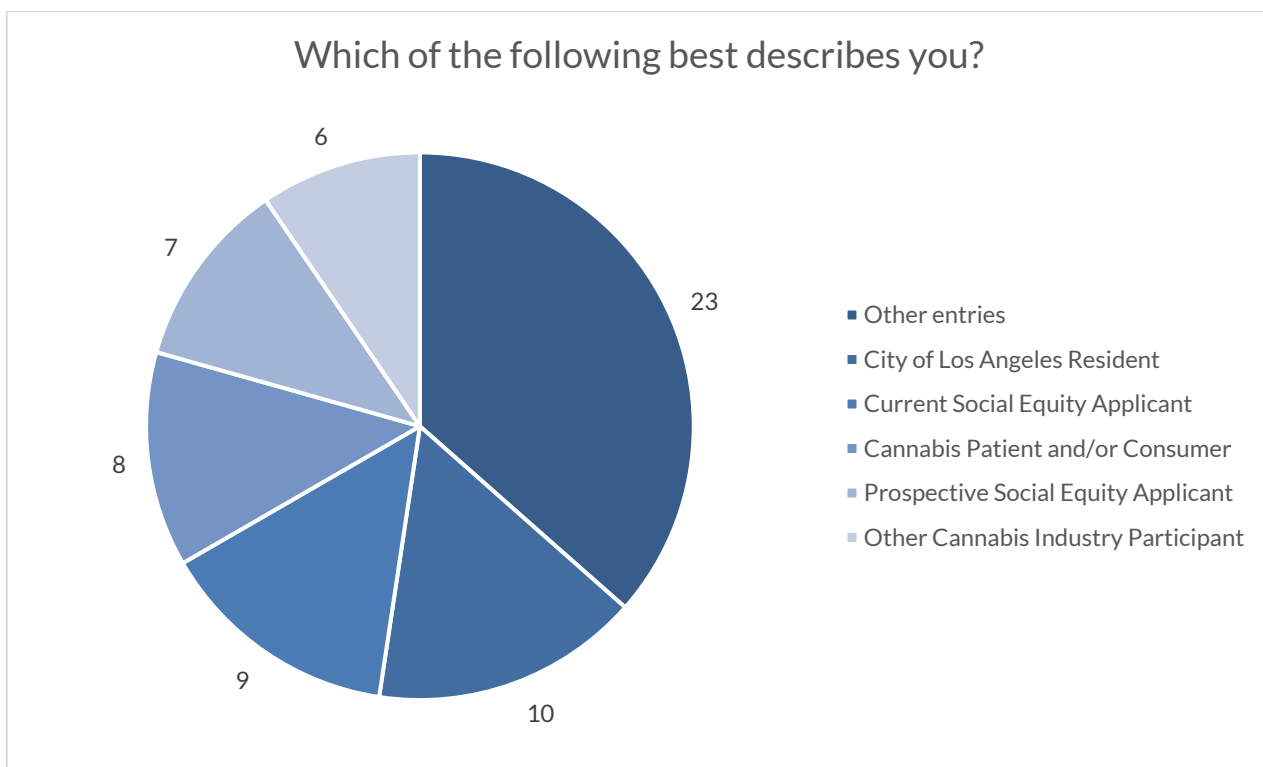


Figure 22. Survey 1- Description

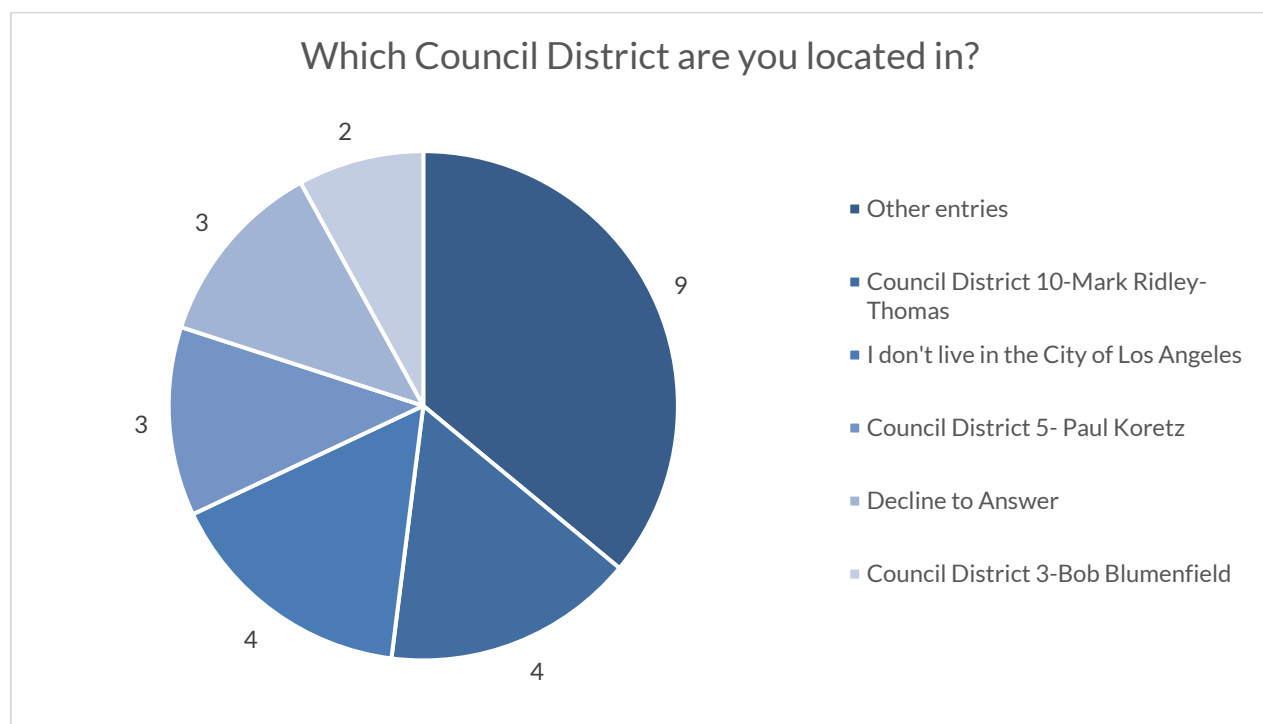


Figure 23. Survey 1- Council District



Have you applied for a City of Los Angeles commercial cannabis license or Temporary Approval?

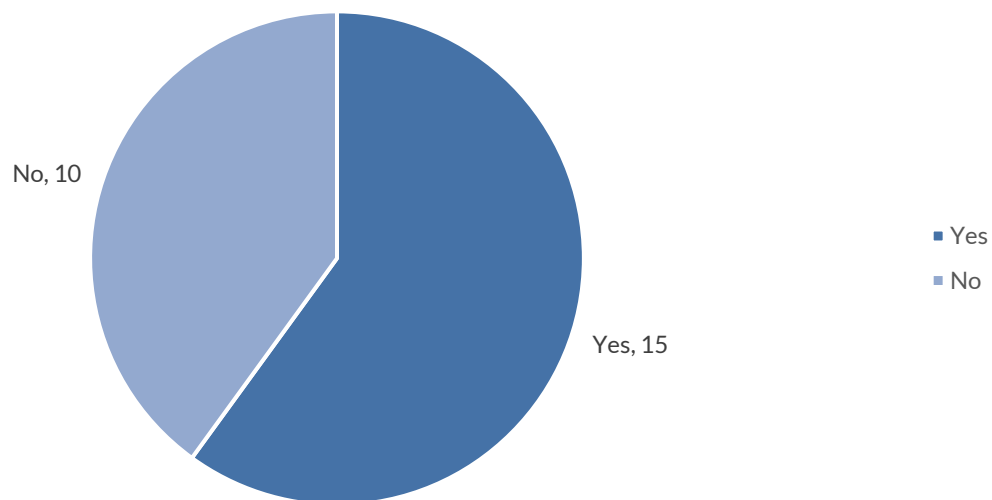


Figure 24. Survey 1- City of Los Angeles License Application

Which City of Los Angeles commercial cannabis license(s) have you applied for?

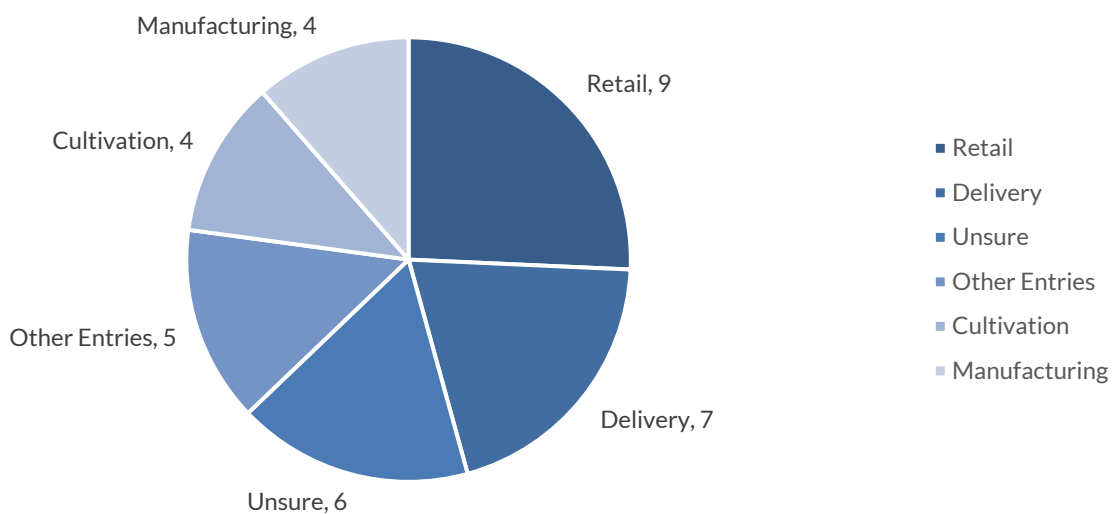


Figure 25. Survey 1- Licenses Applied for in the City of Los Angeles

Have you been issued a City of Los Angeles commercial cannabis license or Temporary Approval?

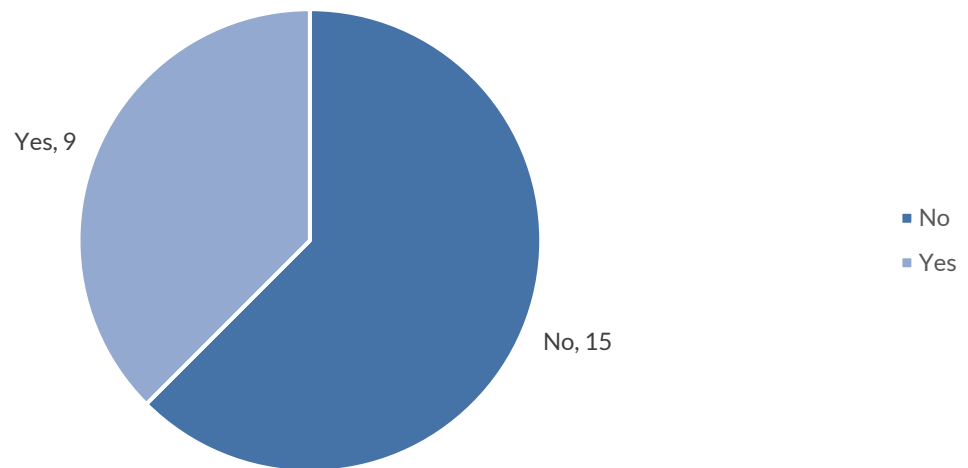


Figure 26. Survey 1- City of Los Angeles Issued Licenses

Which City of Los Angeles commercial cannabis license(s) have you received?

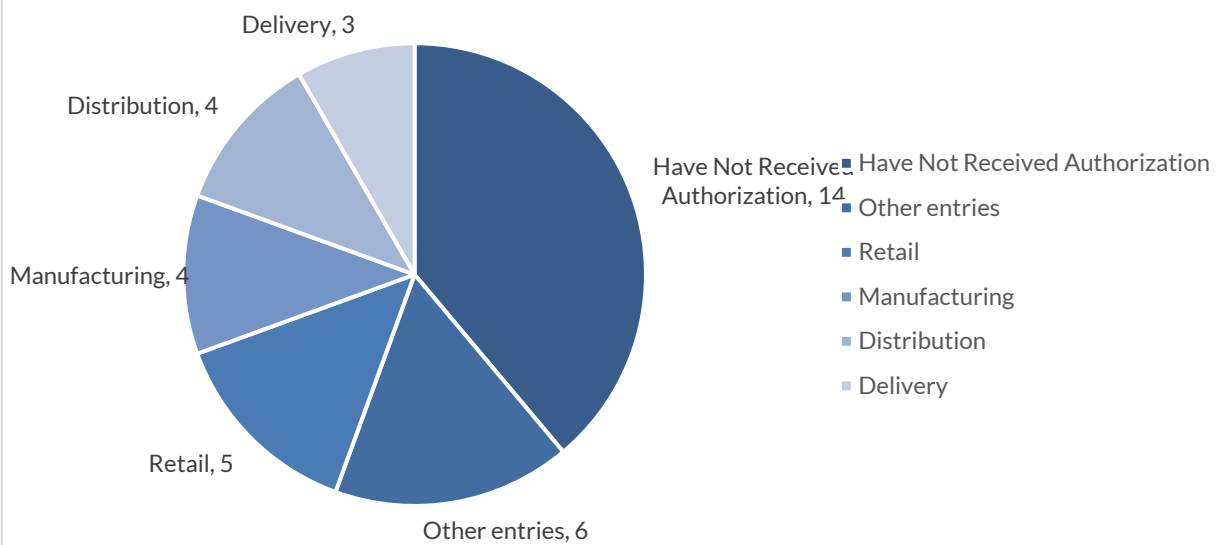


Figure 27. Survey 1- City of Los Angeles Type of License Received

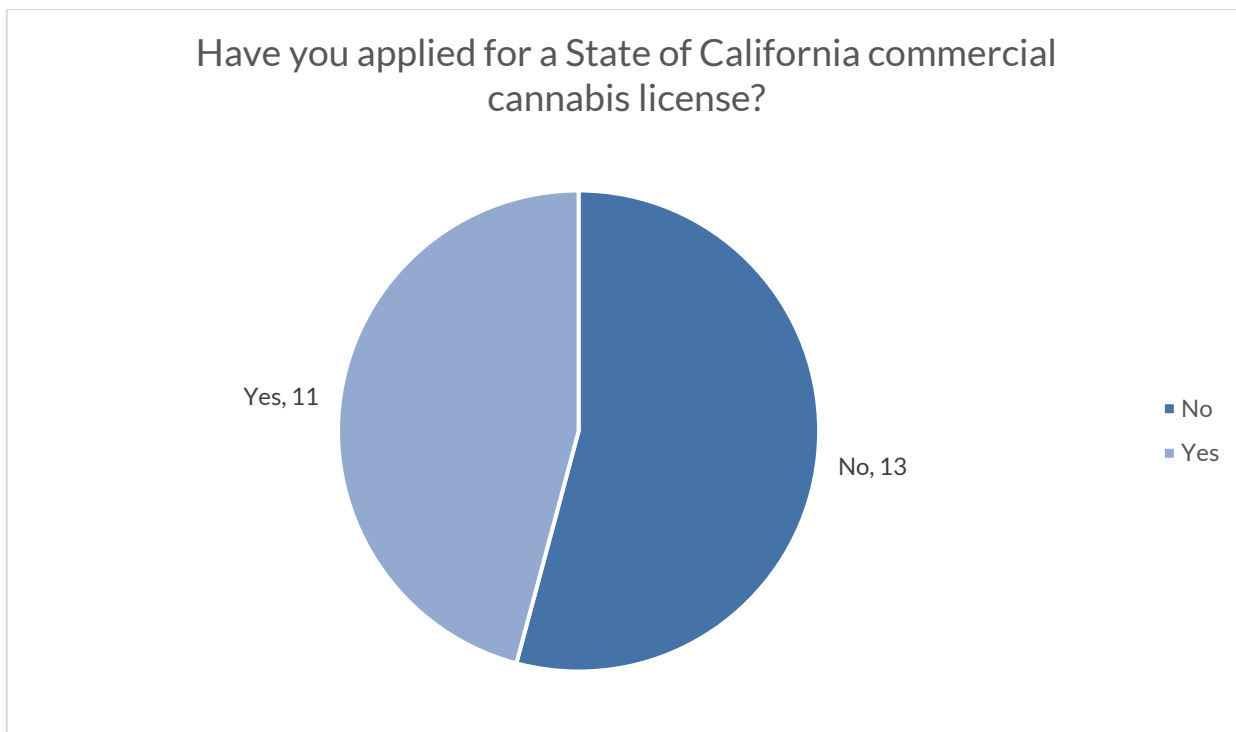


Figure 28. Survey 1- State of California Commercial Cannabis License Application

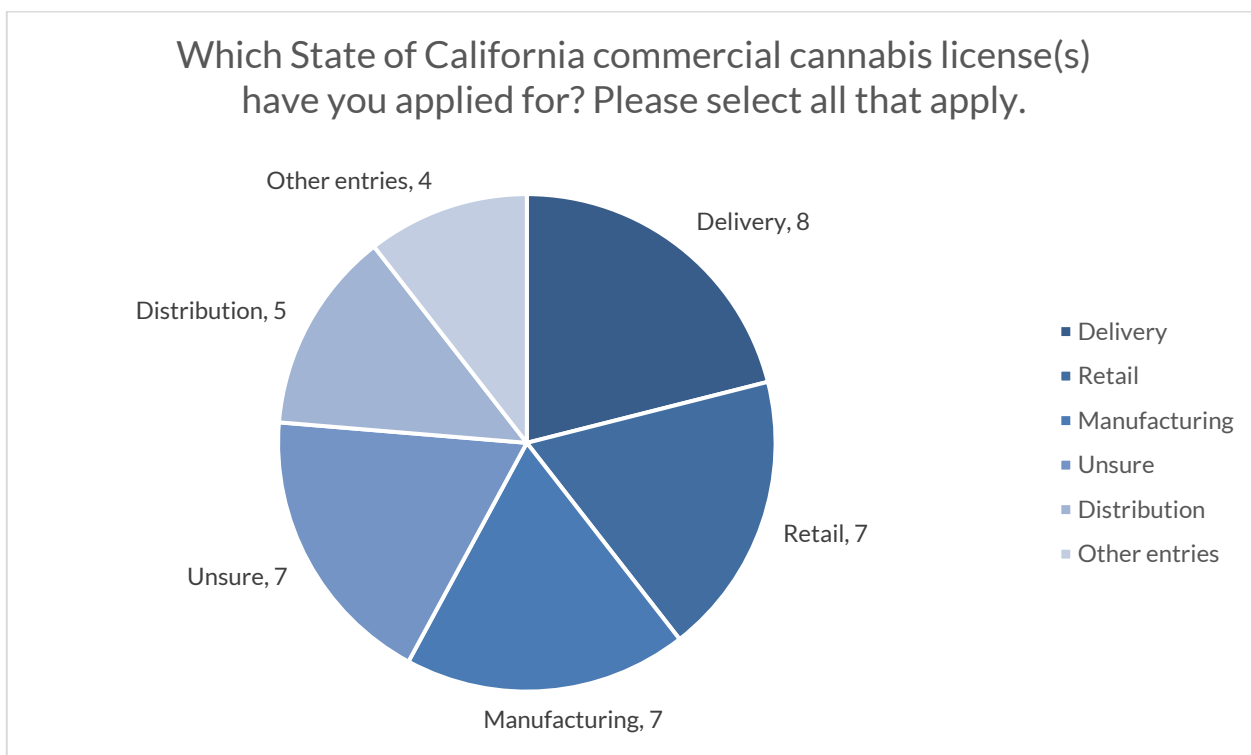


Figure 29. Survey 1- Licenses Applied for in State of California

Have you been issued a State of California commercial cannabis license?

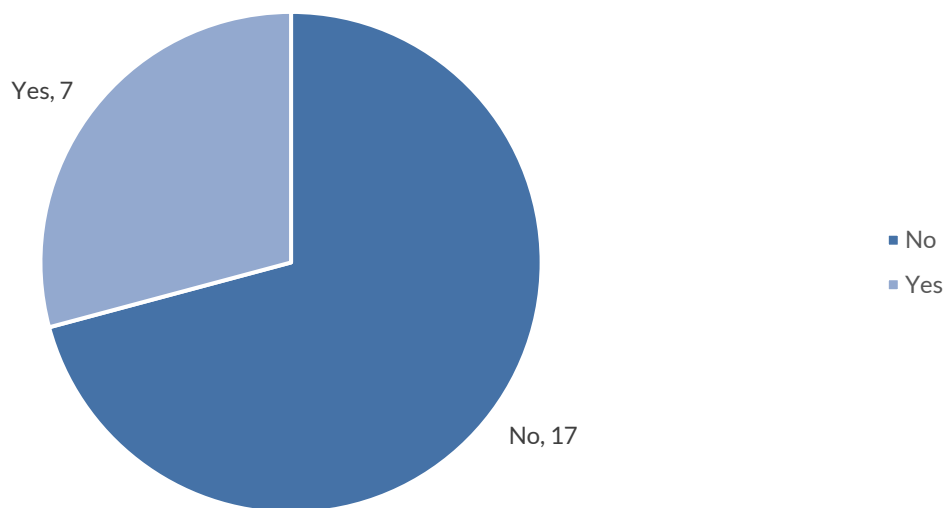


Figure 30. Survey 1- State of California Issued Licenses

Which State of California commercial cannabis license(s) have you received?

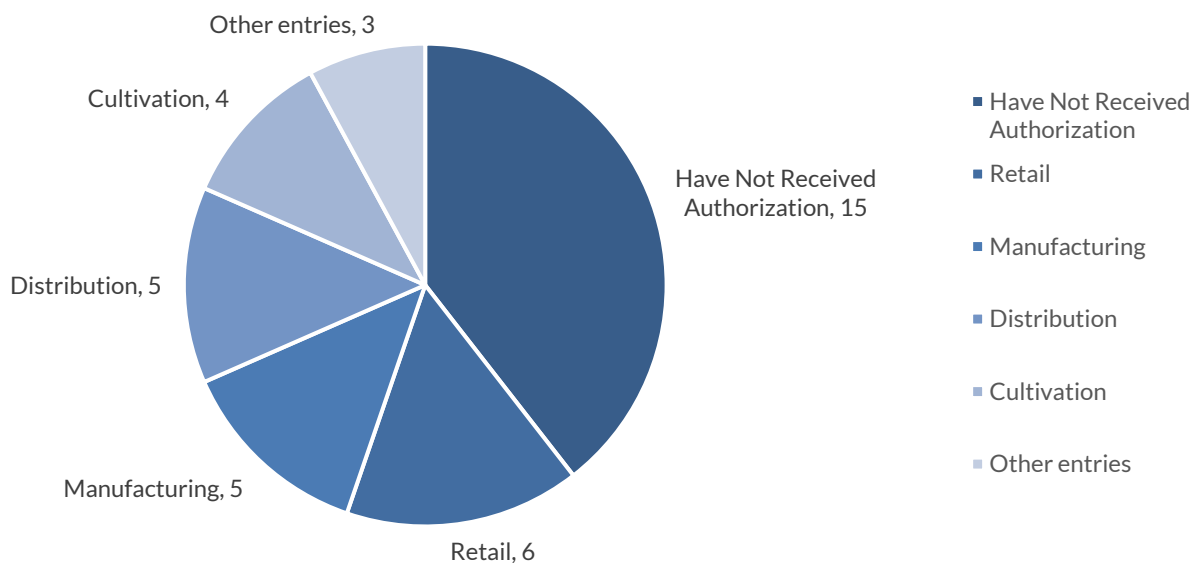


Figure 31. Survey 1- State of California Type of License Received

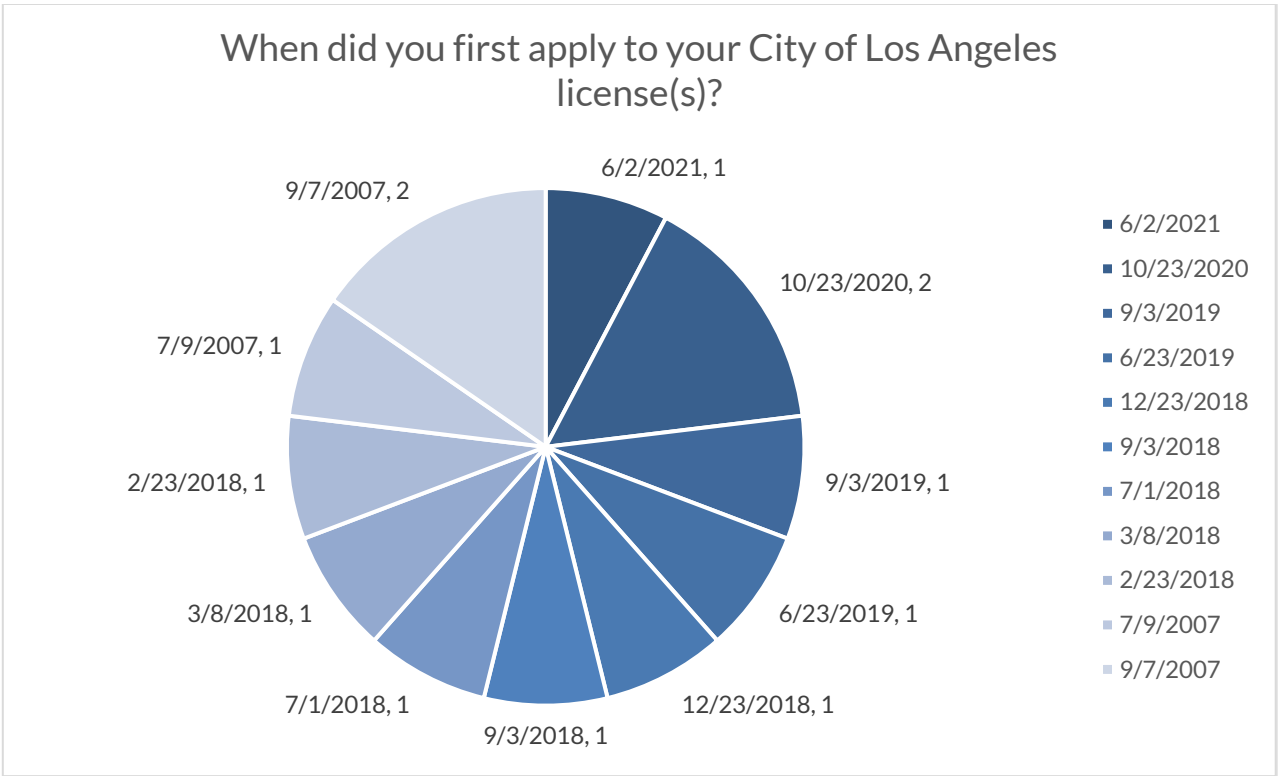


Figure 32. Survey 1- Date of City of Los Angeles License Application

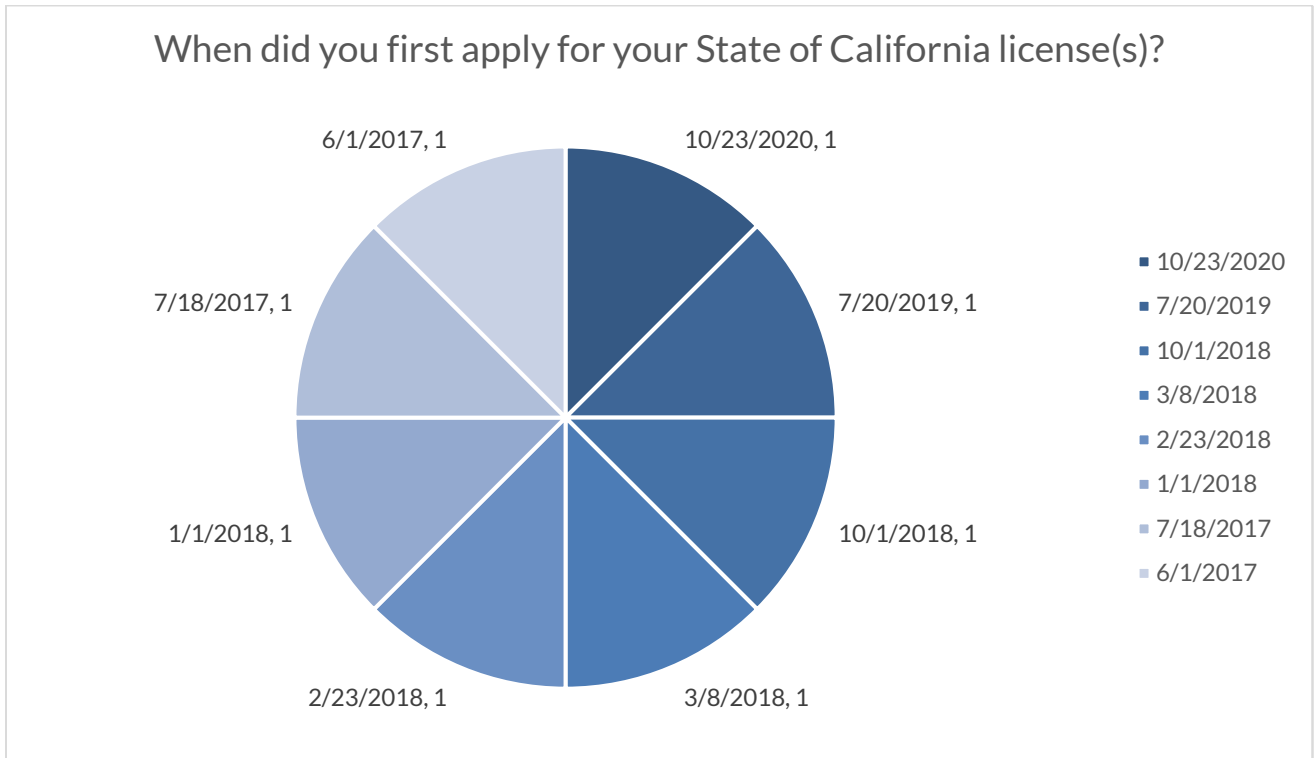


Figure 33. Survey 1- Date of State of California License Application

When did you receive your first State of California license?

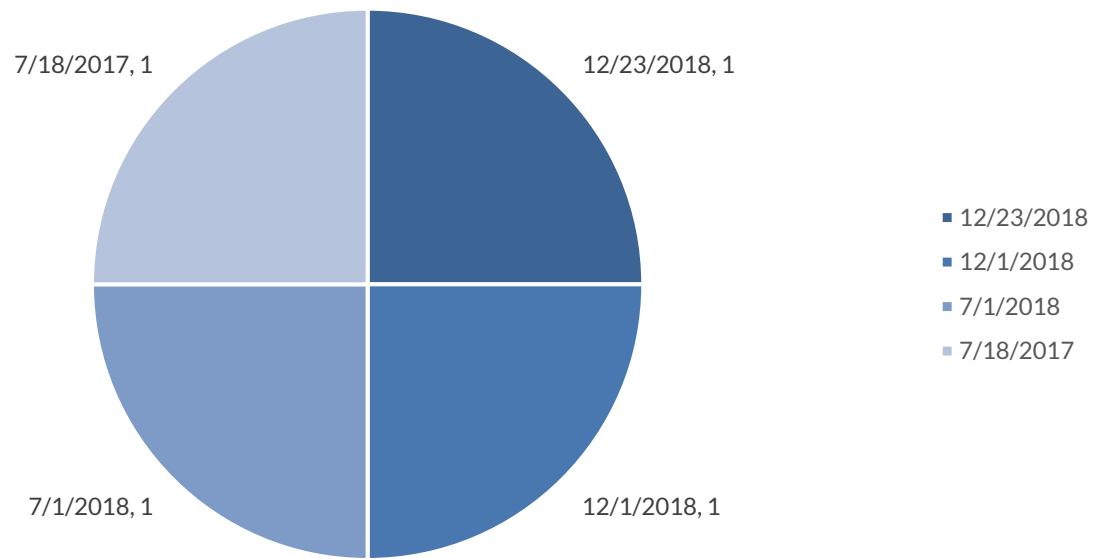


Figure 34. Survey 1-Date State of California Was Received

Are you a first time business owner and/or operator?

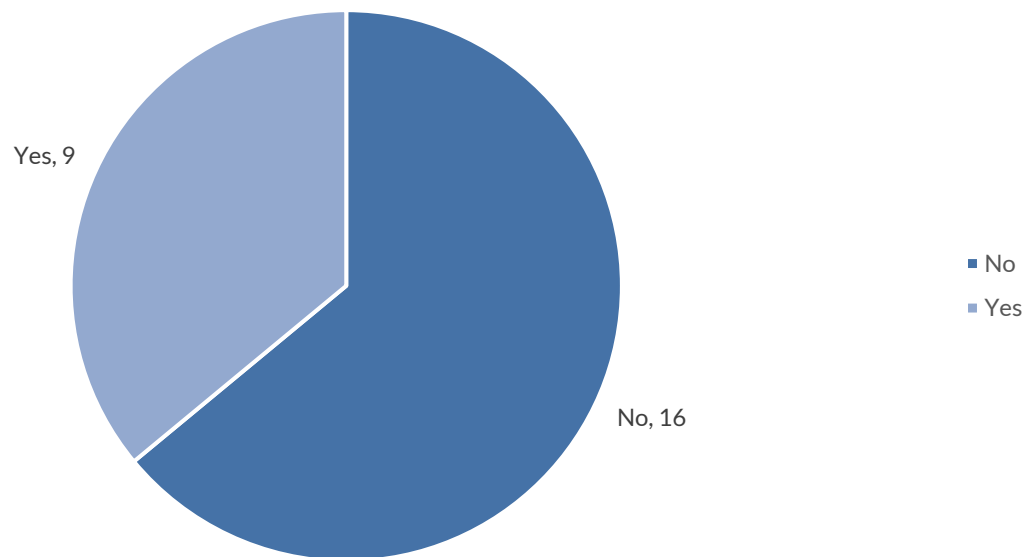


Figure 35. Survey 1- First Time Business Owner or Operator

Are you a first time business owner and/or operator?

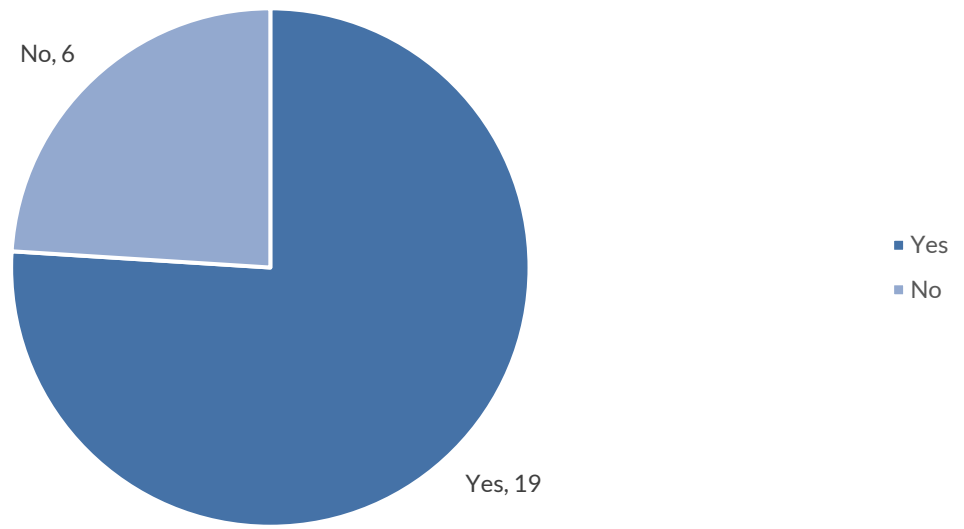


Figure 36. Survey 1- First Time Cannabis Business Owner or Operator

If you have submitted a commercial cannabis license application to DCR, please indicate who manages the Online Application Portal account associated with your application and who responds to information requests from DCR.

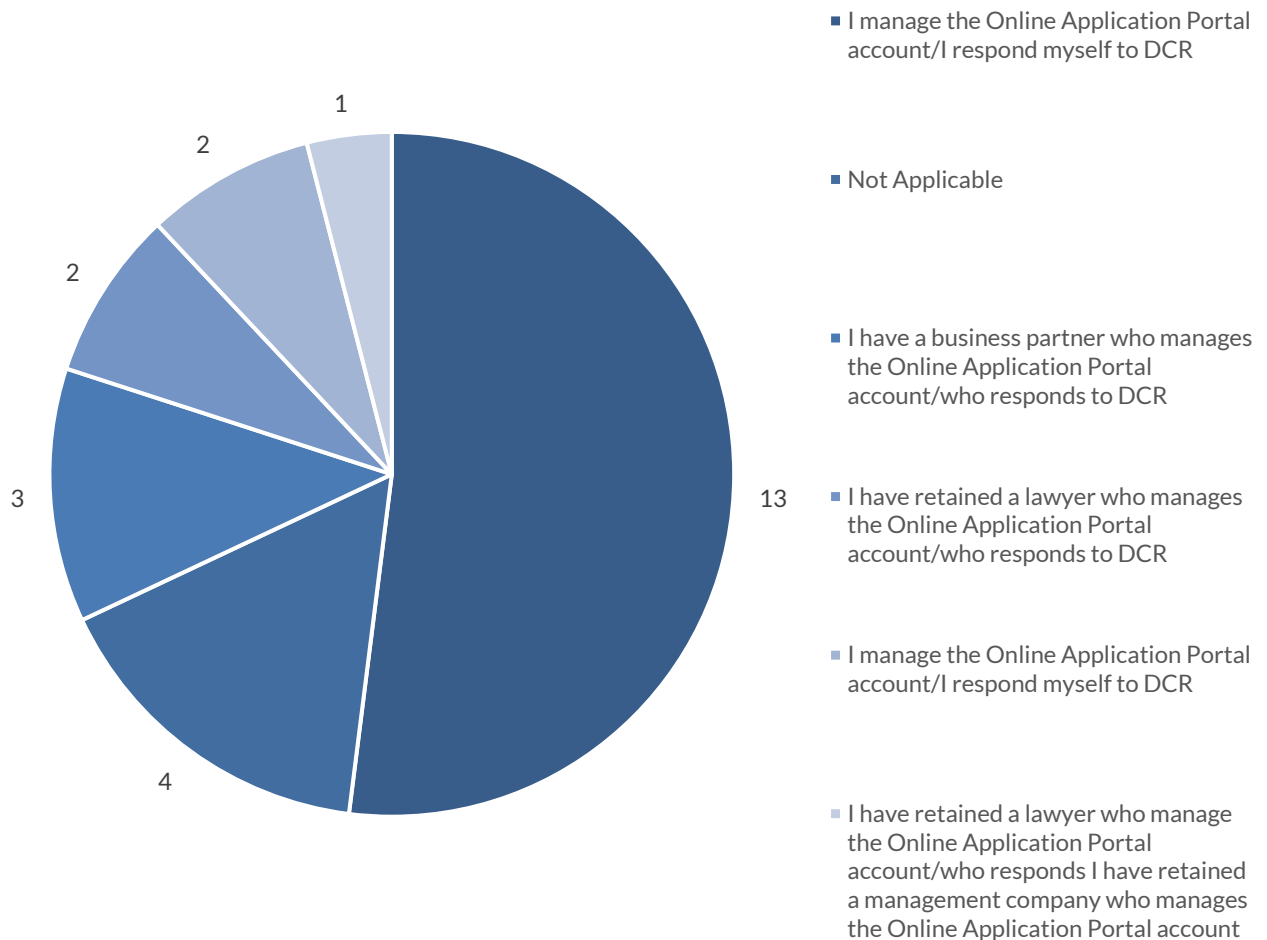


Figure 37. Survey 1- Online Application Portal Manager



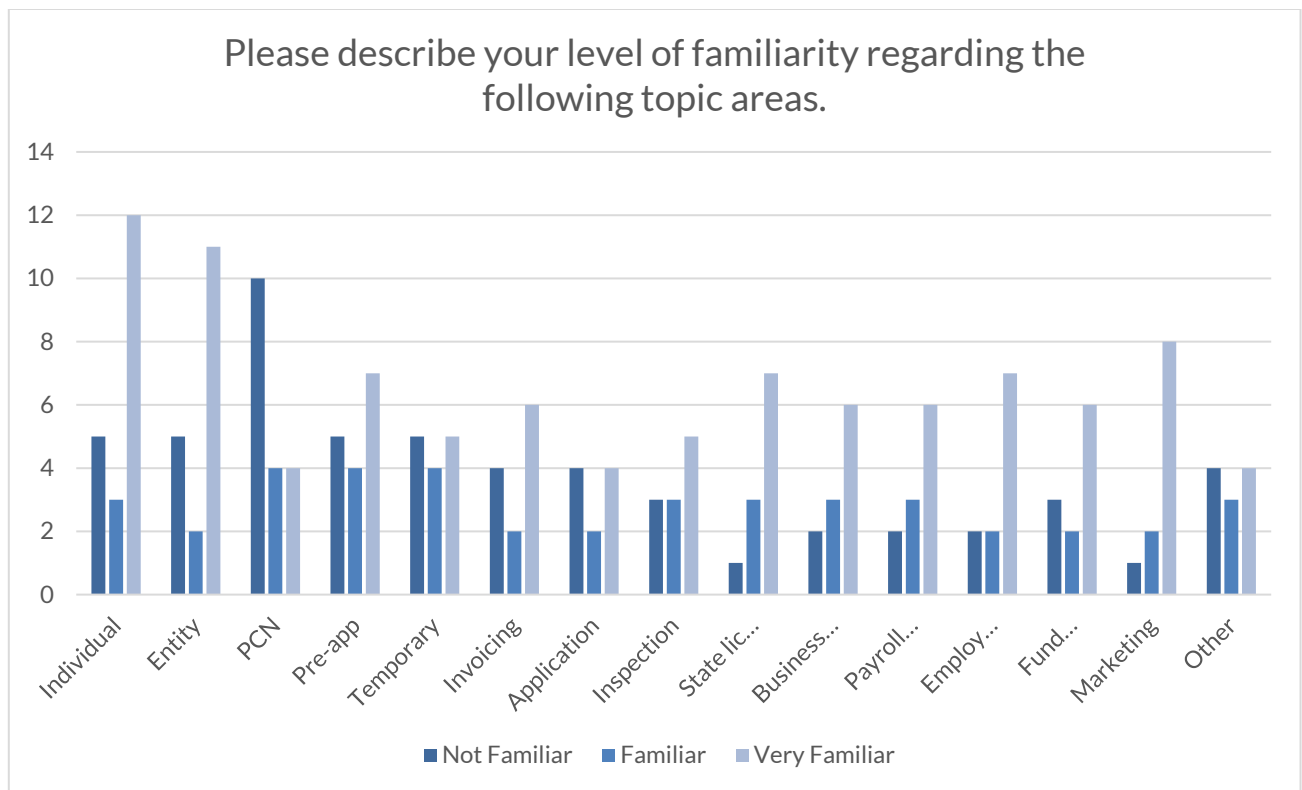


Figure 38. Survey 1- Familiarity with Business Topics

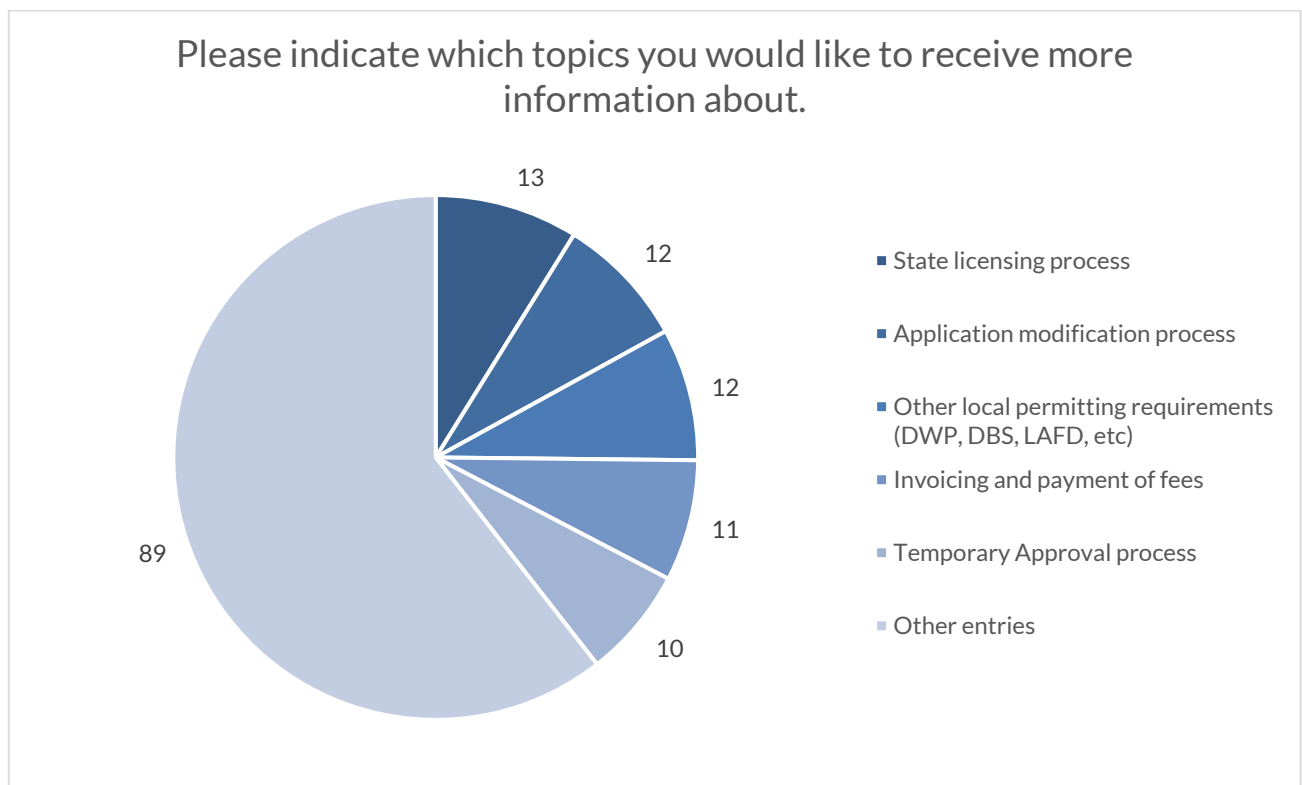


Figure 39. Survey 1- More Information

If you have submitted an application to DCR, in which Council District is the business located? Or, if you intend to submit an application to DCR, in which Council District are you seeking to establish your business?

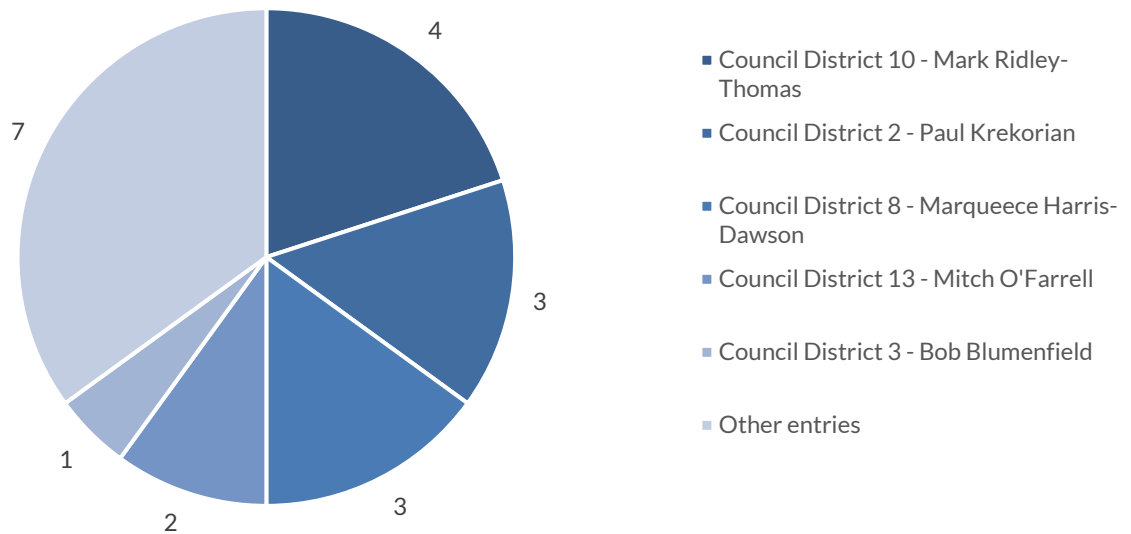


Figure 40. Survey 1- Establishing Business in a Specific Council District

If any of the following have been a barrier to entering the licensed cannabis market, please select yes where applicable.

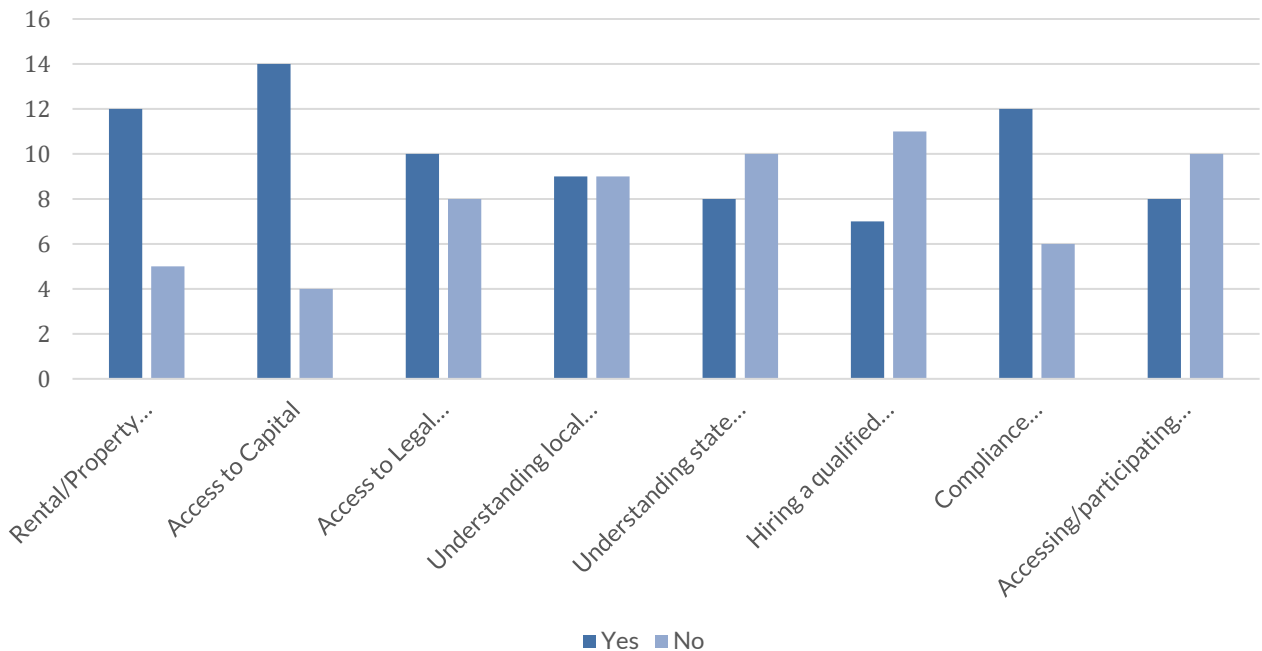


Figure 41. Survey 1- Barriers to Entering the Licensed Cannabis Market

## How can DCR improve services to applicants and licensees?

- Be more transparent and responsive
- Hiring licensing staff for every day instead two days a week
- Help navigate us out of bad predatory investor deals
- More important for you to go after the illegal businesses
- DCR needs to be transparent in the licensing process, priority processing has only been available to current license holders who are reapplying to continue business operations
- The current flow chart for obtaining a cannabis retail license is woefully misleading
- DCR's ability to process and issue license approvals in a timely fashion is what will help the social equity program become effective, failure to execute is inexcusable in any business
- Clarity and resolution of social equity program needs work
- Help applicants find investors
- Expand the definition of social equity beyond individuals with Cannabis convictions
- The licensing process takes too long and is too complicated
- The application process should have a mentorship sba style
- We need the training to help up get our businesses up and running as well as capital

Figure 42. Survey 1- Improving DCR Services

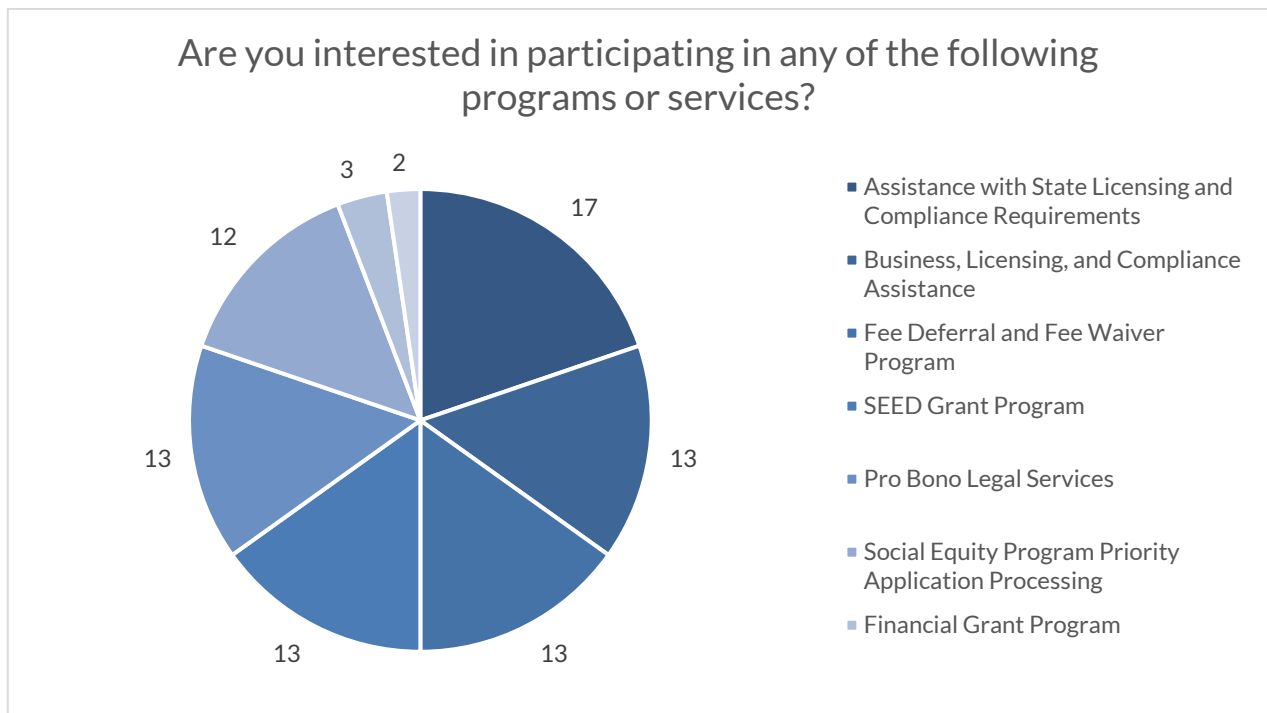


Figure 43. Survey 1-Participation in Programs or Services

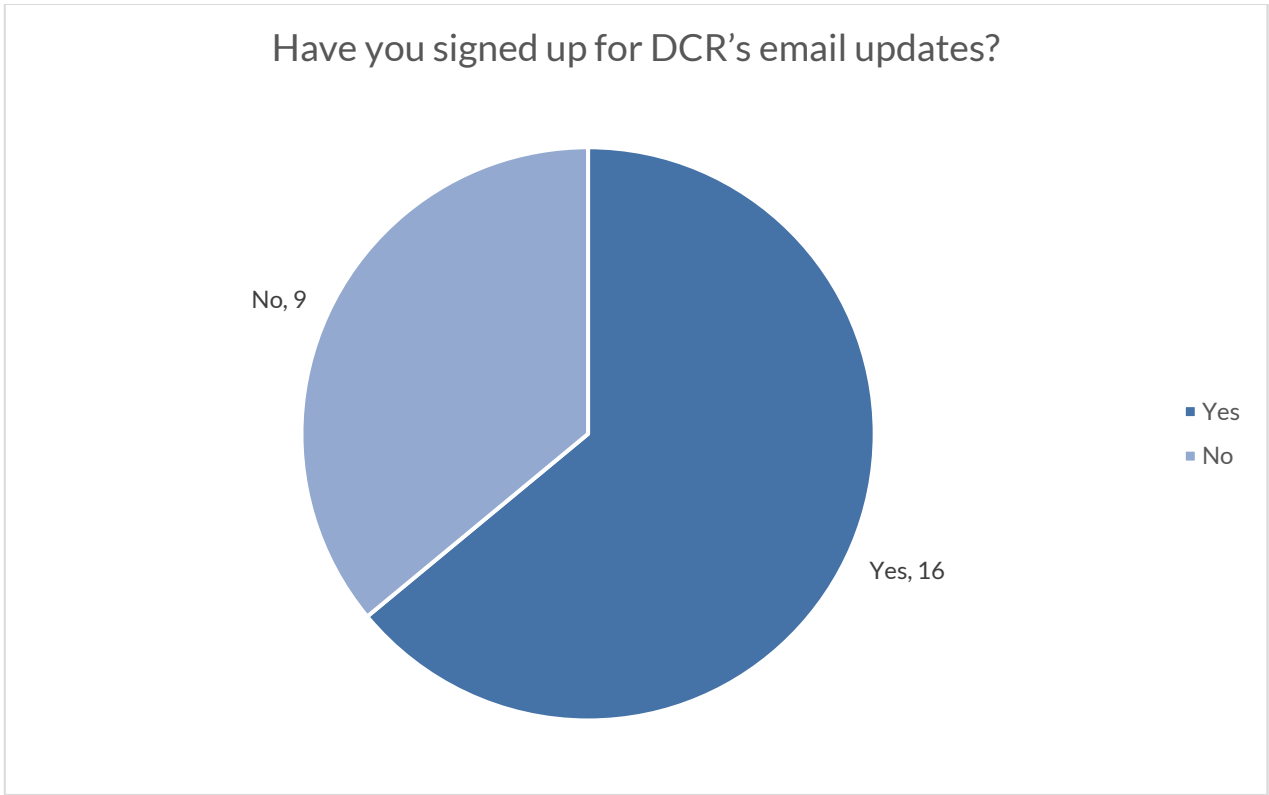


Figure 44. Survey 1- DCR Email Updates

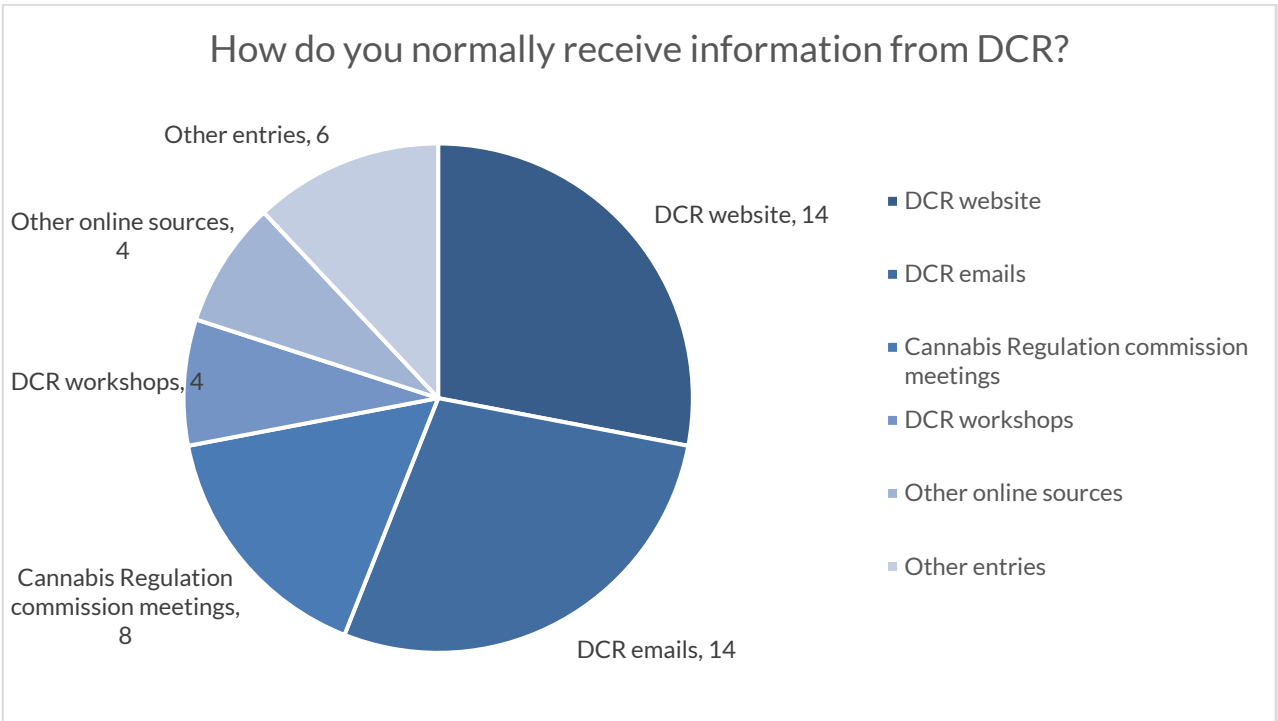


Figure 45. Survey 1- Communication with DCR

### How would you prefer to receive information from DCR?

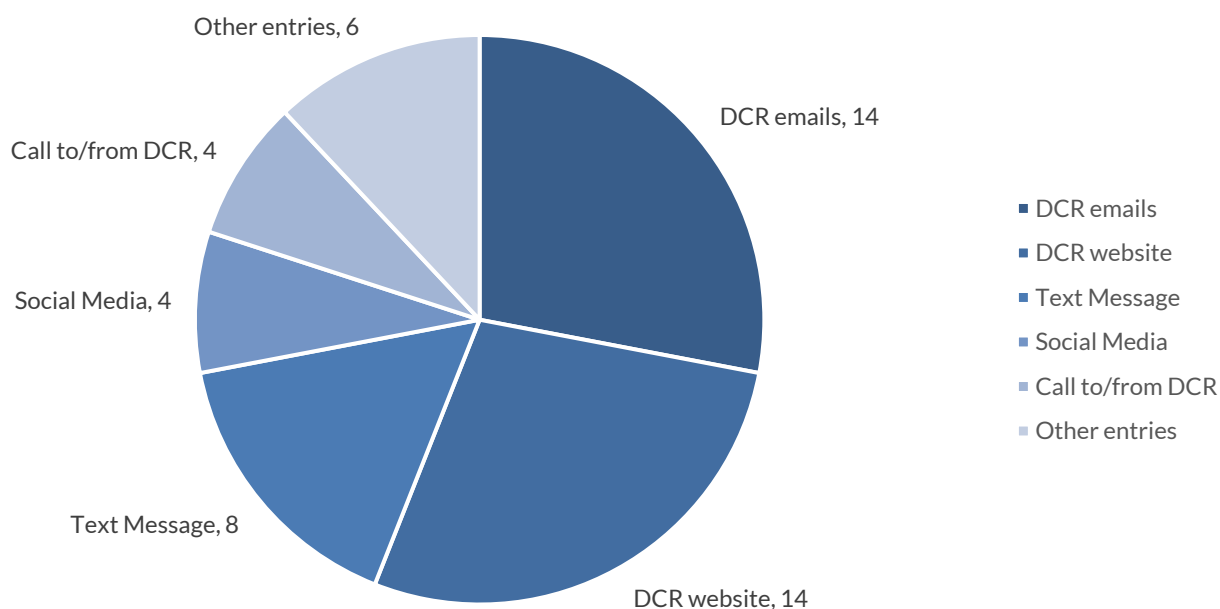


Figure 46. Survey 1- Preferred Communication with DCR

### How often do you access information from or about DCR?

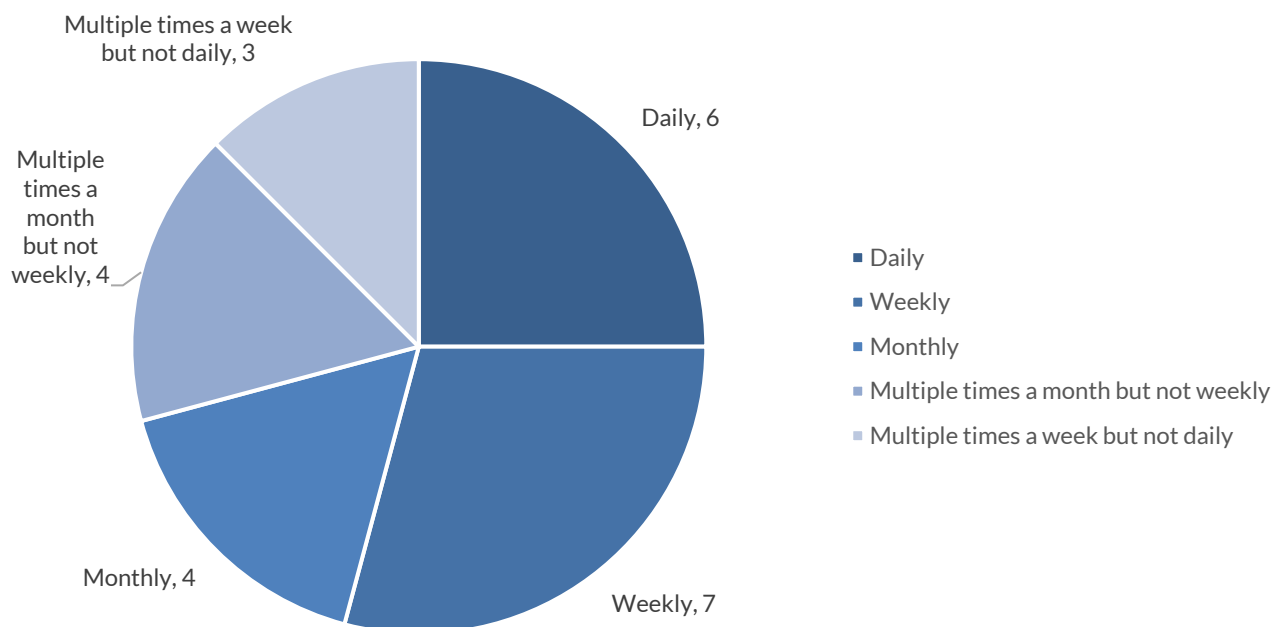


Figure 47. Survey 1- Accessing DCR Information

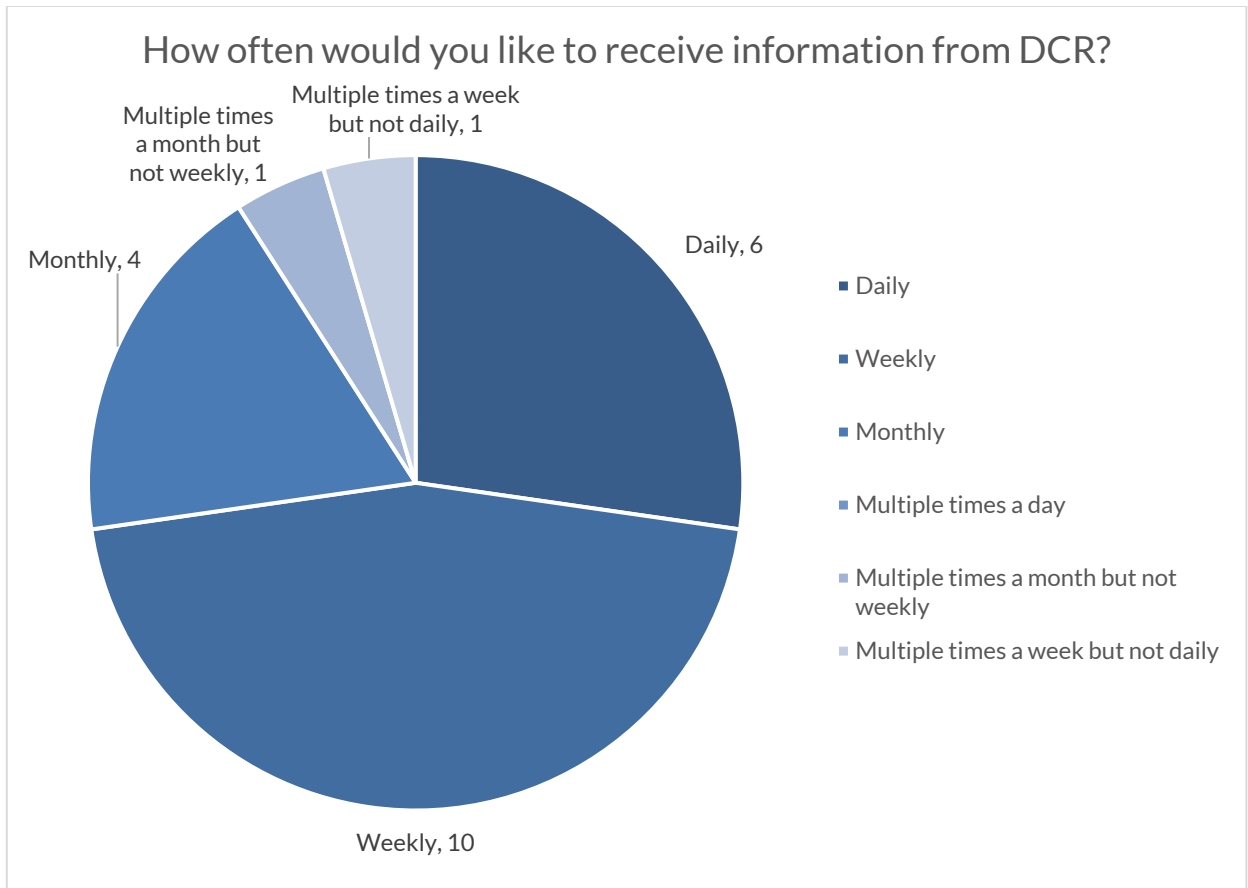


Figure 48. Survey 1- Frequency Preference

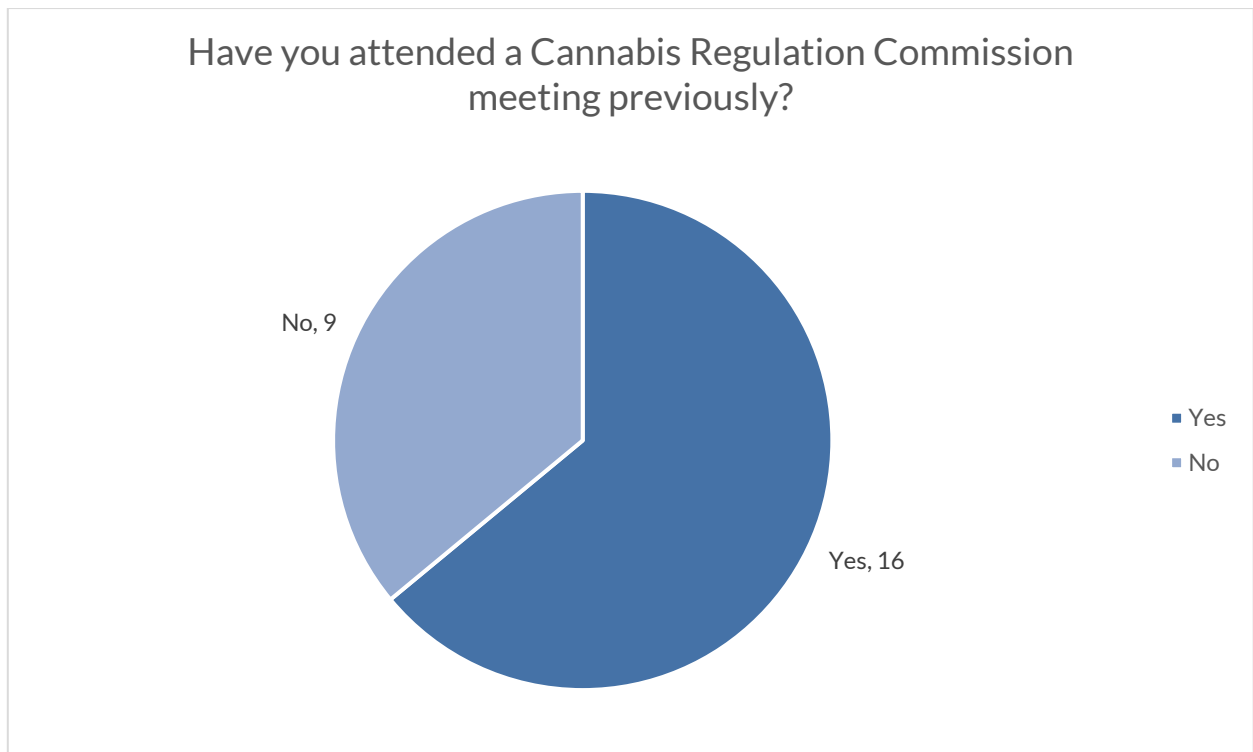


Figure 49. Survey 1- Cannabis Regulation Commission Meeting Attendance

Have you made a public comment at a Cannabis Regulation Commission meeting?

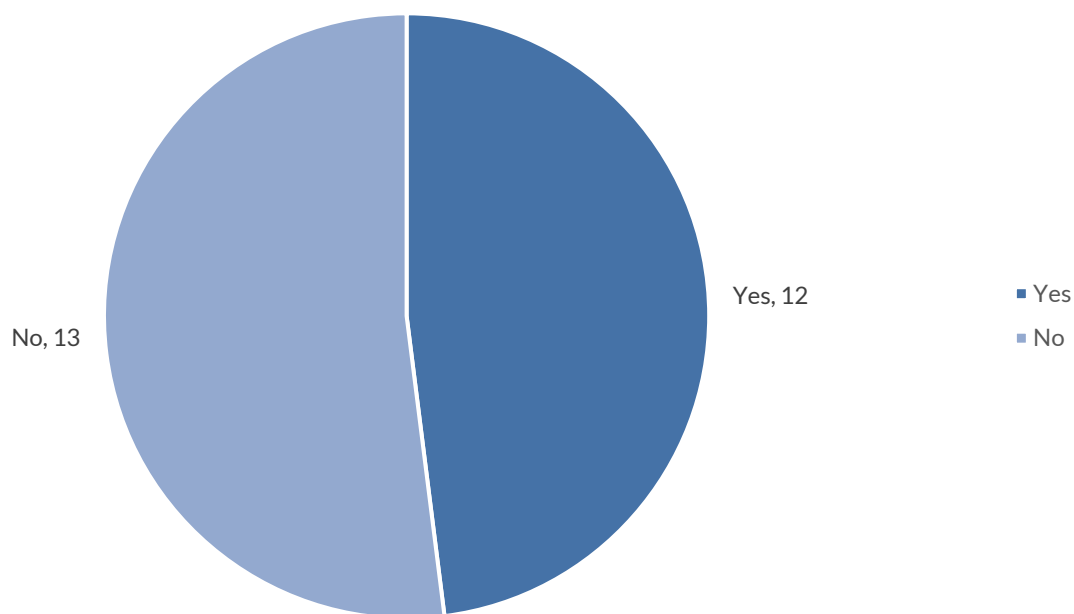


Figure 50. Survey 1- Comments at Cannabis Regulation Commission Meeting

Do you regularly listen to DCR's Executive Director's Report that is provided at Cannabis Regulation Commission meetings?

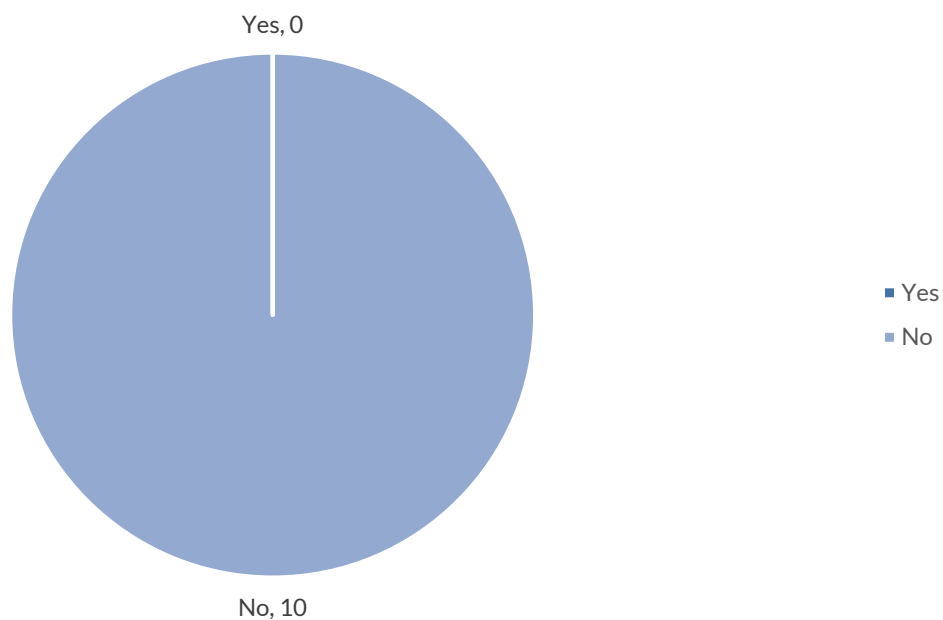


Figure 51. Survey 1- DCR Executive Director Report

How helpful do you find the Executive Director's Report that is provided at Cannabis Regulation Commission meetings?

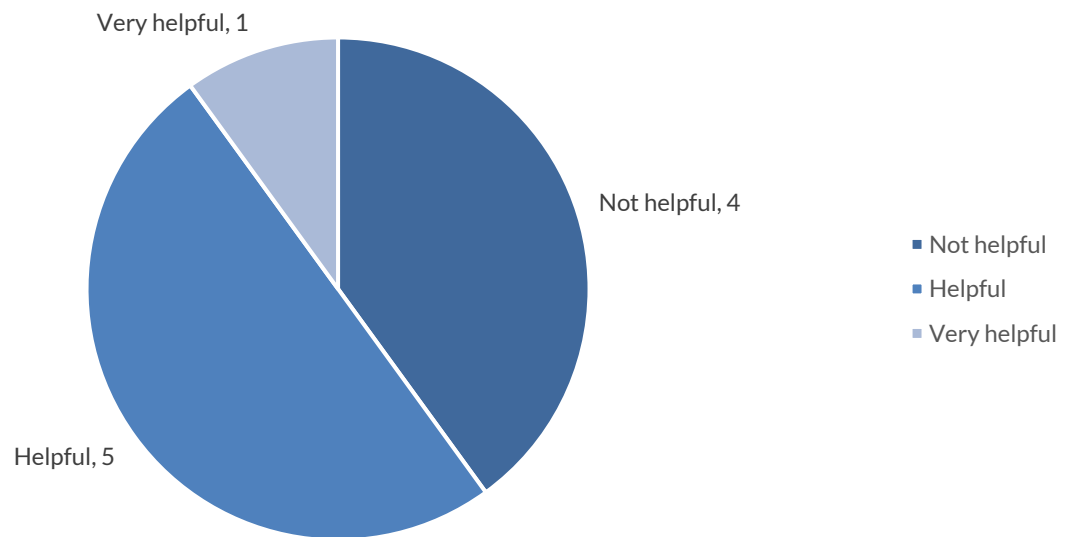


Figure 52. Survey- Helpful Information

Have you viewed the tutorial videos on the DCR website

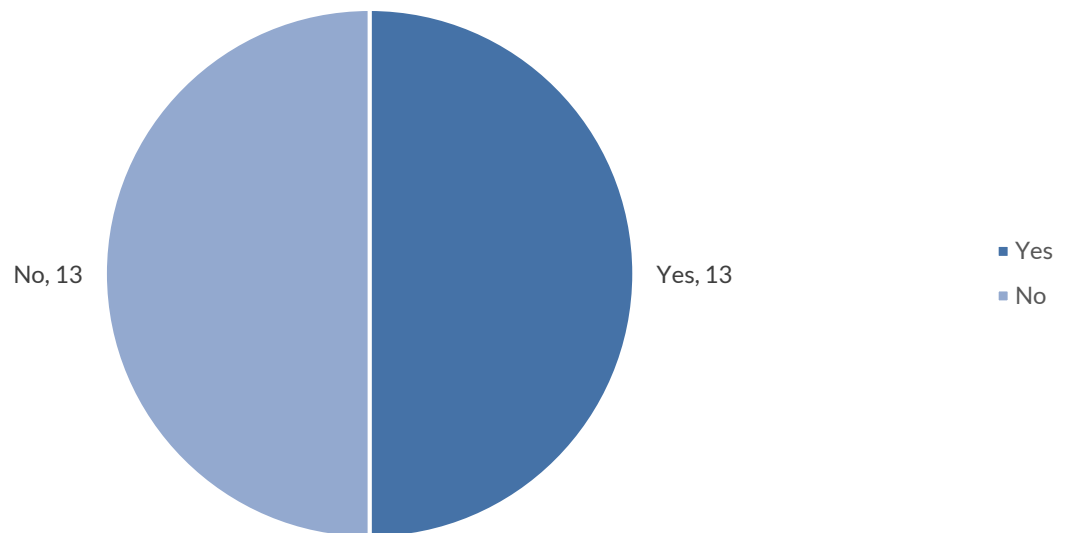


Figure 53. Survey 1- DCR Tutorial Videos



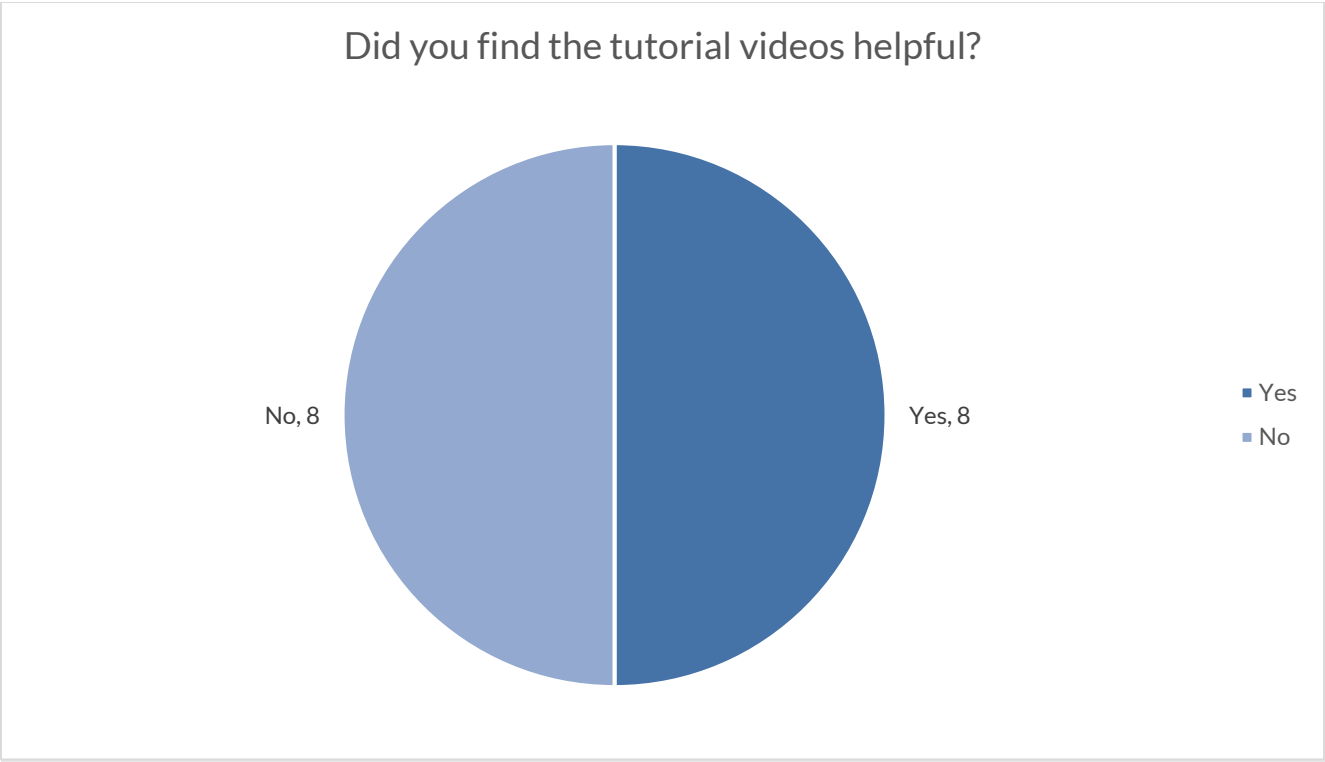


Figure 54. Survey 1- Help from DCR Tutorial Videos

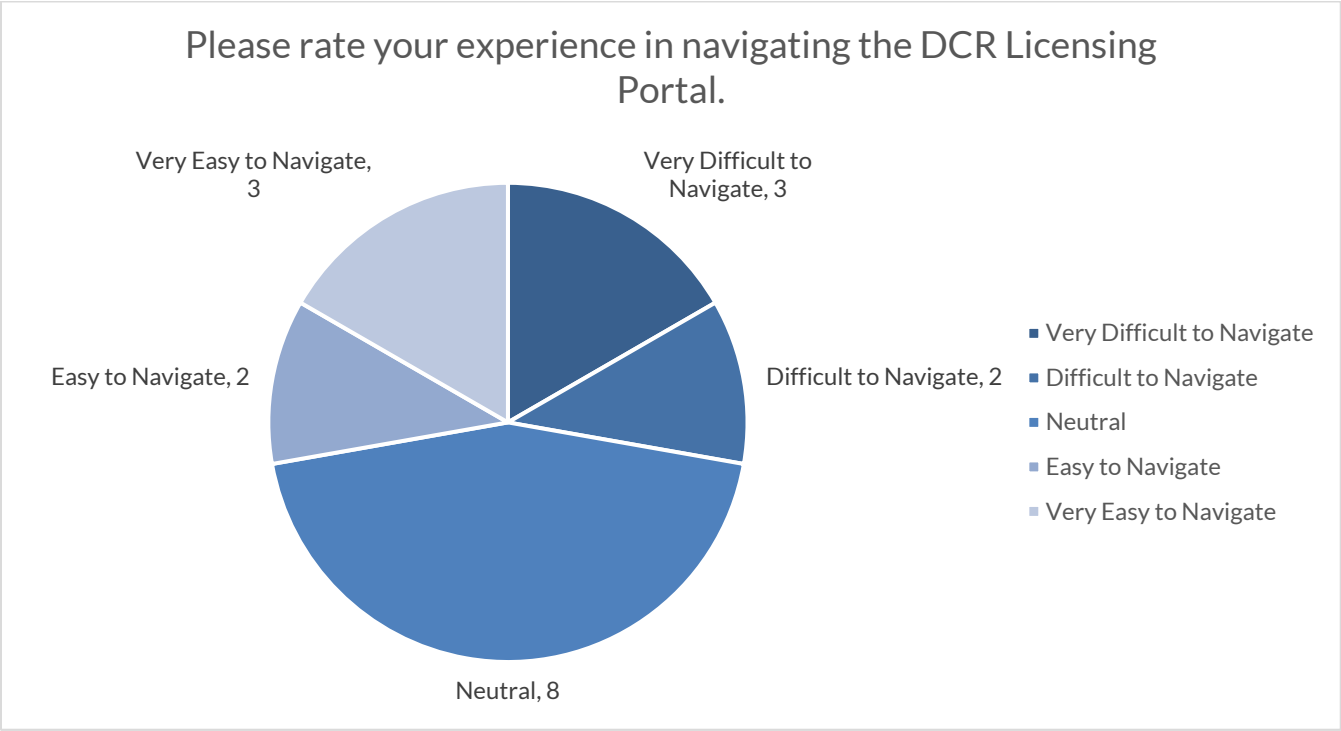


Figure 55. Survey 1- DCR Licensing Portal Experience

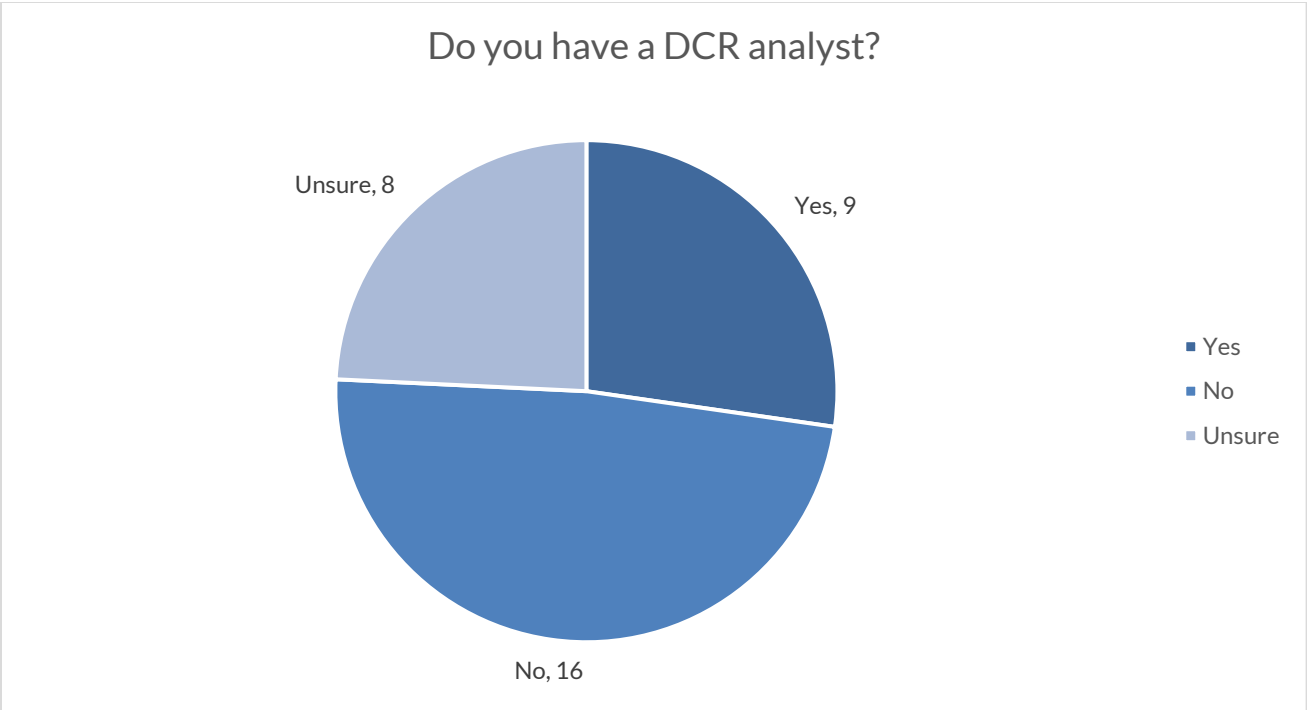


Figure 56. Survey 1- DCR Analyst

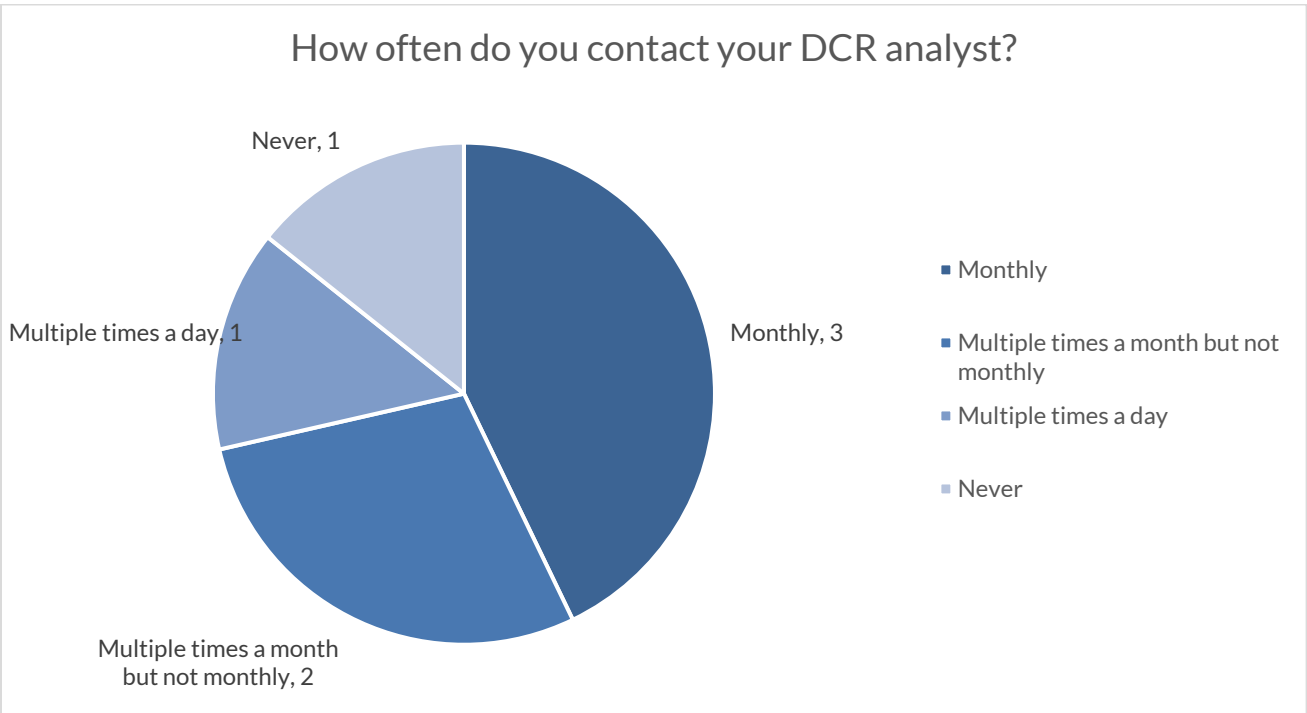


Figure 57. Survey 1- Contact with DCR Analyst

How do you usually get in contact with your DCR analyst?

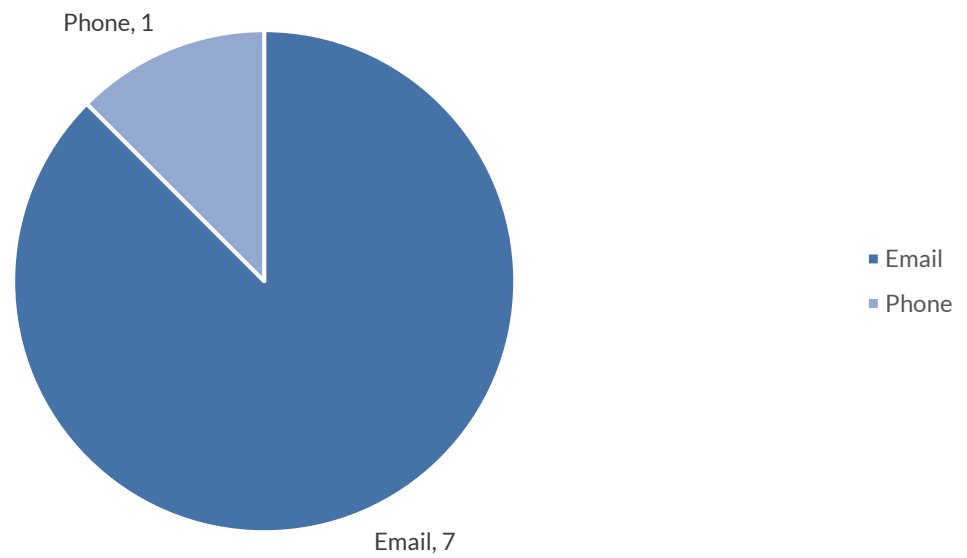


Figure 58. Survey 1- Ways of Contacting DCR Analysts

How helpful is your DCR analyst?

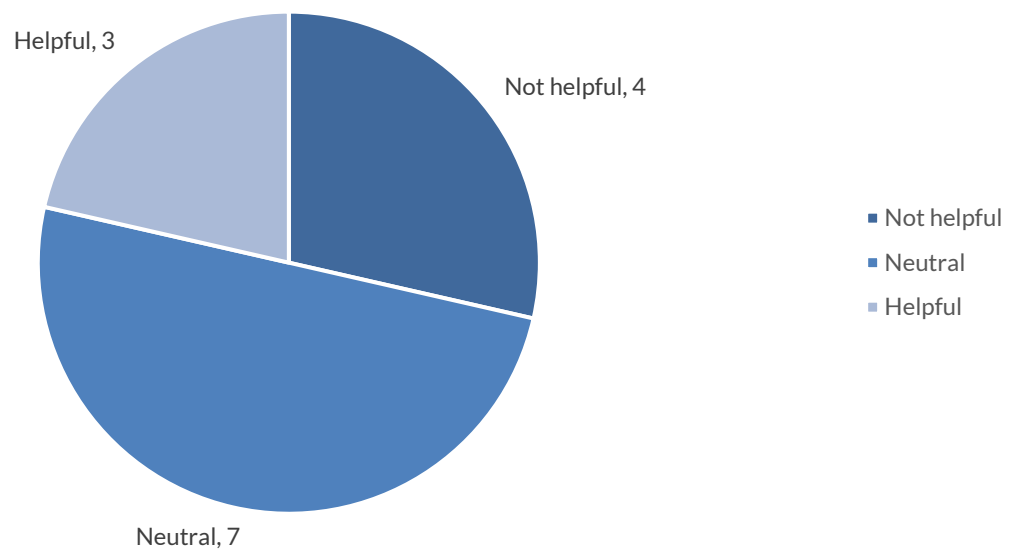


Figure 59. Survey 1- DCR Analyst Help

How long does it typically take your DCR analyst to respond to your communications?

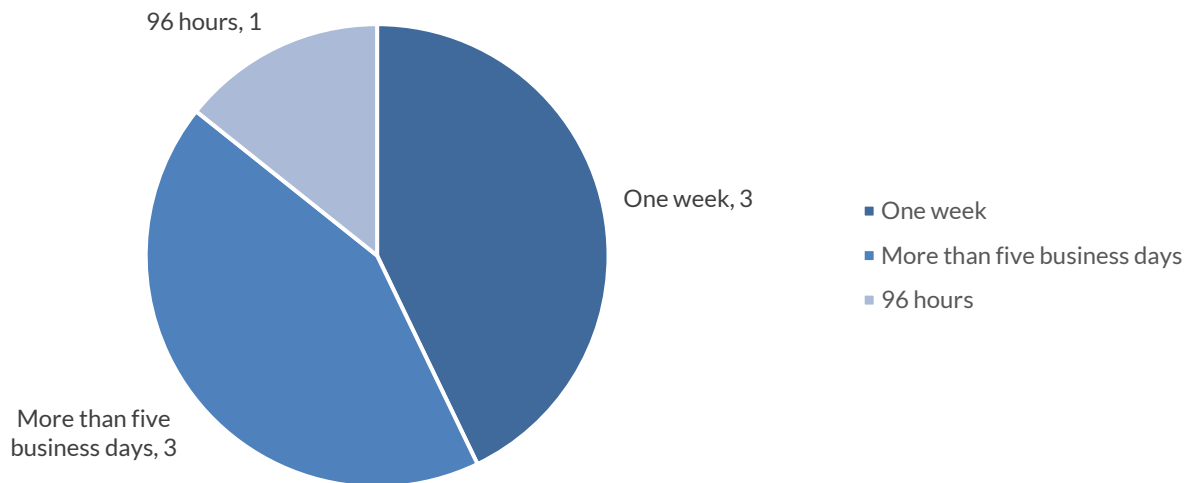


Figure 60. Survey 1- DCR Analyst Responsiveness

How helpful do you find communications from DCR to be?

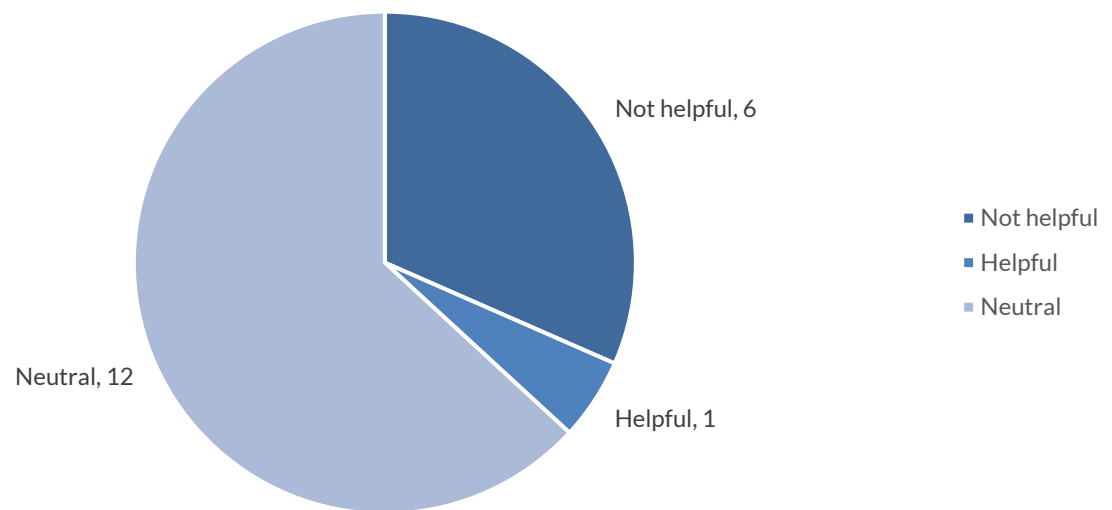


Figure 61. Survey 1- Effectivity of DCR Communications

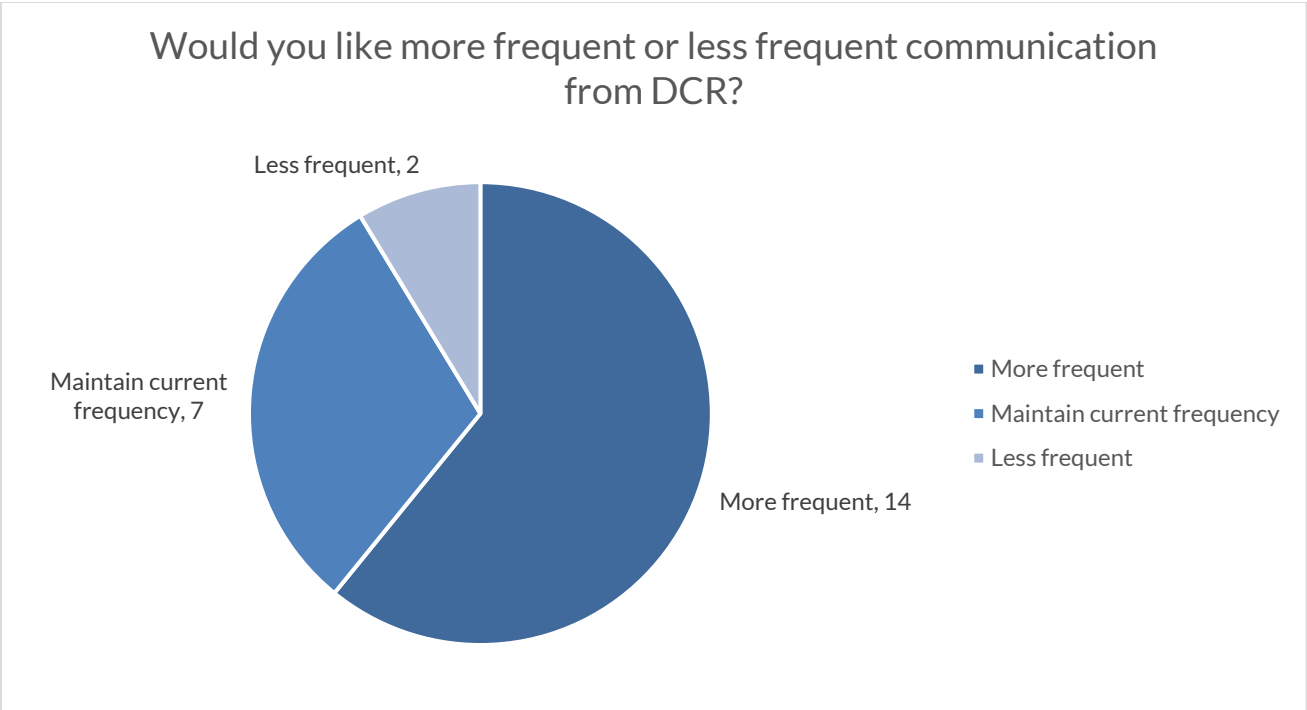


Figure 62. Survey 1- Preference on Communication Frequency

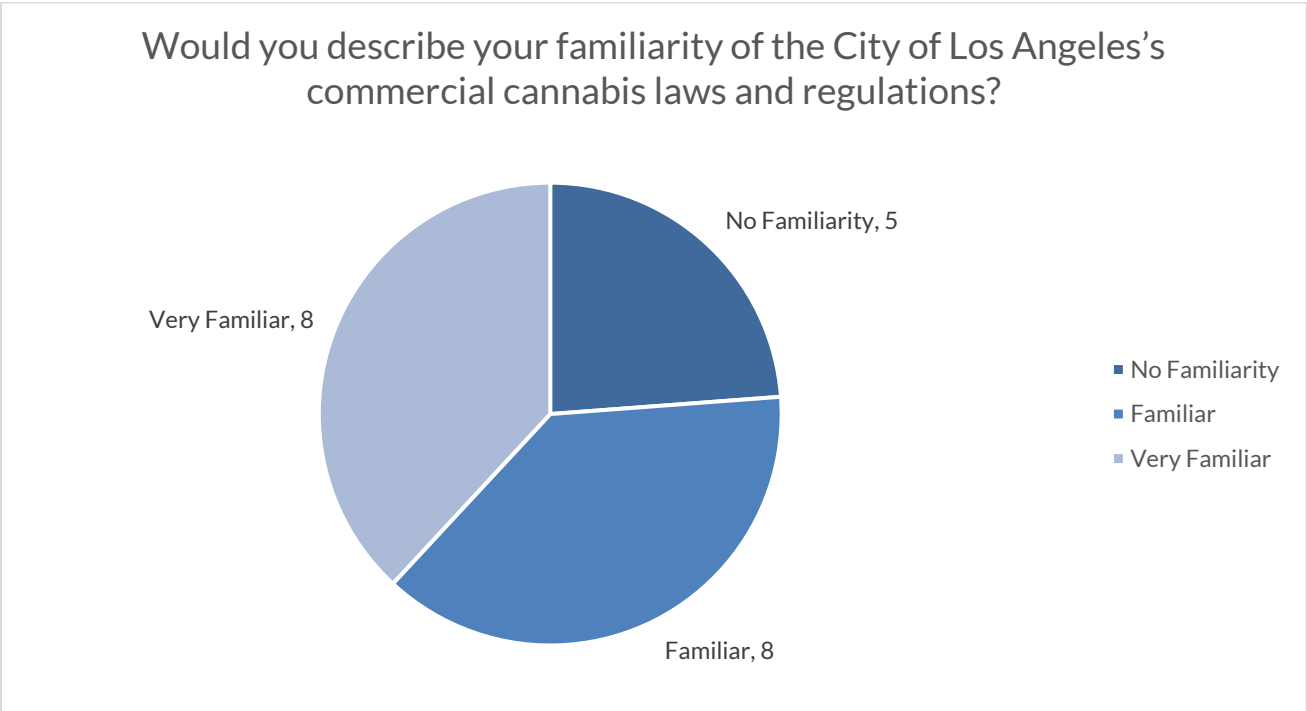


Figure 63 Commercial Cannabis Laws and Regulations

If you have specific recommendations regarding the City of Los Angeles's commercial cannabis laws and regulations, please share your recommendations here. If known, please cite the specific law and/or regulation.

- Closure of illegal businesses. Enforce the law instead of overtaxing
- Sharecropper investors are attempting to take full advantage of the Los Angeles Social Program
- The rule should be amended that any verified social equity applicant with priority access to further processing it shall be mandatory that the Social Equity Applicant be listed as a member or owner with no less than the minimum amount of equity according to the social equity guidelines of the controlling operating entity associated with the application or the business is not in compliance
- The current exit bag requirement should be revised, other local cities do not require these plastic bags that are adding waste and litter to the city of Los Angeles
- Air quality, monitoring of odors emitting from grow and processing commercial locations
- Locations that are near residential areas need to be required and monitored as to what they are emitting into the air. We are breathing in fumes that should have been filtered, and we have not had much luck with the facility liaison as to remedies
- Crack down on the corporate cannabis people who usurp the law, simply because they have the money for lawyers
- The check list and follow through for social Equity applicants is very broken
- The laws and regulations are extremely difficult to locate, comprehend and interpret
- Funds

Figure 64. Survey 1- Recommendation regarding the City of Los Angeles's Commercial Cannabis Laws and Regulations

Would you be interested in participating in future focus groups intended to identify best practices for the cannabis industry and to assist DCR with the development of applicant and licensee resources?

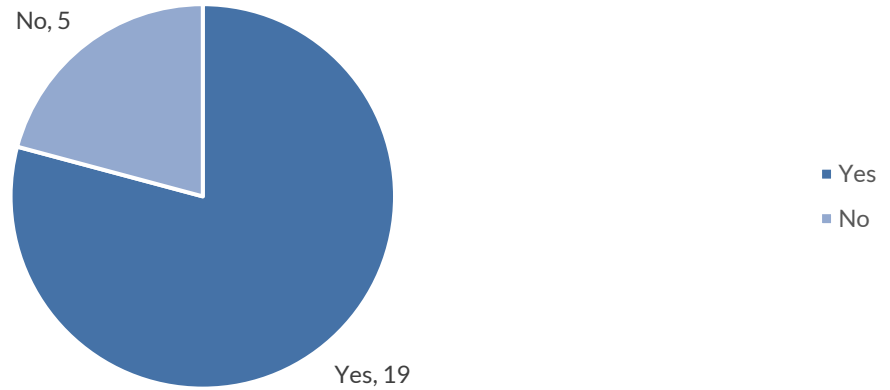


Figure 65. Survey 1- Interest in Participating in Future Focus Groups

#### 6.2.2 Survey 2 Results- Cannabis, Community Impact and Corporate Social Responsibility in the City of Los Angeles

If you do not wish to participate in this survey, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

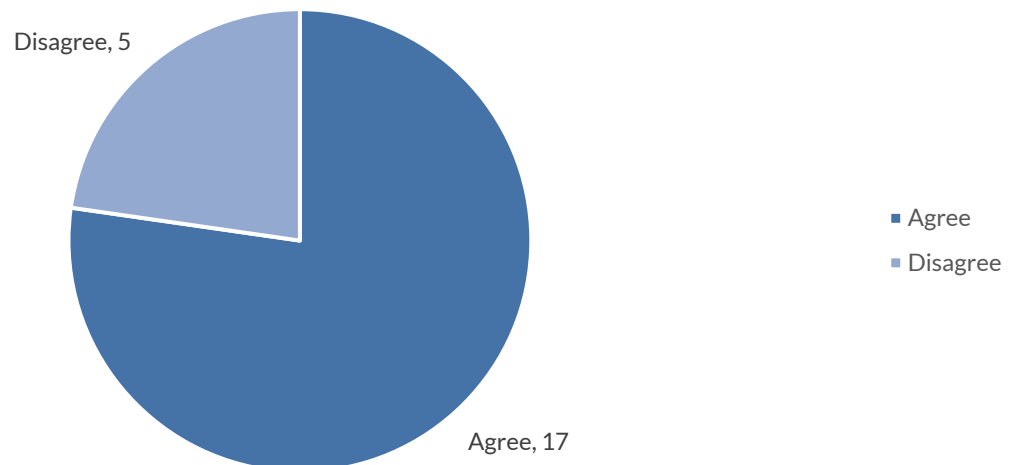


Figure 66. Survey 2- Survey Participation

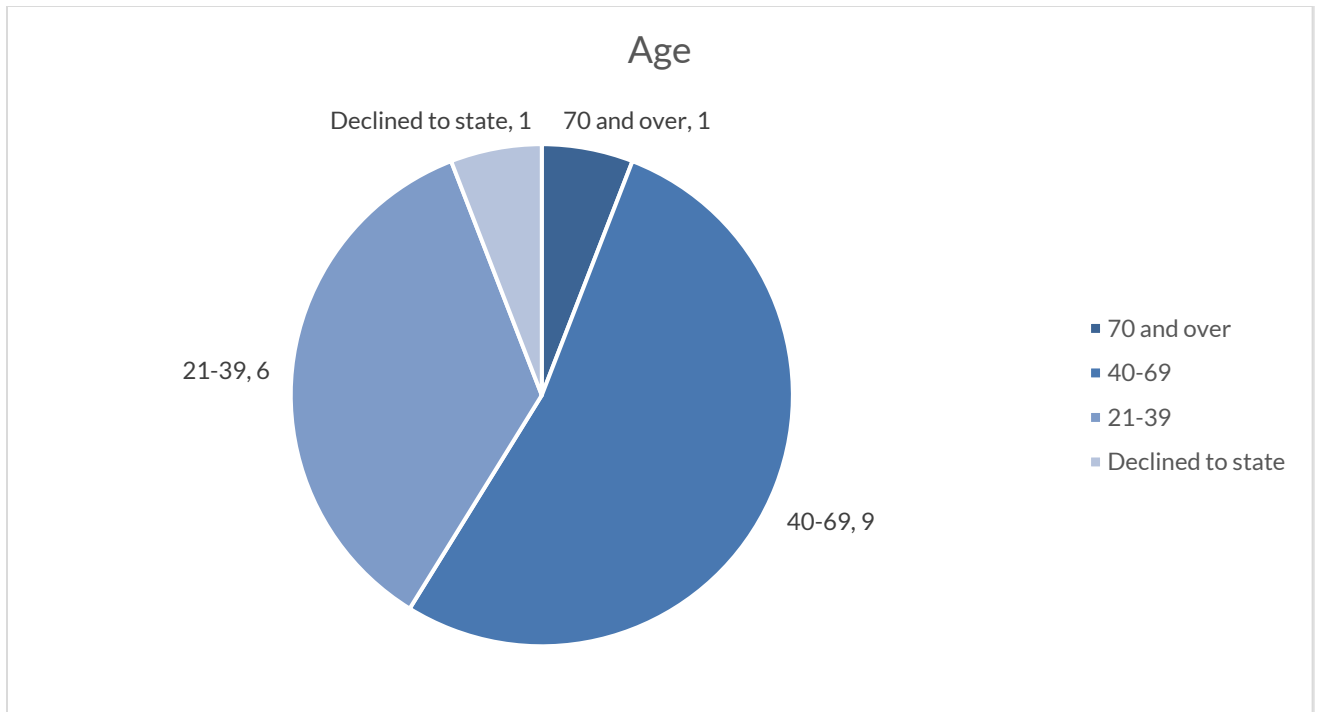


Figure 67. Survey 2- Age

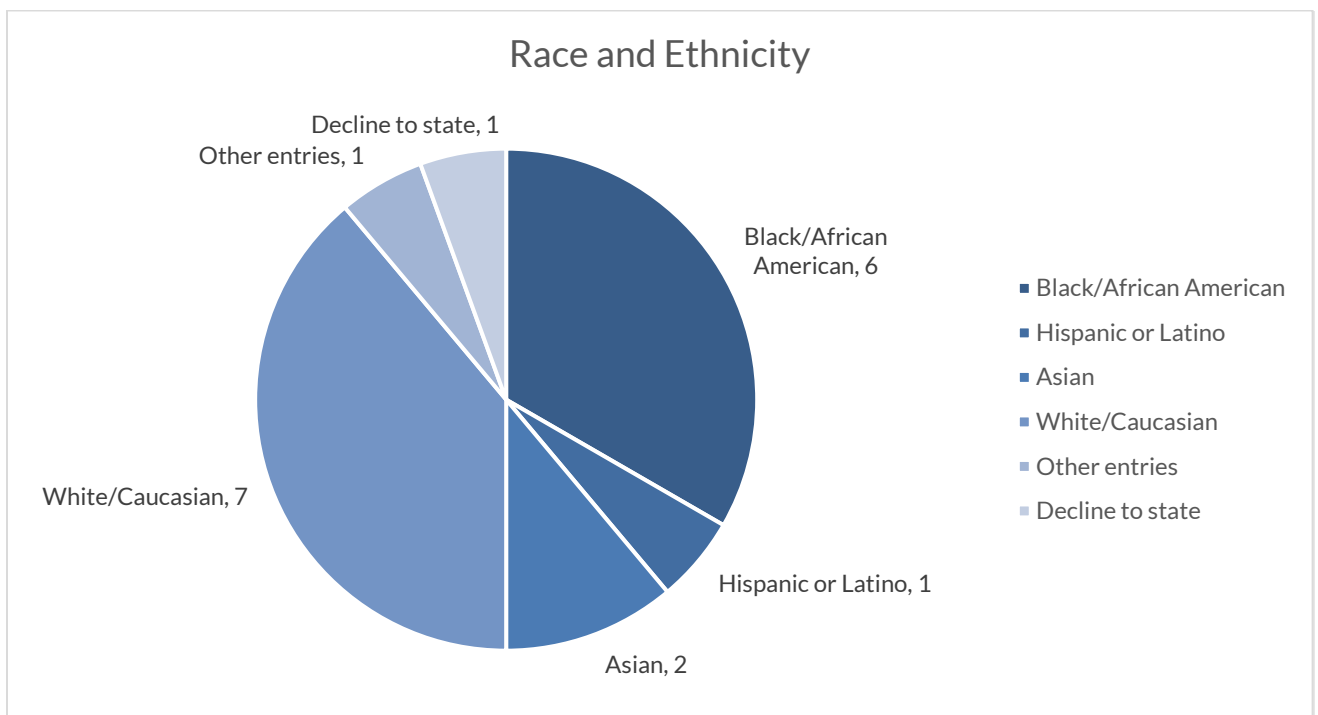


Figure 68. Survey 2- Race and Ethnicity



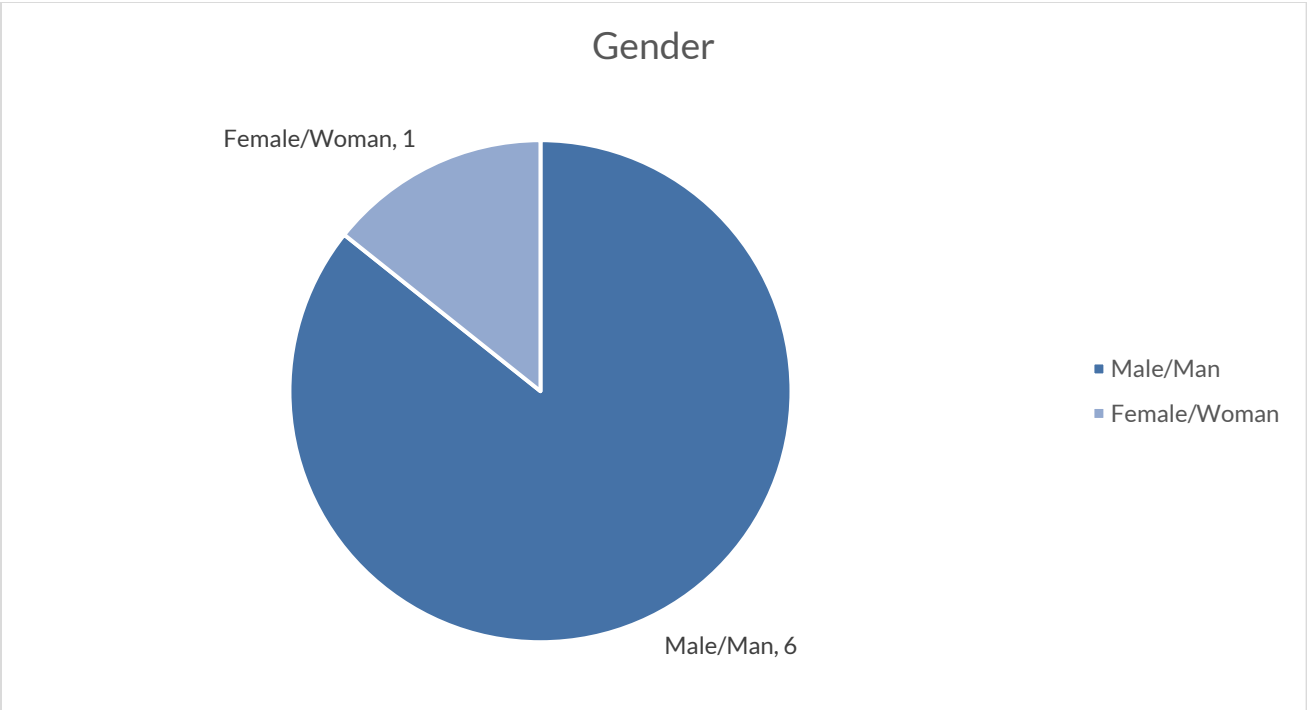


Figure 69. Survey 2- Gender

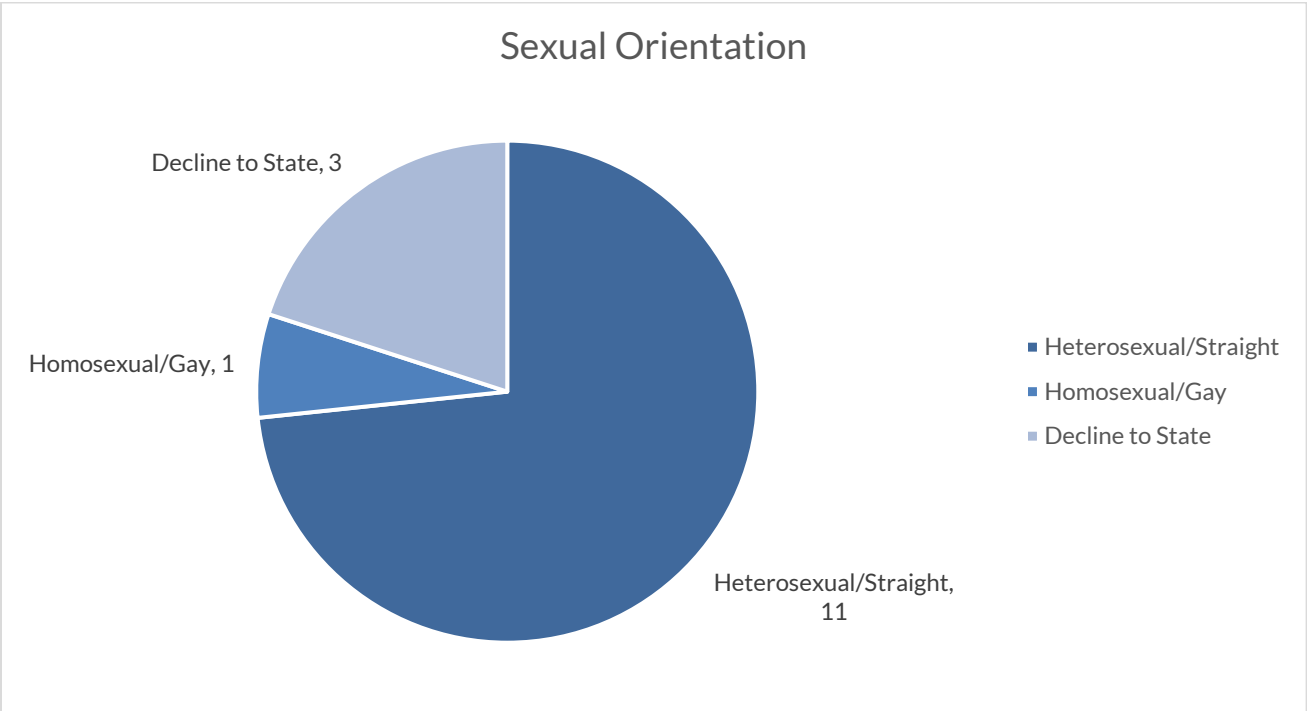


Figure 70. Survey 2- Sexual Orientation

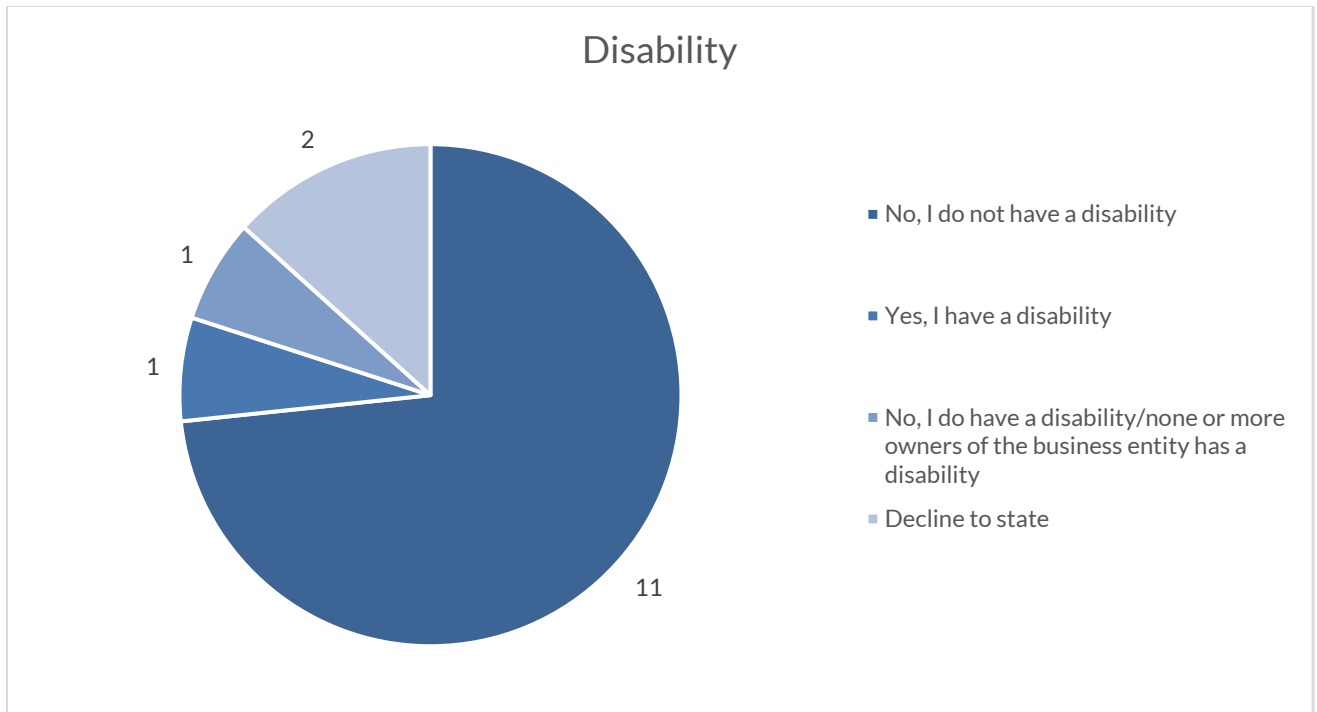


Figure 71. Survey 2- Disability

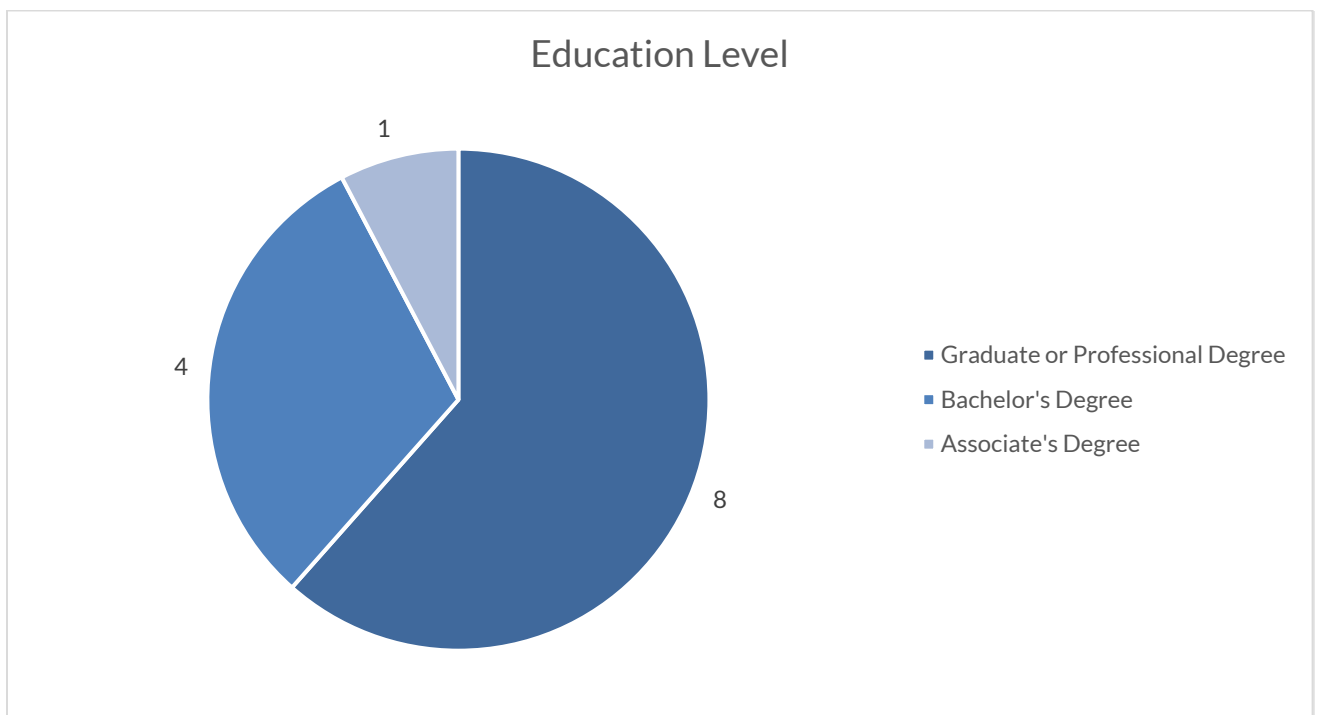


Figure 72. Survey 2- Education Level

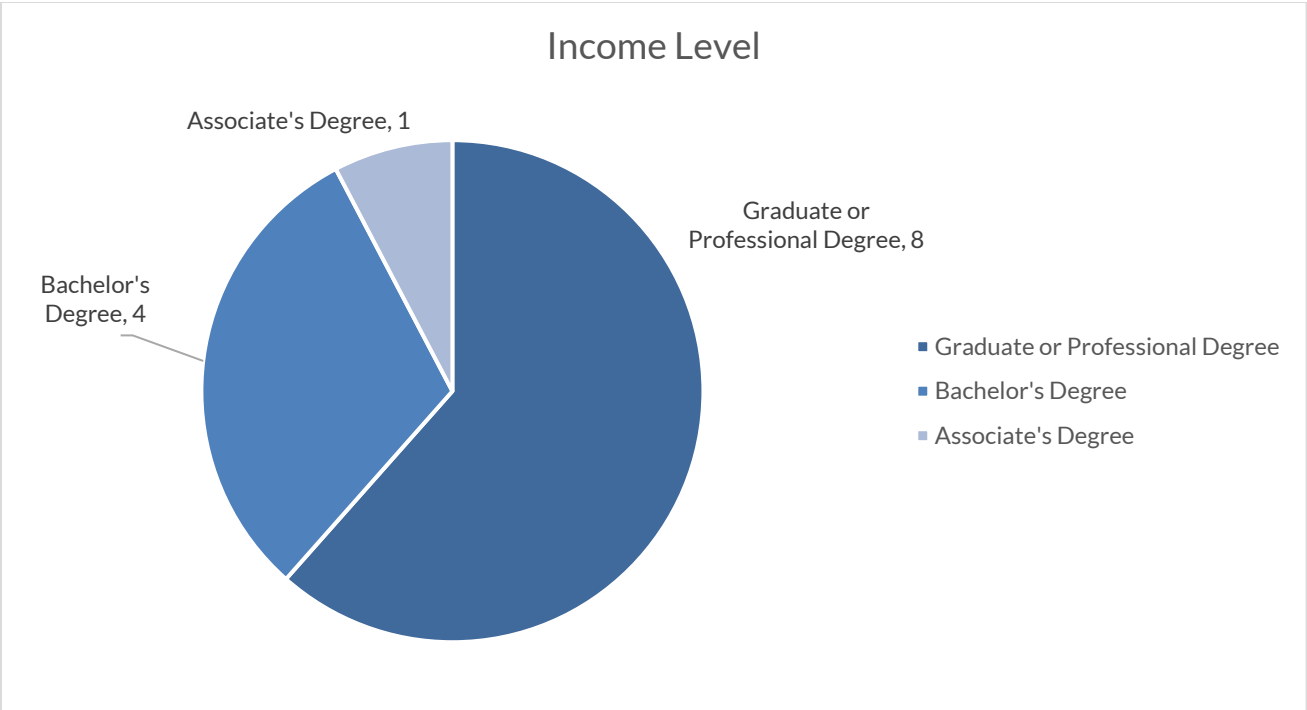


Figure 73. Survey 2- Income Level

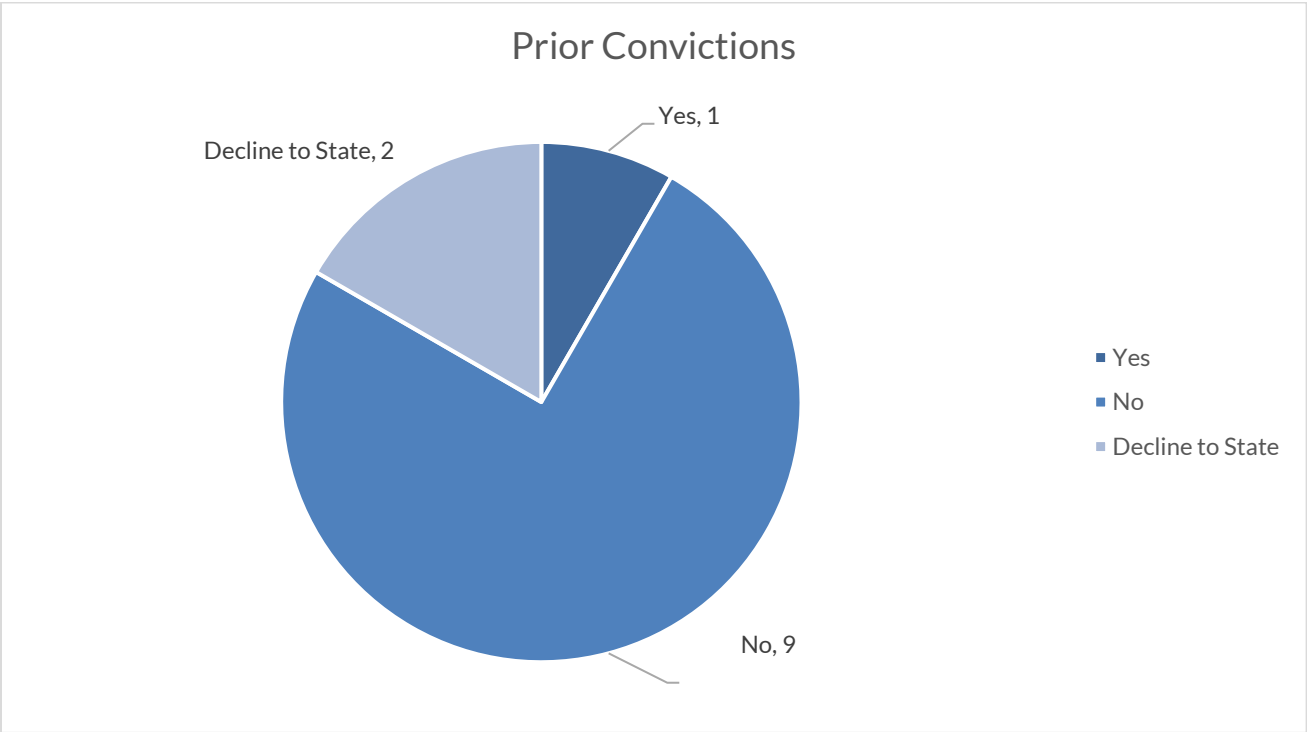


Figure 74. Survey 2- Prior Convictions

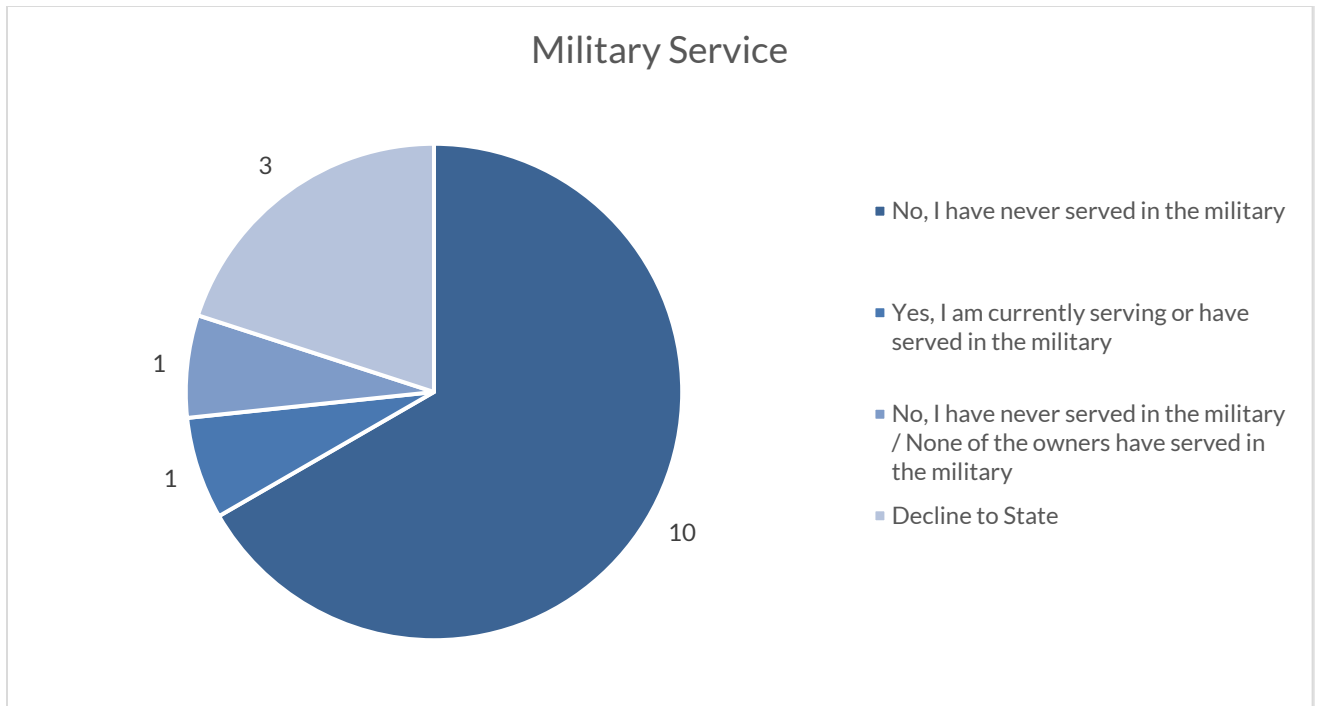


Figure 75. Survey 2- Military Service

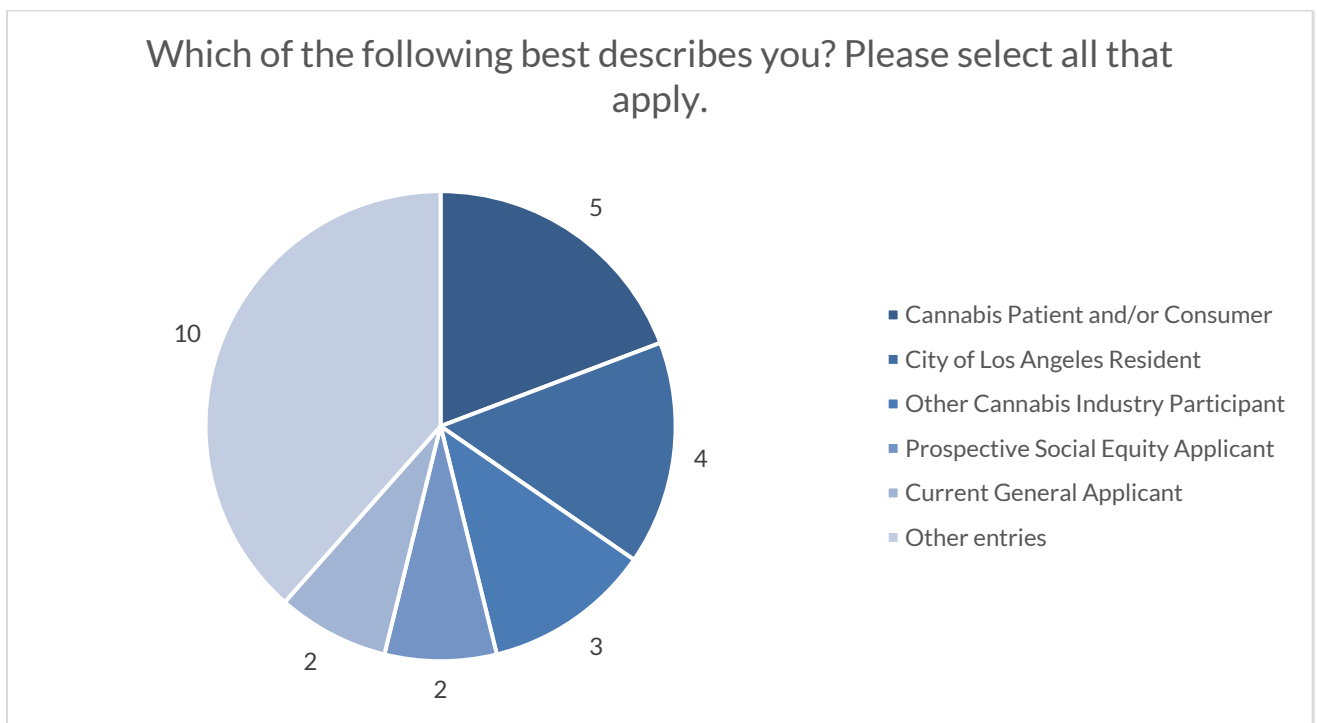


Figure 76. Survey 2- Description

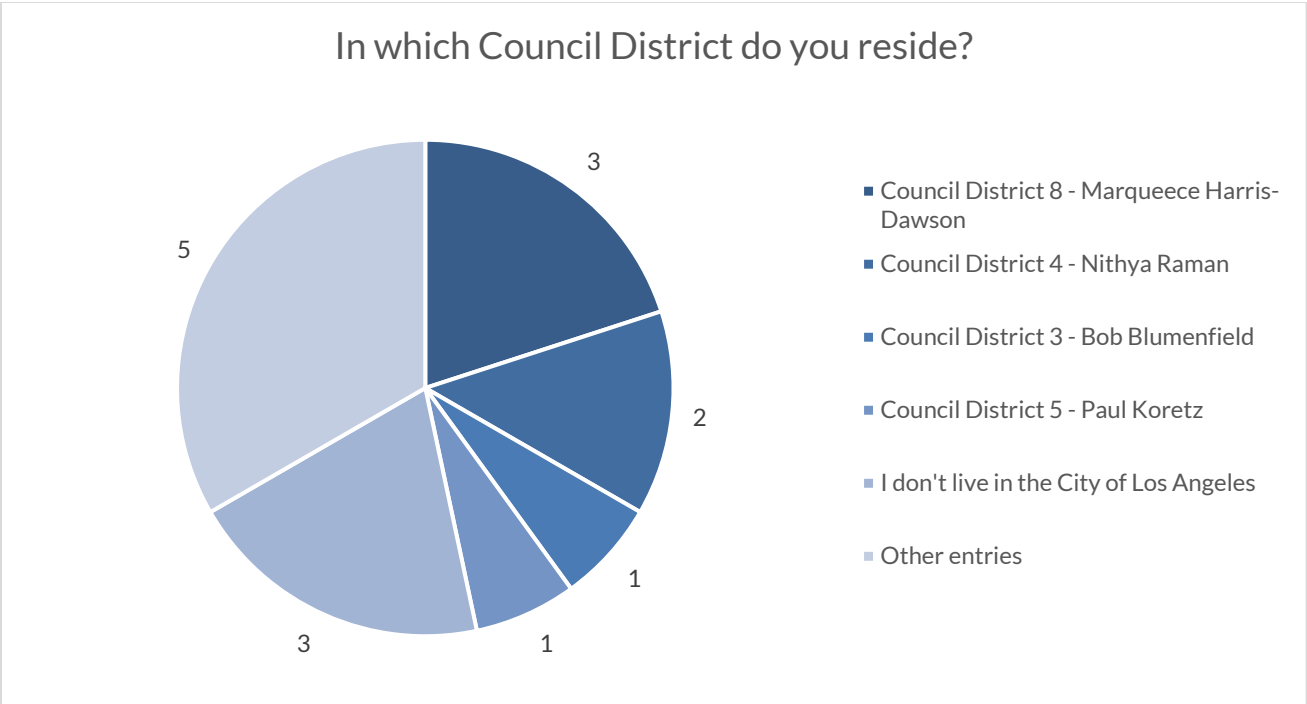


Figure 77. Survey 2- Council District Residence

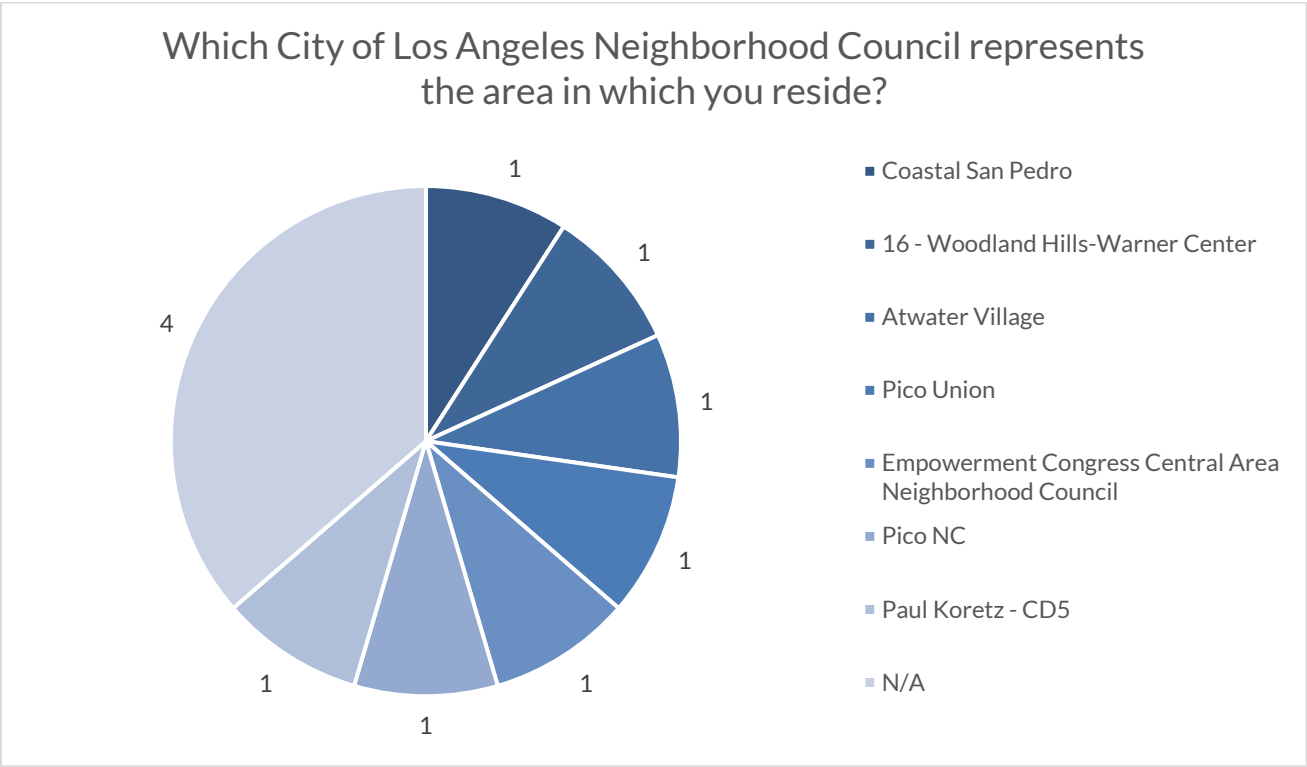


Figure 78. Survey 2- Neighborhood Council

How familiar are you with laws related to personal cannabis activity (i.e., what's legal for adults 21 and older) in California?

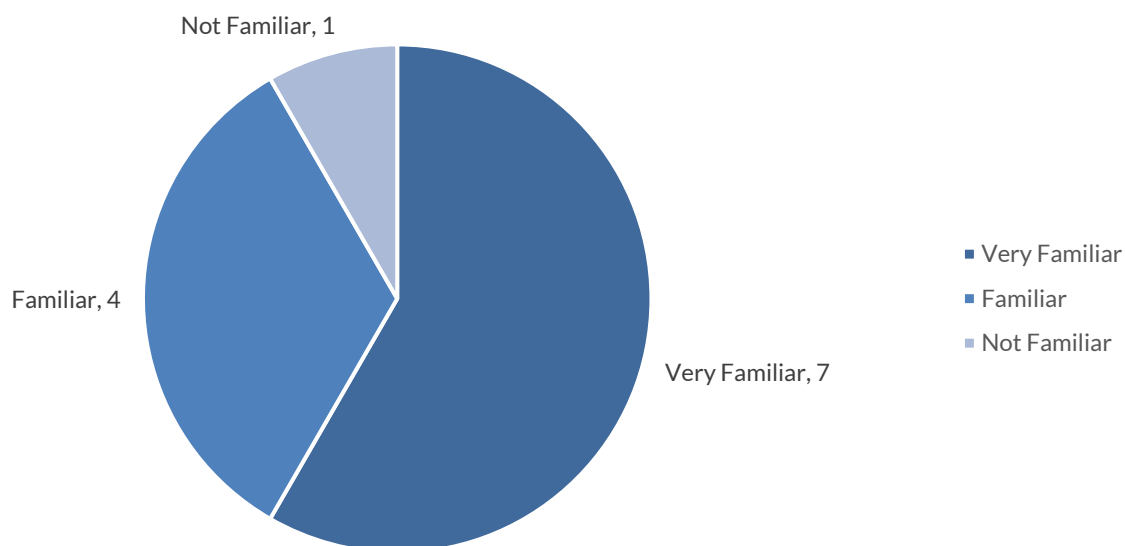


Figure 79. Survey 2- Familiarity with Personal Cannabis Activity Laws

How familiar are you with laws related to commercial cannabis activity (i.e. business licensing requirements) in Los Angeles?

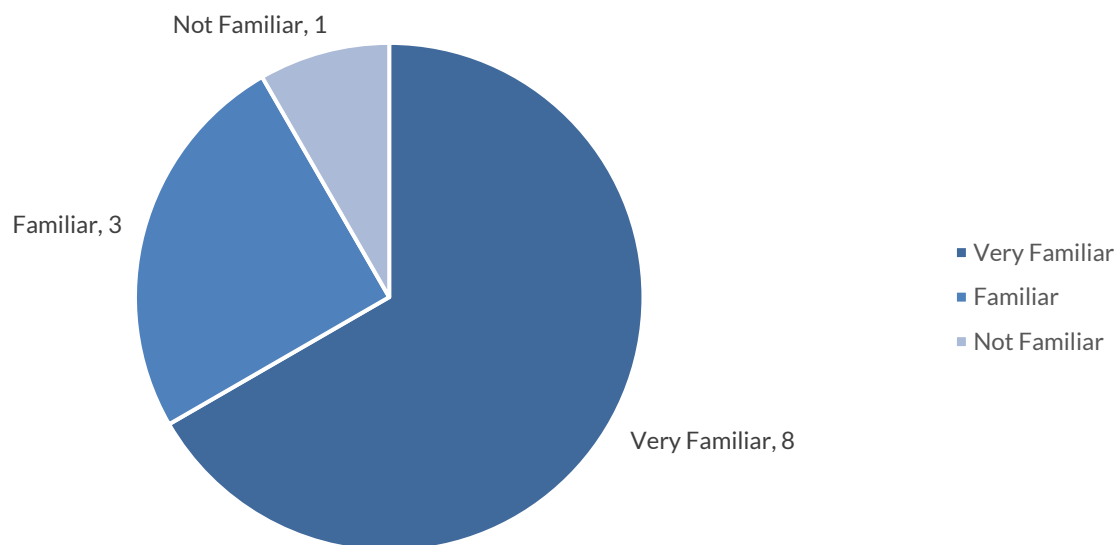


Figure 80. Survey 2- Familiarity with Commercial Cannabis Activity Laws

Please select any topic that you would like to receive more information about.

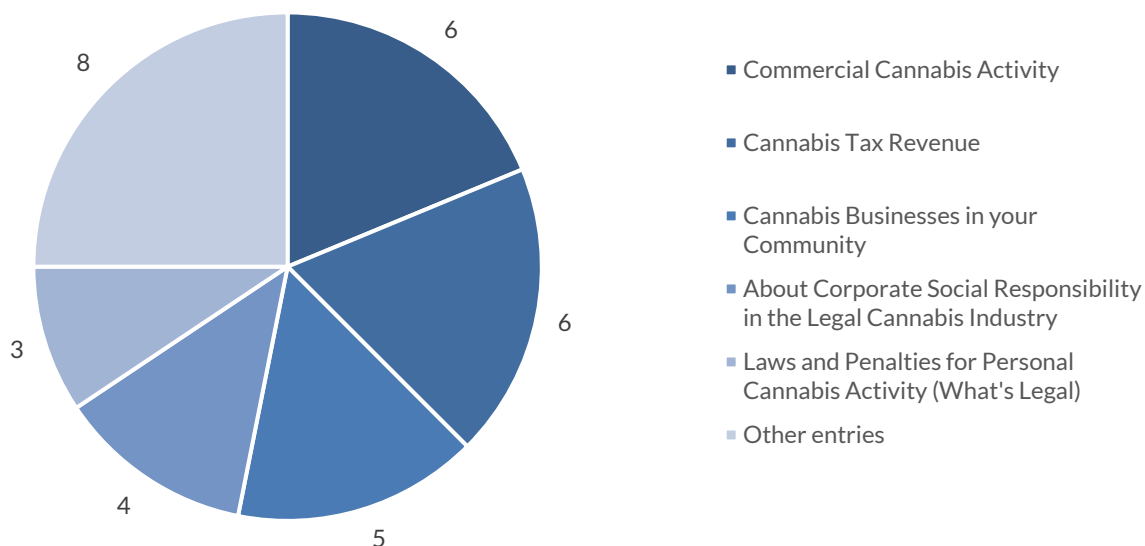


Figure 81. Survey 2- More Information

Do you know how to identify licensed (legal) cannabis businesses in the City of Los Angeles?

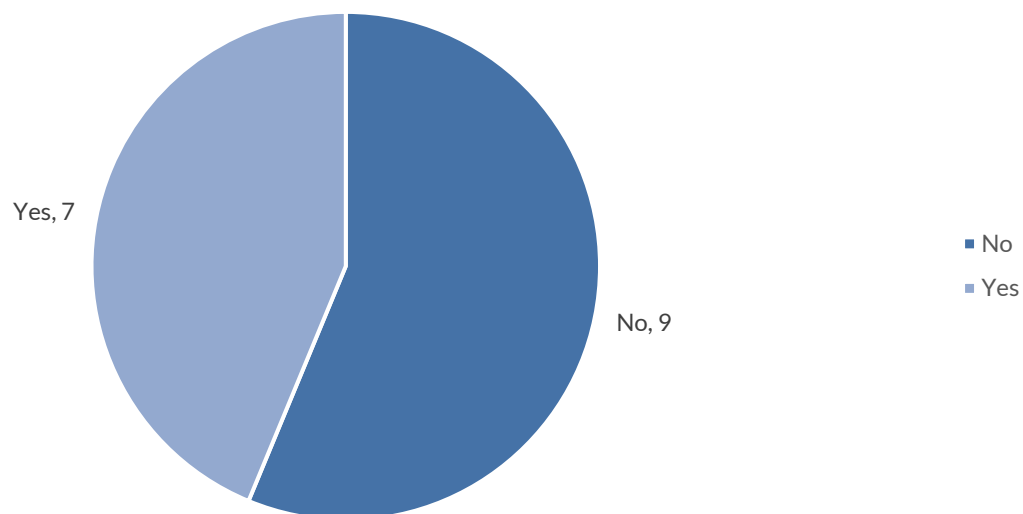


Figure 82. Survey 2- Identification of Licensed Cannabis Businesses

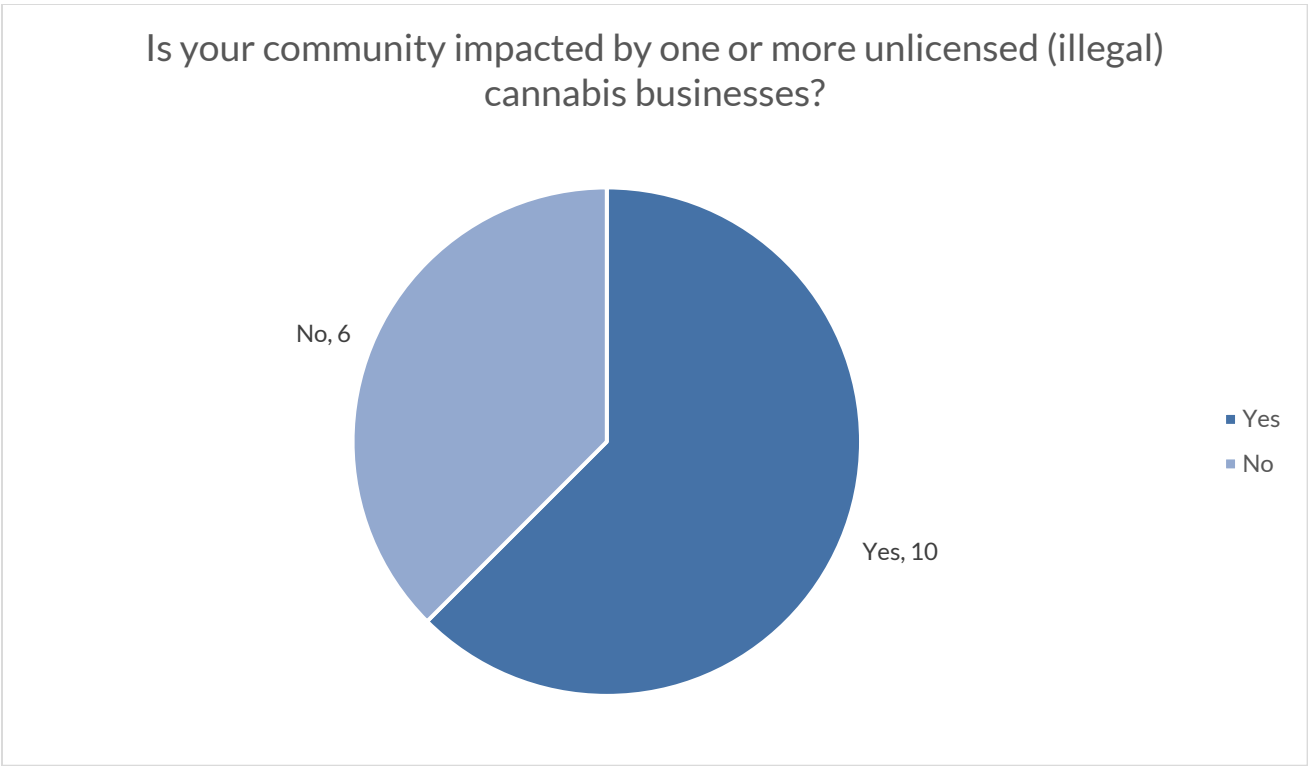


Figure 83. Survey 2- Impact of Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses

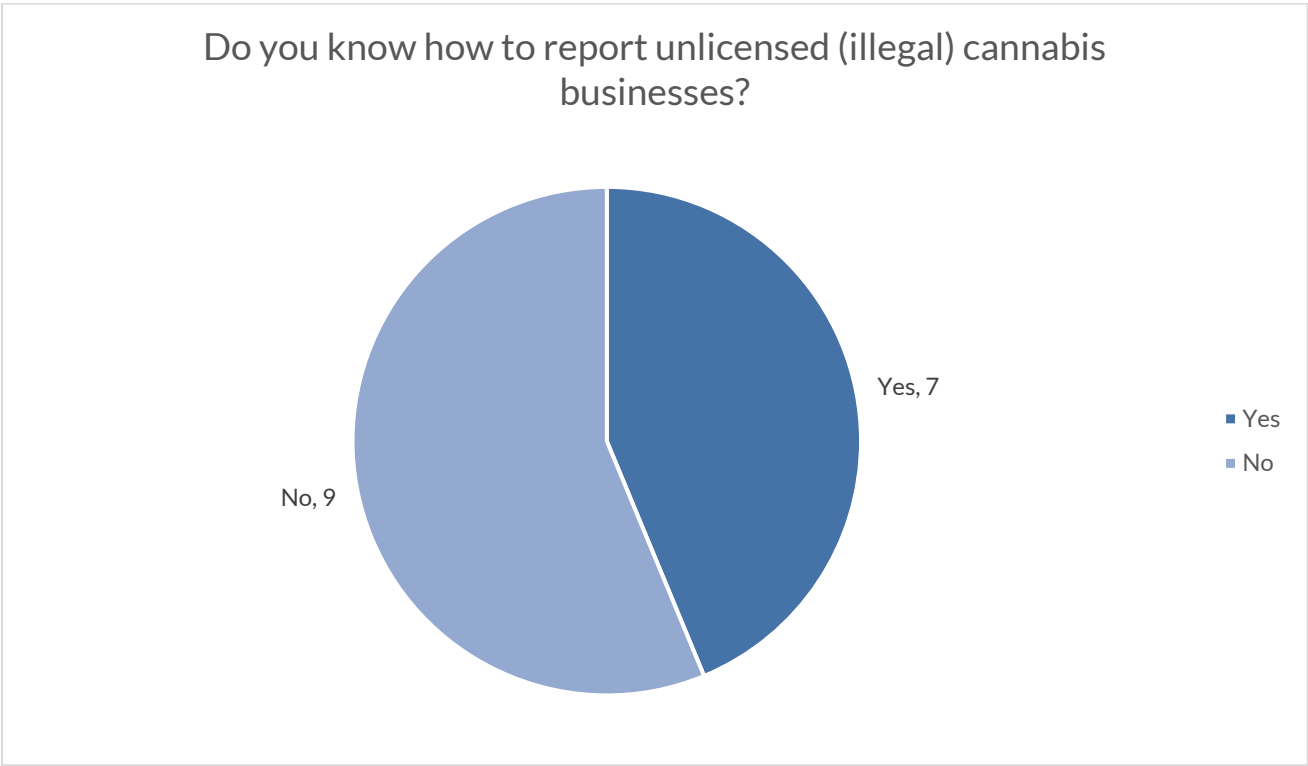


Figure 84. Survey 2- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses



How comfortable would you be with a licensed (legal) cannabis business in your community?

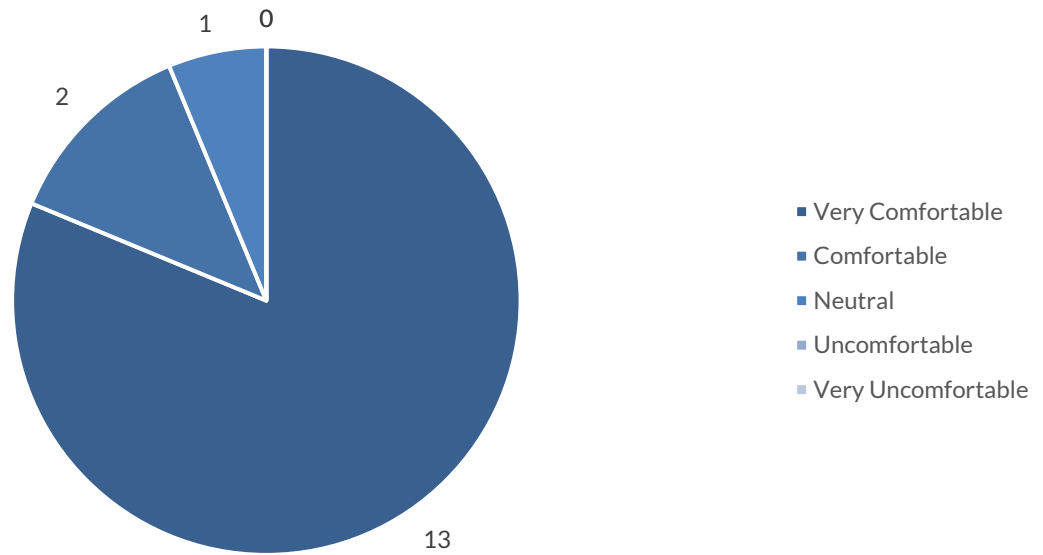


Figure 85. Survey 2- Licensed Cannabis Businesses in Your Community

Did you know that the City of Los Angeles created a Department of Cannabis Regulation and a Cannabis Regulation Commission to advise the City on cannabis related laws and to issue licenses to cannabis businesses?

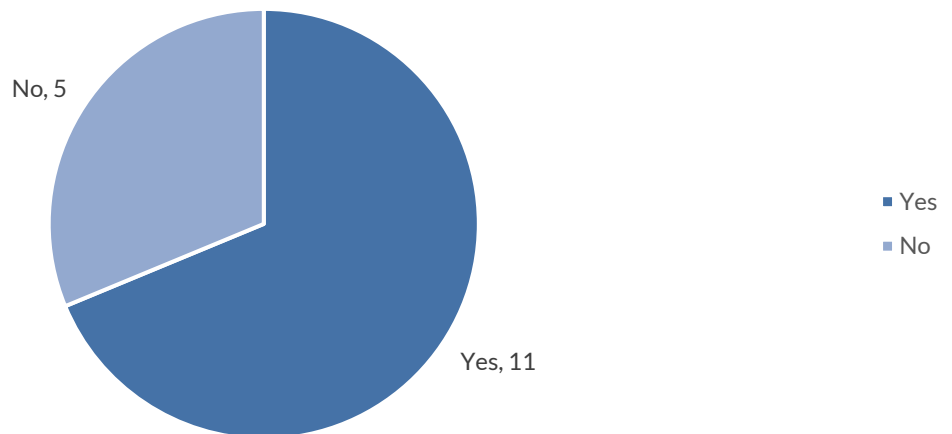


Figure 86. Survey 2- Knowledge about the Department and Commission

Have you ever attended a Cannabis Regulation Commission meeting?

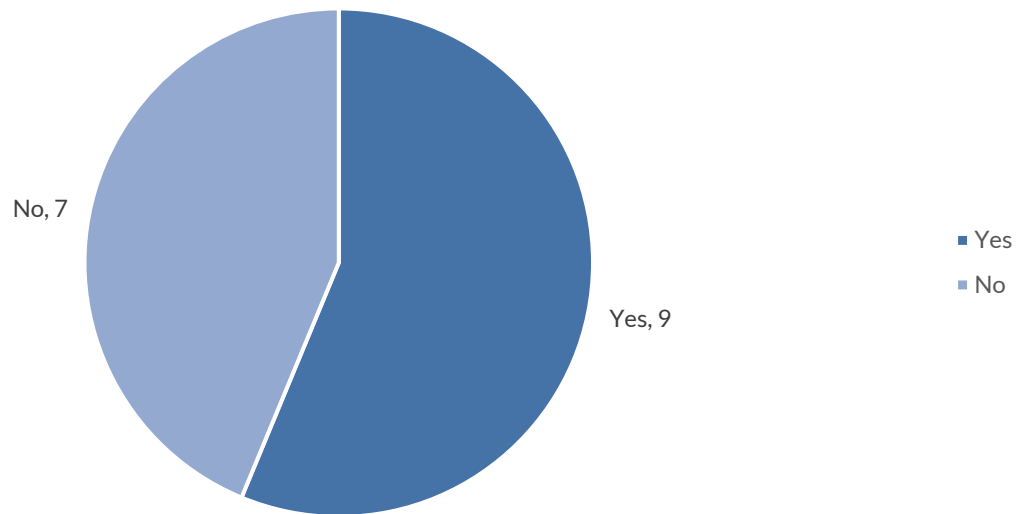


Figure 87. Survey 2- Cannabis Regulation Commission Attendance

Did you know that the City of Los Angeles created a Department of Cannabis Regulation and a Cannabis Regulation Commission to advise the City on cannabis related laws and to issue licenses to cannabis businesses?

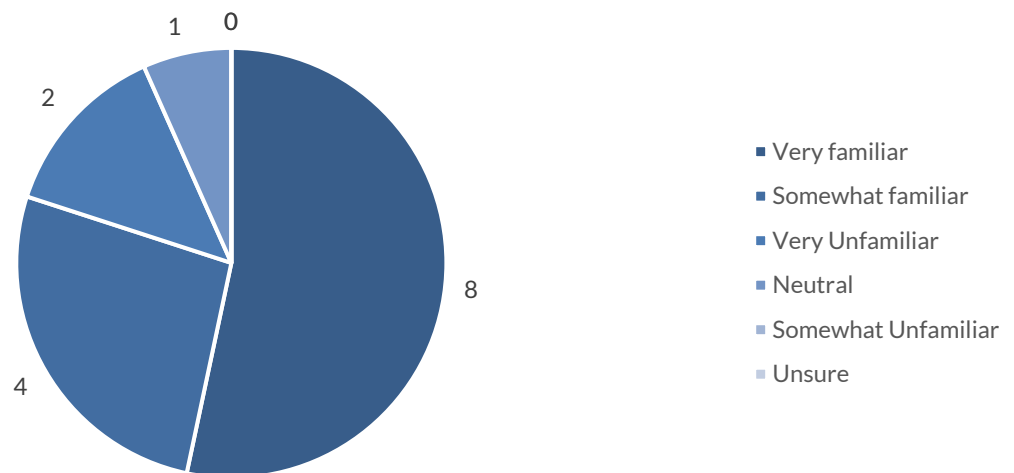


Figure 88. Survey 2- Knowledge about the Department and Commission Role

Please let us know what Corporate Social Responsibility means to you.

- CSR differs from traditional definitions in relation to cannabis because all cannabis activity at the federal level, (save that exempted by the CJS Amendment) is illegal. This means no charity that gets federal funding can accept cannabis donations, nor can the state or other government subdivisions and charities involving children, or addiction services are reluctant to accept money even if they receive no federal funding. CSR is best accomplished by the cannabis business giving directly to the community, rather than funding through a third party. It should also be noted that in Los Angeles, the process for collaborating with the City on things like street repair or other beautification projects involves a lot of red tape, and typically council action before the collaboration can begin. Compassion Programs which give free medical cannabis to patients who are poor, visiting nurse hours at the cannabis dispensary, discounts for the elderly and veterans, are all good examples of programs that not only demonstrate the business is practicing CSR in a direct and effective manner, it's much easier for the DCR to audit these programs than third party gifting or project collaboration. Cannabis given away to financially challenged patients is already part of METRC Track and Trace. All the DCR has to do is match up what the patient has received with the METRC sale or compassion use records. Basically, this is an activity that could be done by a Summer Law School Intern. And, if done correctly, CSR has a ripple effect that traditional giving does not. For instance, visiting nurse hours at the dispensary help to address health inequities in underserved neighborhoods by putting a healthcare professional in an environment that cannabis patients visit far more frequently than they see a doctor.
- It means that the Corporations are taking all the MONEY for what Black Men & Women are in jail for selling cannabis!!! It means the big CORPORATIONS are reaping all the benefits and making billions while the Social Equity Stakeholder are still waiting to get in the door. It means that the DCR is robbing us blind and are NOT BEING SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE by dragging their feet and not providing Stakeholders with reparations for waiting years to open a reputable business. DCR continually repeats the same promises and offers no RESULTS therefor their Corporate Social Responsibility to the community - the REAL COMMUNITY THAT LIVED & DIED in the War on Drugs are NOT BEING COMPENSATED WHILE other cultures are coming into our community and making ALL THE MONEY FROM OUR PEOPLE!!!
- Response to social inequities that shouldn't be confused with bureaucratic policies and delayed actions on the people it seeks to help by way of providing avenues for funding, business development and guidance, technology and other services.
- A business that listens to stakeholders and provides fairness, equity and diversity in all its public activities.

Figure 89. Survey 2- Meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility

## Please let us know what Corporate Social Responsibility means to you. (continued)

- In the cannabis industry specifically its when licensed operators actually recognize the social impact of the legal cannabis industry and are proud to pay in forward. Providing resources to remedy how it affects communities affected by the regulations but more specifically how it negatively affected communities hit hardest by the war on drugs. This is a direct way that companies can be social responsible in repair of the damage caused by the failed war on drugs that companies are now taking advantage of when other are locked out. By investing in social equity applicants, or education in communities hit hardest my the war on drugs for example. Not charity not symbolic gestures. Corporations that are benefiting off legal cannabis while others sit in jail for cannabis related crimes. Corporations are take full advantage of the legal industry with no commitments to re building the very communities that have been ravished by the failed ware on drugs.
- The private sector finding ways to make positive contributions to communities and causes beyond the domains of the company's products, financials and employment.
- Dont Know but responsibility about safely execution of cannabis business in community with taking account of public safety, public health and youth trends.
- Giving back to the community though different ways that will benefit the community ensuring their businesses follow the laws, and regulations the for the sales of cannabis, establishing rules that makes customers accountable to respecting the community (loud music, cannabis related litter etc.. should be addressed)
- Besides the obvious, corporate cannabis has taken over. They have no regard for the laws, the product or the consumers. They get away with everything, and the city just allows it.

Figure 90. Survey 2- Meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility (Continued)

In your opinion, how important is Corporate Social Responsibility?

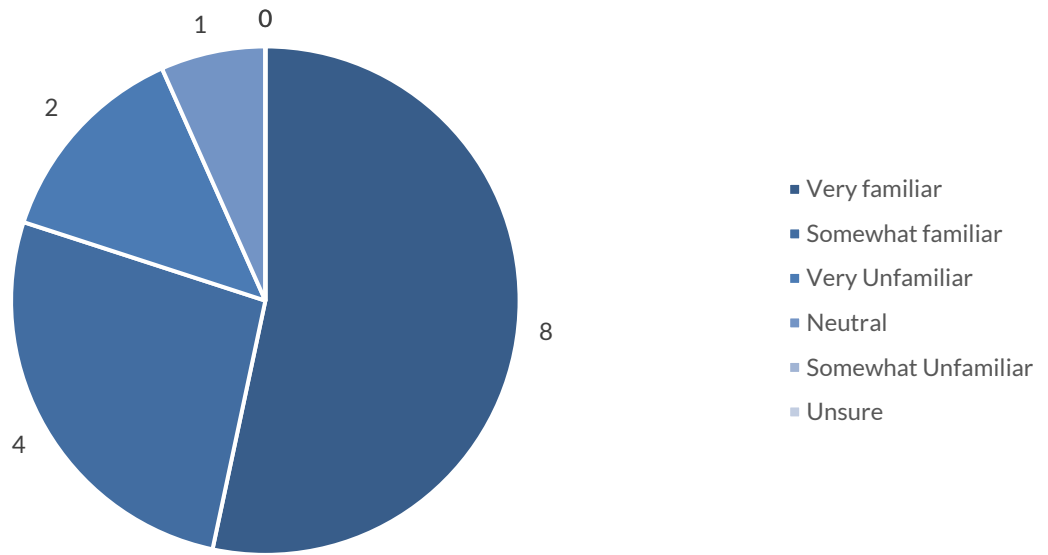


Figure 91. Survey 2- Opinion on Corporate Social Responsibility

In your opinion, should the legal cannabis industry participate in Corporate Social Responsibility?

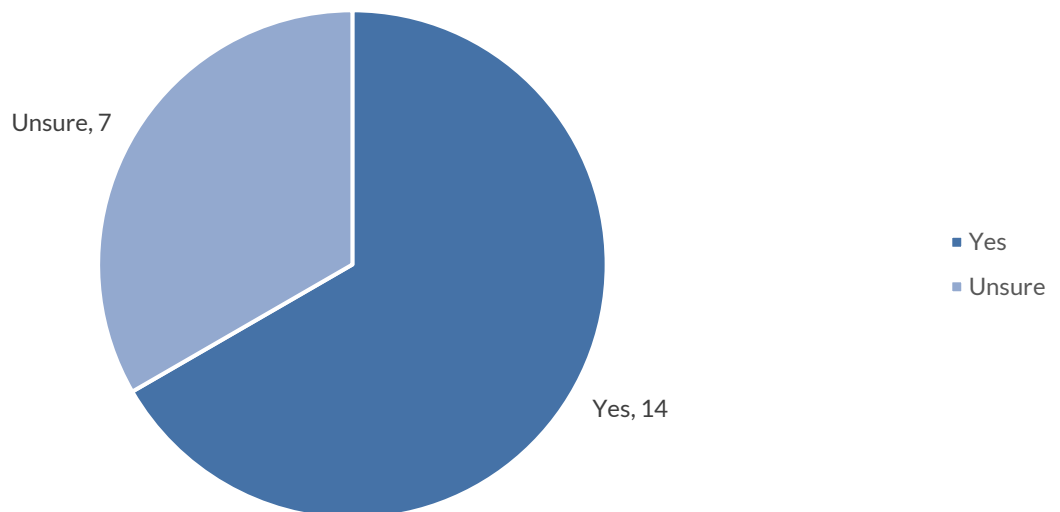


Figure 92. Survey 2- Legal Cannabis Industry Participation in Corporate Social Responsibility

Would a cannabis business's Corporate Social Responsibility policy have an influence on how you would feel about the business being located in or near your community?

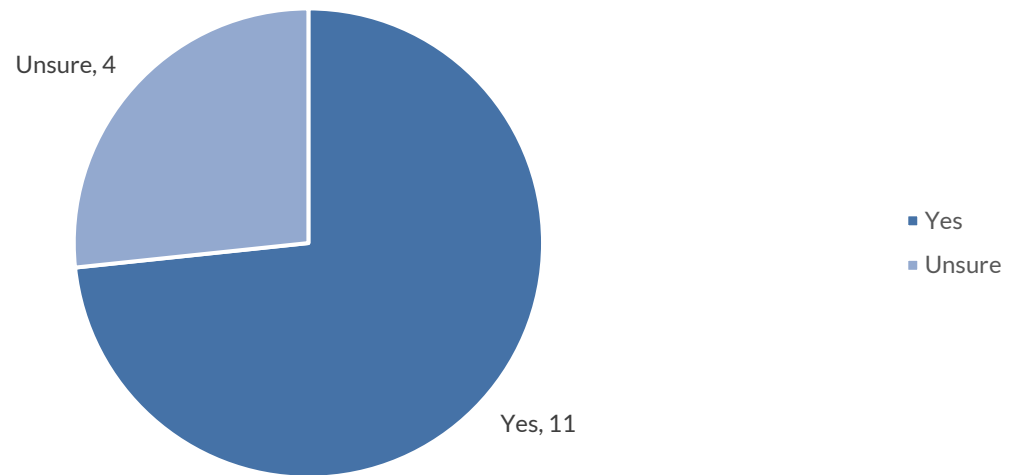


Figure 93. Survey 2- Influence of Corporate Social Responsibility in Your Community

Would a cannabis business's Corporate Social Responsibility policy have an influence on whether or not you would patronize that business?

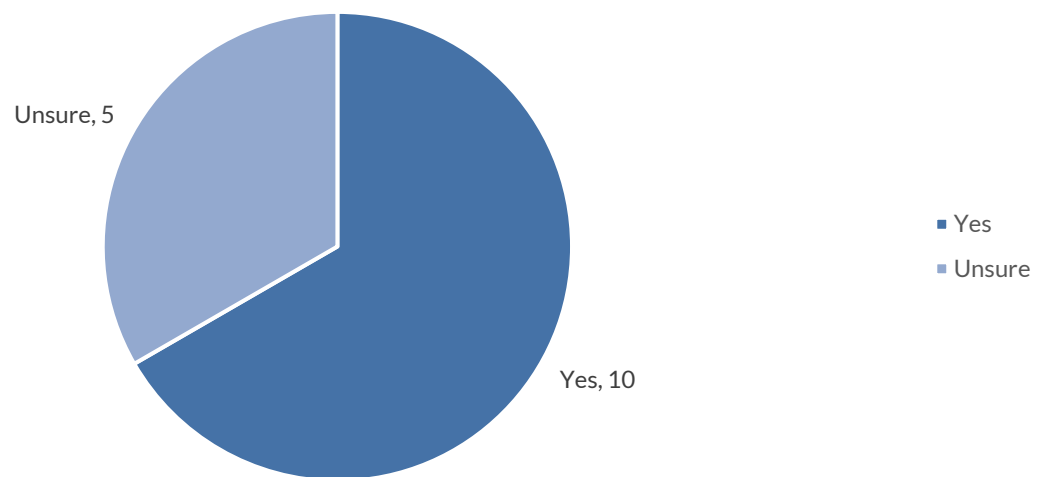


Figure 94. Survey 2- Corporate Social Responsibility Influence

In your opinion, should the legal cannabis industry participate in Corporate Social Responsibility?

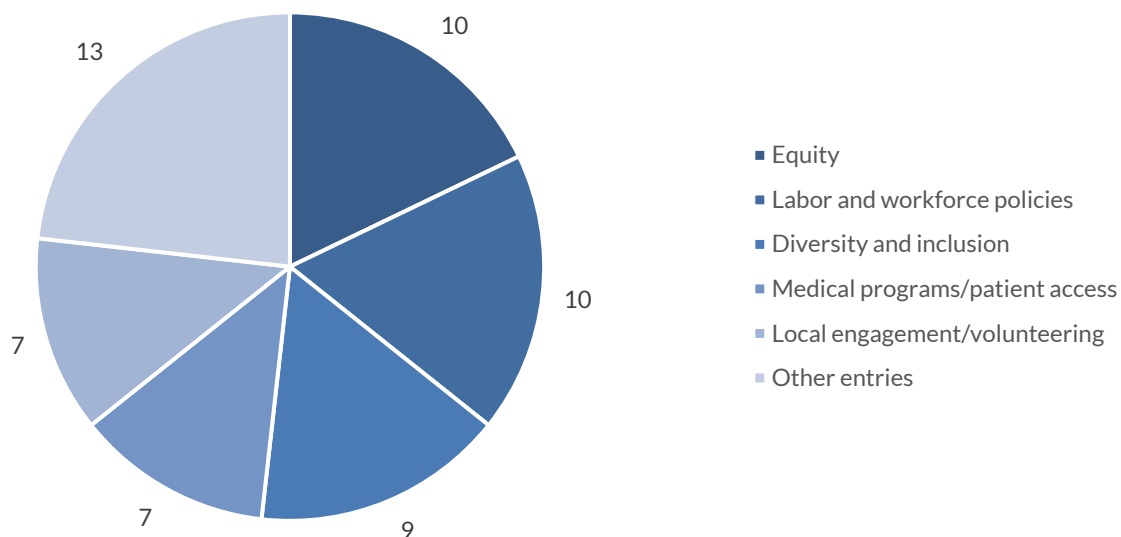


Figure 95. Survey 2- Legal Cannabis Industry Participation in Corporate Social Responsibility

Which of the following disparities should the legal cannabis industry in the City of Los Angeles seek to address through Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives?

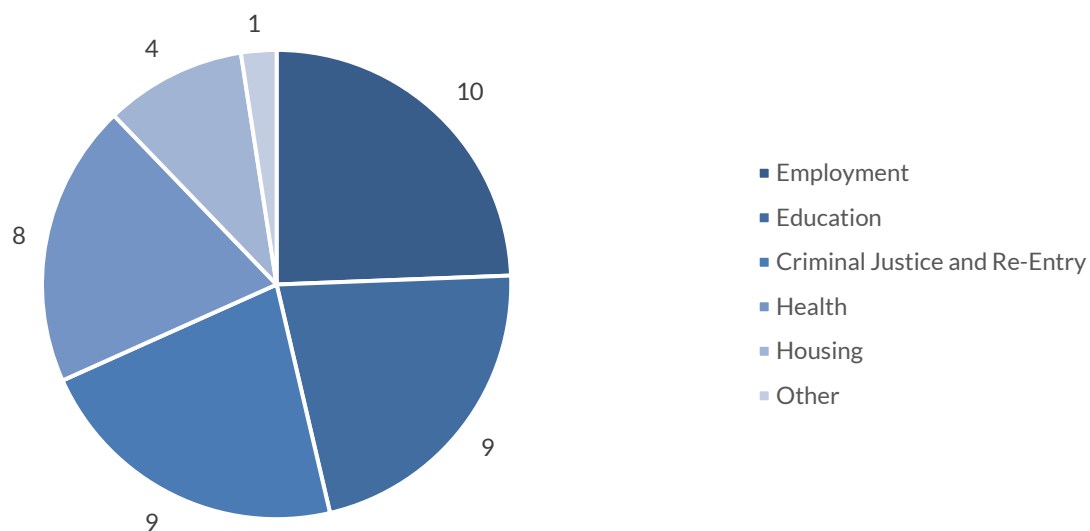


Figure 96. Survey 2- Industry Disparities

If you are in the cannabis industry, does your business have a Corporate Social Responsibility policy?

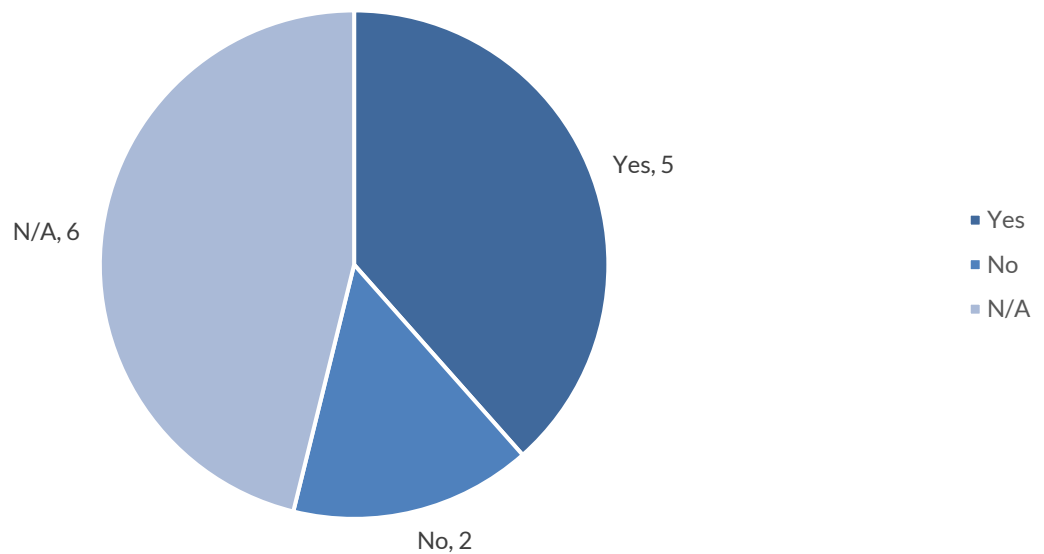


Figure 97. Survey 2- Your Business and Corporate Social Responsibility

Would you participate in programming designed to promote community engagement and community service by the cannabis industry?

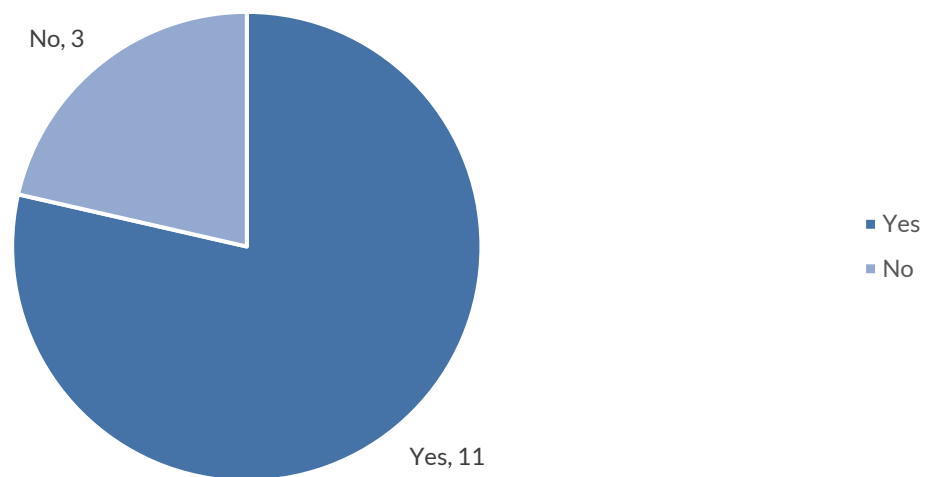


Figure 98. Survey 2- Interest in Programming Designed to Promote Community Engagement and Service



### 6.2.3 Survey 3 Results- Licensing and Social Equity Program

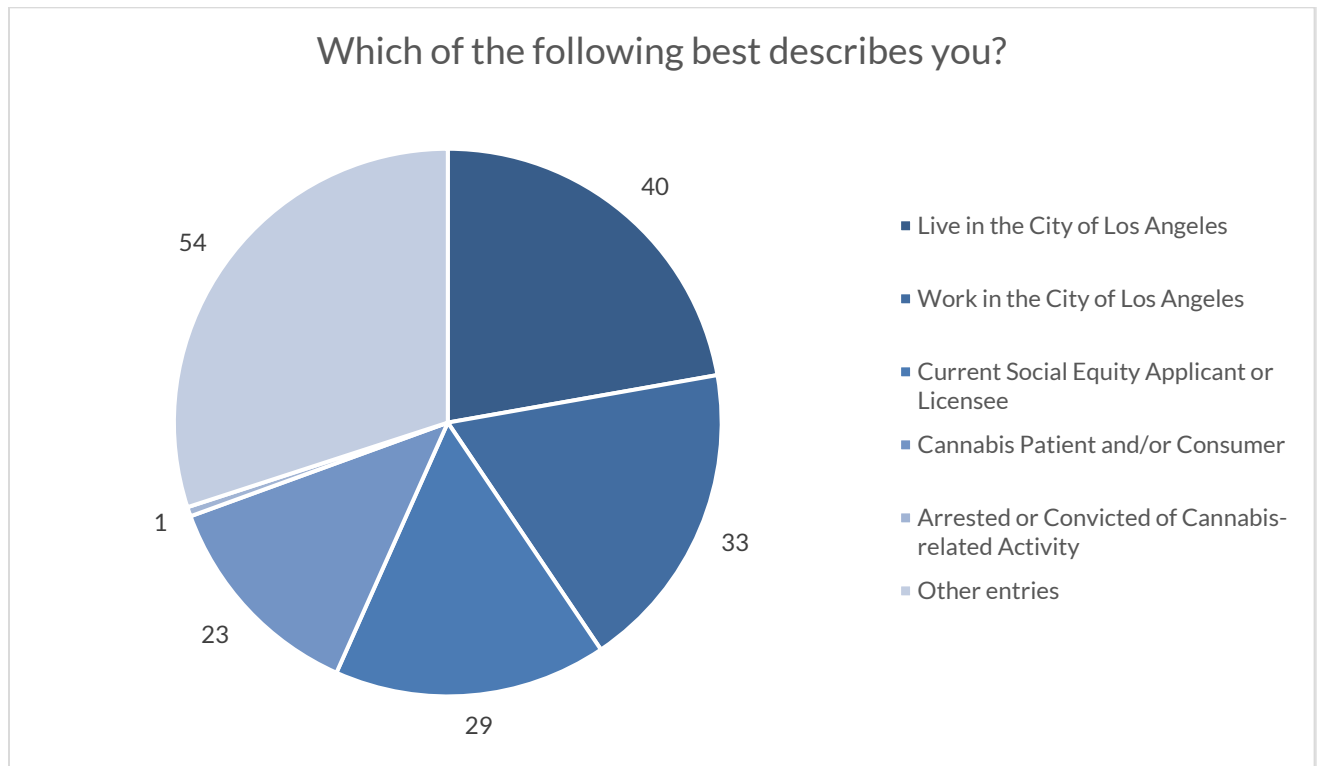


Figure 99. Survey 3- Description

Which of the following business types are you interested in operating?

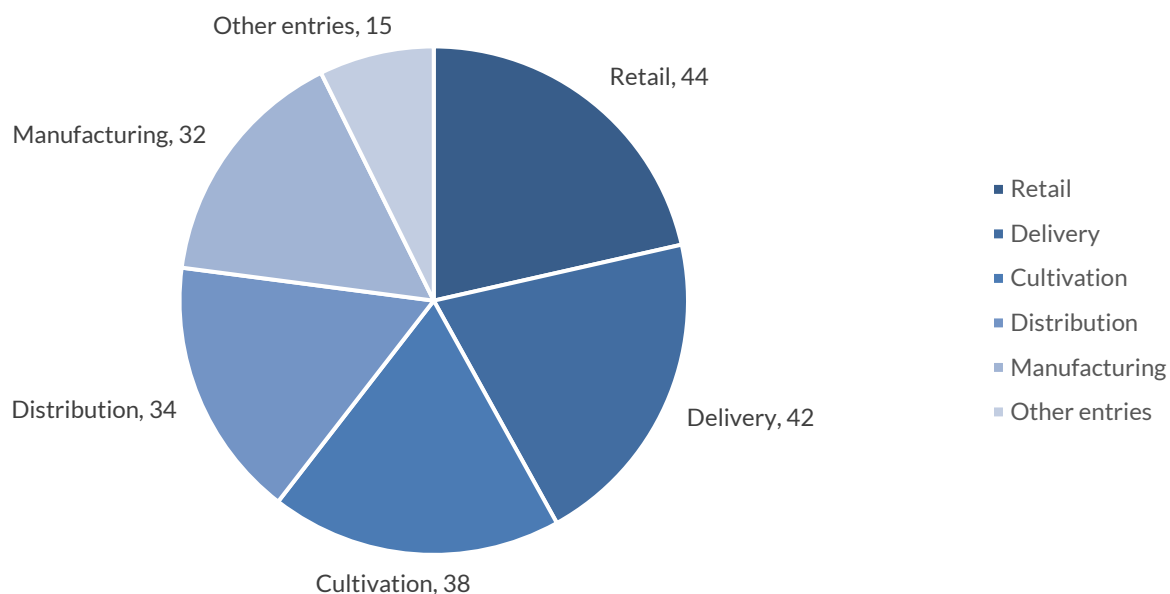


Figure 100. Survey 3- Business Types of Interest

Select any barriers that you have faced or may face when opening a commercial cannabis business?

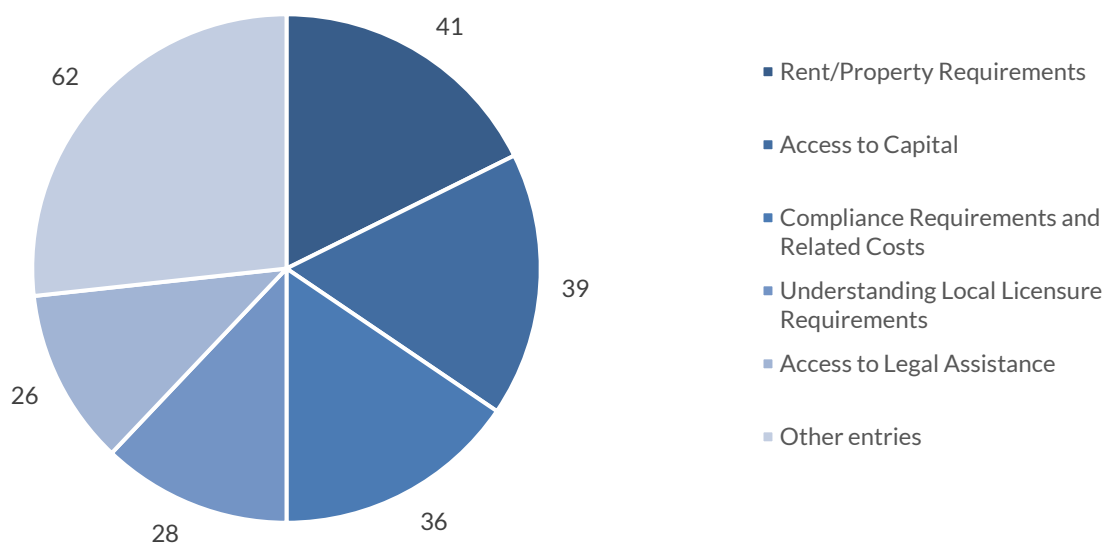


Figure 101. Survey 3- Barriers when Opening a Commercial Cannabis Business

Please indicate which topics you would like to receive more information about.

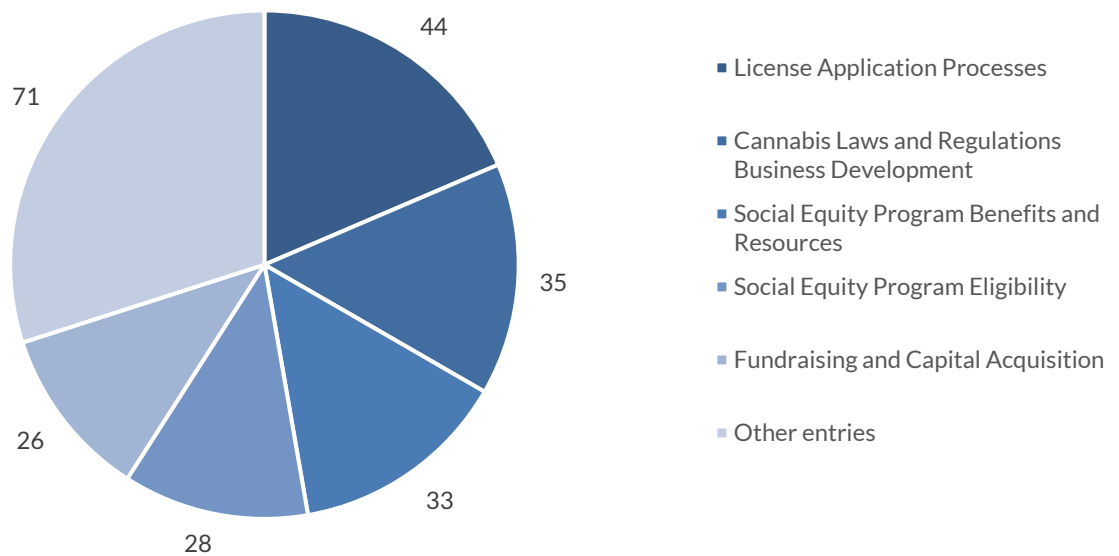


Figure 102. Survey 3- More Information

Which of the following methods would you prefer to receive information from DCR?

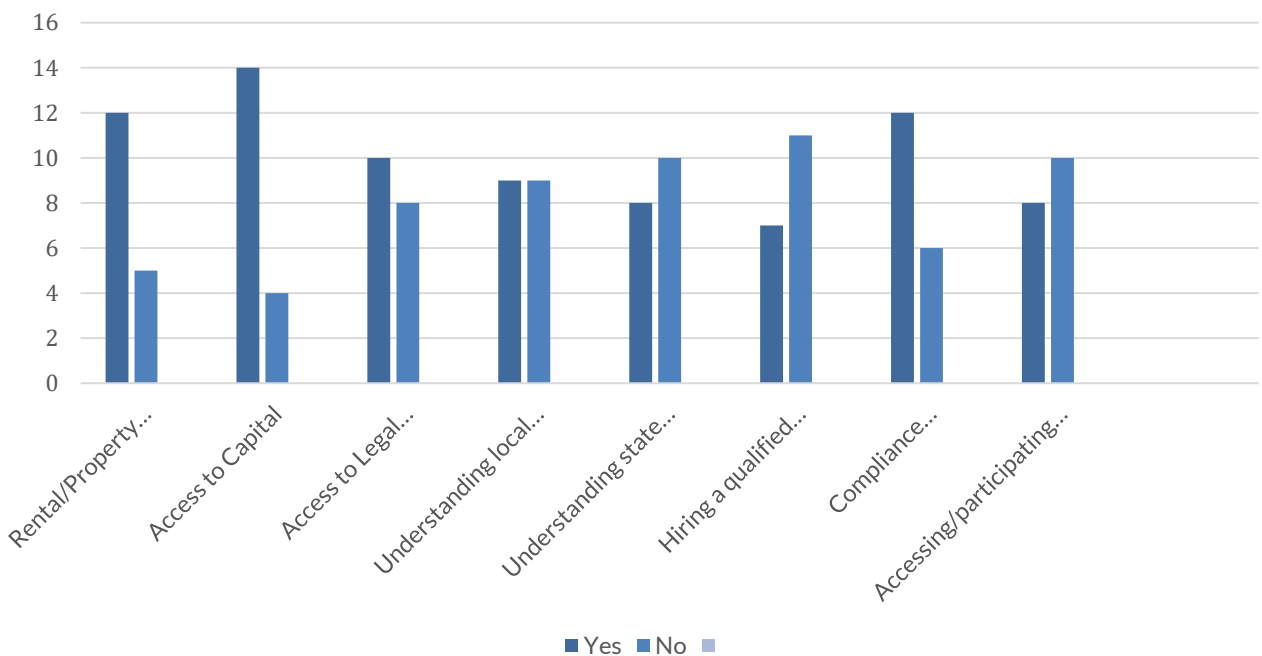


Figure 103. Survey 3- Preference in Receiving Information

## Please Provide Any Additional Feedback

- I am the Co/Founder and President of International Cannabis Consulting Business Women's Association. We are seeing a huge need of programs to support female business owners to have more corporate social equality in the cannabis industry. We support these programs
- The DCR should be providing Phase 2 candidates with more application support
- This survey fails to address any of the concerns applicants have expressed. If we are asked for feedback, why not be able to provide feedback on solutions to current issues/problems. I think the survey that is missing is the one that asks what are all of the challenges applicants and licensees have with DCR
- Very hard to speak to our agent in DCR waiting up to a week to get a call back sent emails. As we have numerous questions which require more of a conversation than in emails. Not being advised of changes in policy such as PCN process being over with
- The current cannabis laws in the city of Los Angeles exclude small home growers that would operate under the California state indoor cottage license which in turn fuels illegal distribution. I am in favor of expanding local cannabis laws in the city of LA to provide a legal and safe way of manufacturing and distributing organic homegrown cannabis to consumers
- Timeframe before General Applications are going to be accepted in Los Angeles County. People voted, kind of feels like bureaucracy landed stumbling around clanging giant symbols of self importance. Any normal business shelved any project for Los Angeles County until the Sultan of Cannabis completes processes of delay, financial stress and marginalizing every interested party. Quality, price, availability, education, local support have all suffered greatly, yet extortion fakes pop-up shops all abound amidst a quandary of indecision, bureaucracy and people with genuine needs, for otherwise untreatable pain, nervous conditions, an array of medical conditions remain waiting for City Hall to Get it done. Once you get your system in place, Social Equity will occur through ALL customers receiving LOWER priced, more readily available, better informed solutions, with a more collective approach to Medical access to Cannabis products in LA County. Collectively viewing Cannabis as both a mild Psychotropic and pain therapy will provide more insight into best plant to patient fit, along with Sociological collective correlated clinical studies available ongoing, in real time. LA could be an innovative, transparent creative boiling pot of all peoples from everywhere, transforming how modern society facilitates Cannabis access, but alas, we currently have bureaucracy and pirates polluting the streets of LA, CA.
- What is the date of re-vetting ? And how long until the phase 3 lottery starts ? How will you notify us if we are picked and can we see it live online ?
- I applied for social equity program in 2019 but I still haven't got more information of my application status
- As a current Phase 3 Part 1 SE Retail applicant who has been approved to move forward I think it would be nice to have a login section on the site that is only available to those who qualified to move forward.
- I would love to be able to To do an online chat when I have licensing questions
- I would really like to become a Licensed Manufacturer but I am finding it difficult to find resources. Neighborhood councils should have Cannabis Liaisons
- Hi I think DCR is doing an amazing job with social equity program and their intentions are good to promote equitable ownership opportunities in the cannabis industry. Thank you so much for creating programs we we feel we have a voice

Figure 104. Survey 3- Additional Feedback Part 1

## Please Provide Any Additional Feedback (continued)

- Hello, I have been accepted into the social equality program and an active participant of the DCR workshops, zoom meetings and conference calls. I am looking to apply for a cannabis retail and consumption lounge license if possible in the 3rd phase of round 2. I feel fortunate to have not gotten chosen in the first round as it has allowed me to gain insightful knowledge about the social equity program, our local laws, regulations and as well the lengthy application process. I am hopeful that the DCR, our city officials, businesses and residents will recall why cannabis has increasingly become legal in cities and states across our country. Let us not forget that this is a medicinal herb which although used recreationally but more importantly used to assist in healing mentally, emotionally and physically. My goal is to create a very unique wellness consumption lounge that will focus on the medicinal benefits of the herb to assist individuals in healing. Healing is what this herb does and I sincerely hope LA's social equity program at its core does the same. For this is the reason I went through the tedious verification process three years ago and continue to participate in a program that seems so unsure of its success. I am requesting that DCR and our city council allow our social equity program individuals to establish and (DCR) license an appropriate number of strategic and thoughtfully devised consumption lounges to assist in healing the community those that are so desperately in need of it. Doing so would also give DCR an opportunity to offer a license to those involved within the program either initially or exclusively.
- I would really like to become a Licensed Manufacturer but I am finding it difficult to find resources.
- Neighborhood councils should have Cannabis Liaisons
- Hi I think DCR is doing an amazing job with social equity program and their intentions are good to promote equitable ownership opportunities in the cannabis industry. Thank you so much for creating programs we we feel we have a voice
- We are applying for Micro Licensing Distribution, Manufacturing, and delivery. Obstacles that we face & need more attention are as follows. DCR needs to have more communication with Social Equity applicants who cannot afford attorney's, but sometimes have questions regarding applications process. I understand that DCR cannot give any legal advise but sometimes Applicants need advise on questions regarding application process. Sometimes I have waited almost two weeks for a call back from DCR agents. This is not acceptable as we have landlords that are breathing down our necks to get licenses. We are still waiting for Seed money from DCR's seed site we could use for attorney fee's in filing applications. Unfortunately for us I was told the only money available are for current retail licenses only. This seems to defeat the purpose of seed money grants for those who cannot afford it! It seems to us that anyone who was fortunate enough to obtain a retail license can find money anywhere because of limited amount of licenses out there. Maybe giving money for people who are struggling along to pay rents while awaiting for government entities to catch up with our plans. Finding funds for Micro licenses are far more difficult to obtain because it is more behind the scenes & easier to obtain. In order to secure building in a zoned area is expensive, and for true social equity applicants simply cannot afford it. We are going on two years now waiting for licenses and it seems maybe another year the way it is going now. DCR needs to step up its game with applicants & respond in a reasonable time frame. Hopefully DCR might be able to help with rents for those of us who have already secured property and are in the process of licensing but needs funds to finish plans
- Greetings It Has Been Extremely Difficult to Get My Permanent Cultivation License. I'm Tier 2 and Others Have Been Granted Permanent Status but I Haven't Due To Red Tape, Constant Rule Changes. I Strongly Feel Myself and Others Should Be Grandfathered In. I Have a 100 yr. Old Building and There Is No Certificate of Occupancy on File. Landlord Won't Help to Get One And It's Getting Very Expensive to Get Through This Process. Fire Marshal Doesn't Handle Giving Final Passes Anymore. DCR Doesn't Know of Fire Inspector Changes It's Really Frustrating. Thank You for This Forum. Please Grant Us All To Be Grandfathered In. Thank You

Figure 105. Survey 3- Additional Feedback Part 2

## Please Provide Any Additional Feedback (continued)

- What will be the requirements for online store owners such as myself?  
Are there any/all provisions to have my business as a go to business, being that our products is Rich Hemp vs others that are less efficient?  
FDA hasn't approved the usage to cure, treat, prevent and/or diagnosis, I would like to know the department to provide Testimonials to?  
While we are getting up and running; is there an area that my business can connect with to partner in the FUNDRAISING, ie Discount for Seniors? Will the law allow for any/all updates to upcoming research's like Delta-8 today and all possibilities later?
- I need assistance filing the application out please help?
- I have been in Que for over a year at this point this has become a grievance
- Please help me make my dreams become a reality
- Please help me establish and make my dreams come true and teach me everything there is to know in the business, thank you
- Opportunities to get involved in the business that goes beyond retail or delivery is very important. Many just need to know what the other opportunities are, how to get into them, and the resources to take advantage.
- It seems that only people with capital can get these licenses. Or, if you know someone with capital. I was under the impression that the struggling people of Los Angeles were to be first to get the licenses. By reading and researching it appears only the people who are connecting to capital or someone with the money
- Our location has been waiting for final sign off from the city, in order to be sent to the state for final approval for an application that has all fees paid and been accepted to operate
- If you are not part of the social equity program are you still able to get a retail license in Los Angeles
- The City of Pacoima, California deserves to qualify for the Social Equity Program. It has always suffered from over-policing and the failed war on drugs. I grew up there and experienced this first-hand. I would like to start a hemp or cannabis business but lack the economic resources, and Pacoima was wrongfully not allowed to qualify for the Social Equity Program
- The biggest problem is the DCR doesn't give applicants information and where they are in the process. Many of us have paperwork in for months with no response. With the high holding costs we have And no answers on the horizon, it's impossible to snag investors. We were told modifications in by February would be done by April and it's June with no answers.
- We need to get detail information of license process
- We are investors attempting to work with social equity partners and while there are plenty of "safeguards" against fraud or other unscrupulous activity that have been set up to protect the social equity applicants...there's nothing to protect the investors. We are currently in an extended lawsuit over licensing with a social equity partner and have very little recourse from their illegal activities but to sue in court. It's been an absolute nightmare and won't be attempting any kind of social equity ventures in the future. Please re-think any and everything social equity. This program has made me not want to donate to causes or to try to help underprivileged people as I have my entire life. Shameful.
- The SPARK live sessions were heavily dominated by people who had not obtained licensure, which is fine, but because the history of cannabis in LA isn't written down anywhere, if the DCR and potential licensees don't have the input from those who lived that history some expensive, and time consuming mistakes will be the result, those who do not understand their history are bound to repeat it, and believe me, I wouldn't wish some of the mistakes my community made as it moved towards licensure on my worst enemy, much less social equity applicants who have already suffered so much.

Figure 106. Survey 3- Additional Feedback Part 3

#### 6.2.4 Survey 4 Results- SPARK Survey Corporate Social Responsibility (Short)

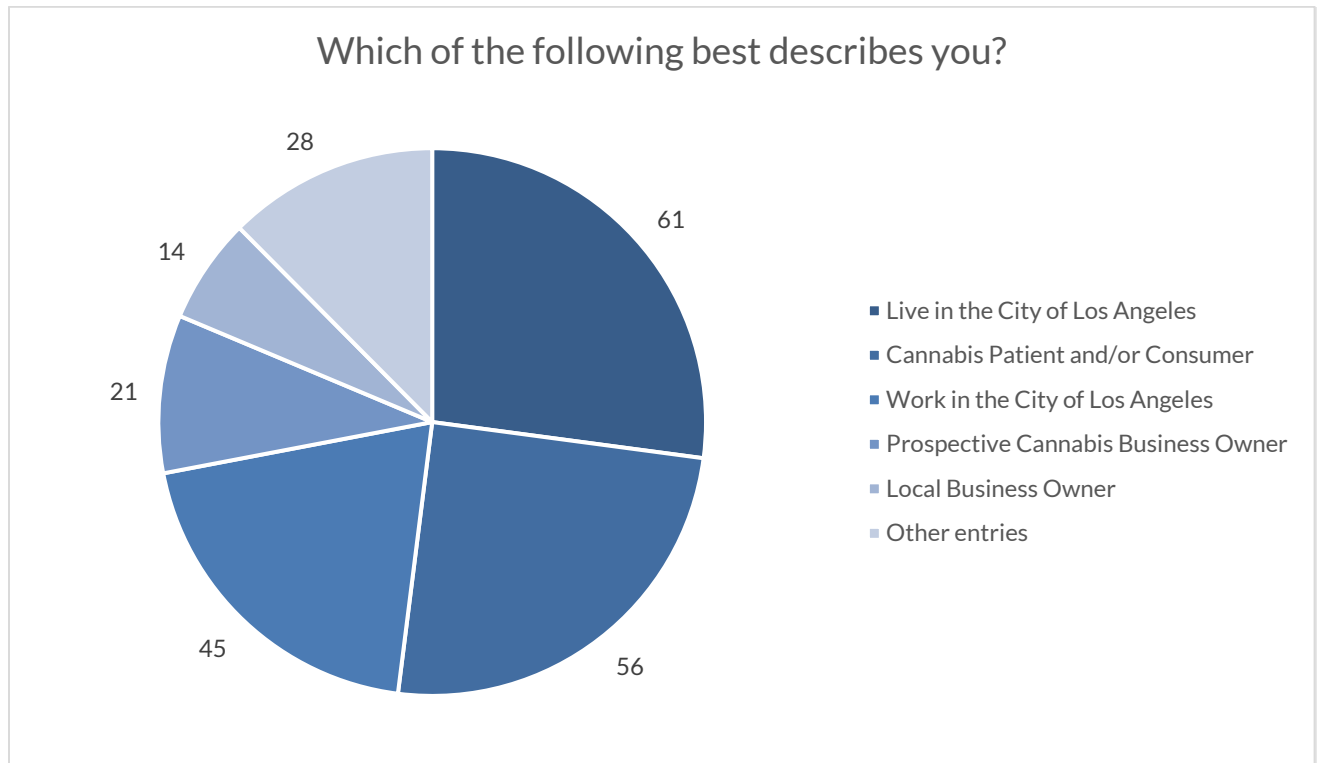


Figure 107. Survey 4- Description

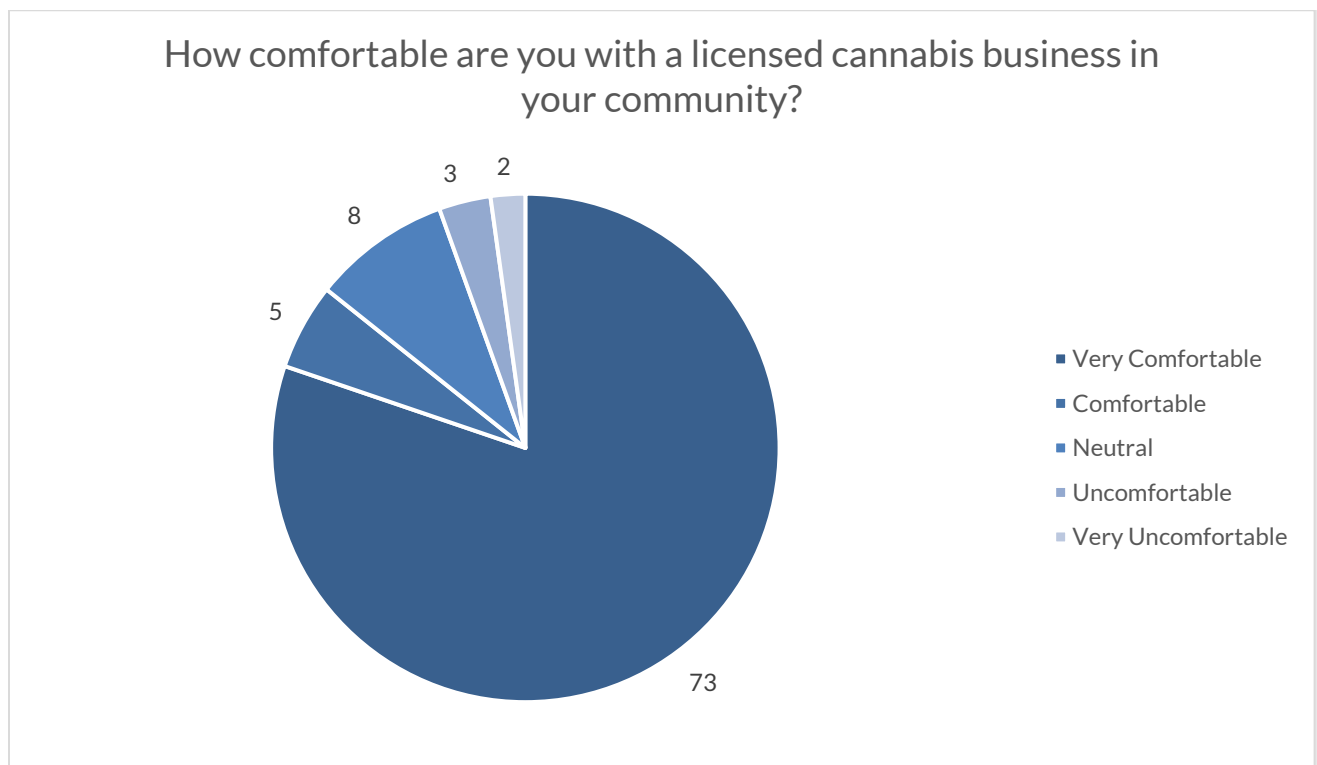


Figure 108. Survey 4- Licensed Businesses in Your Community

Do you know how to identify licensed cannabis businesses in the City of Los Angeles?

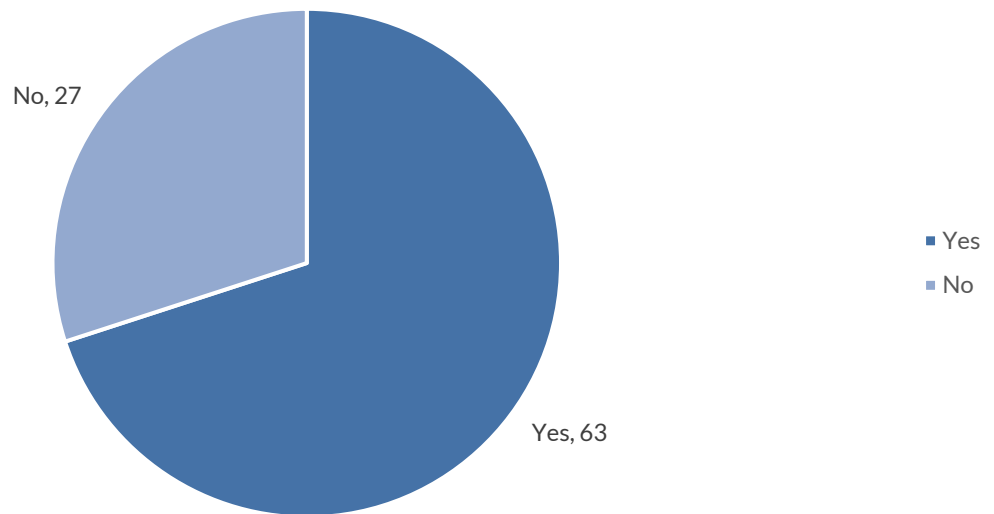


Figure 109. Survey 4- Identifying Licensed Cannabis Businesses in Los Angeles

Is your community adversely impacted by one or more unlicensed cannabis businesses?

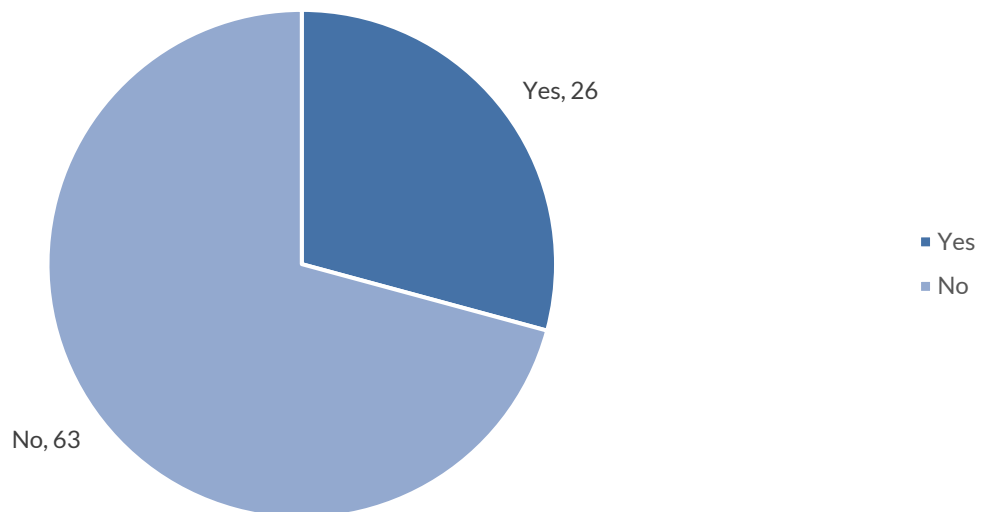


Figure 110. Survey 4- Unlicensed Businesses Impact



Do you know how to report unlicensed cannabis businesses?

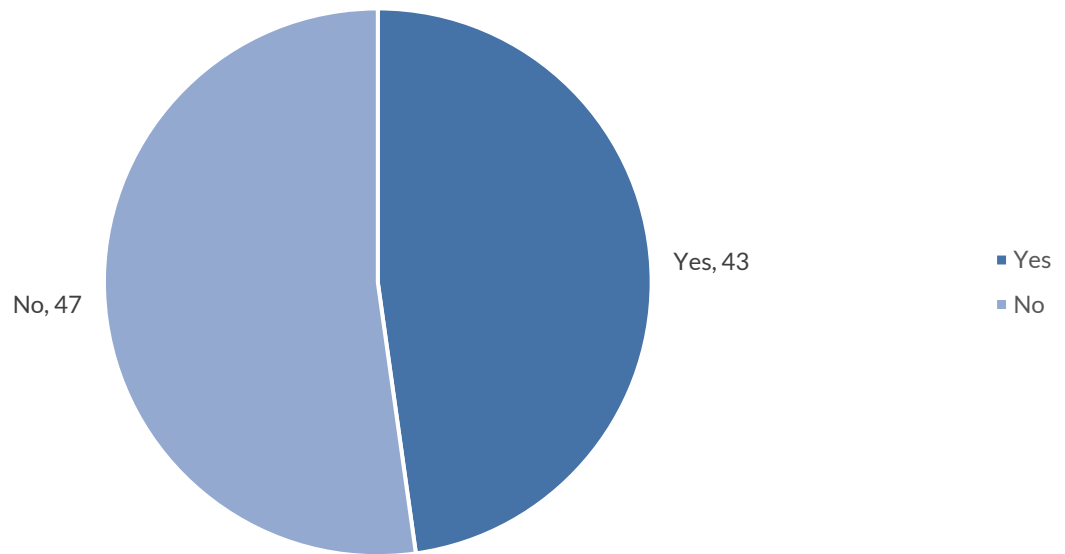


Figure 111. Survey 4- Reporting Unlicensed Cannabis Businesses

Select any topic that you would like to receive more information about.

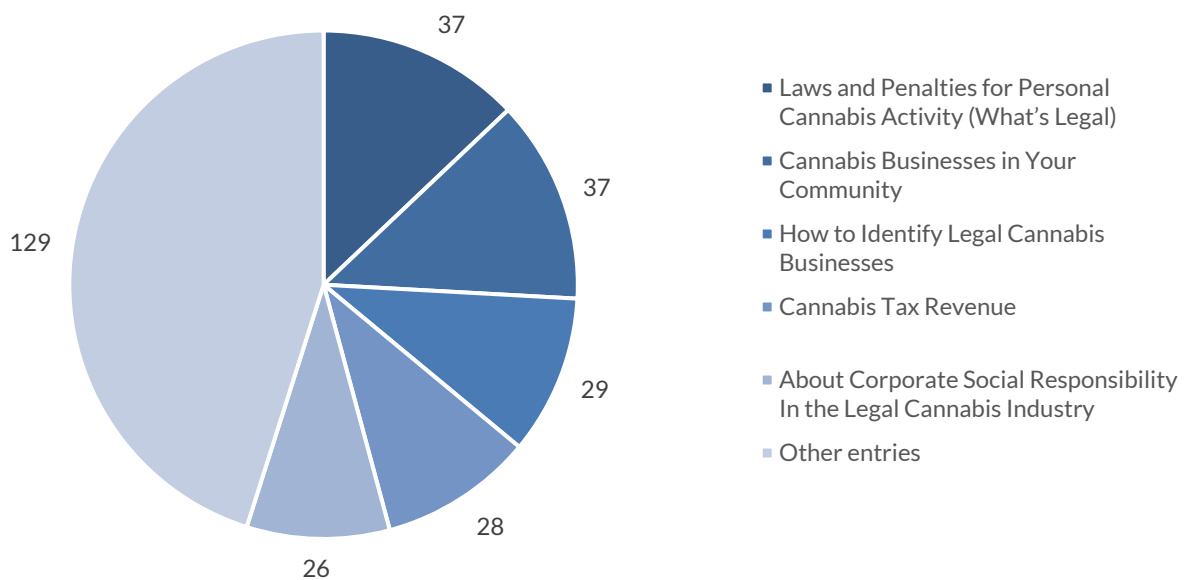


Figure 112. Survey 4- More Information

Which of the following issues are important for a cannabis business's Corporate Social Responsibility policy?

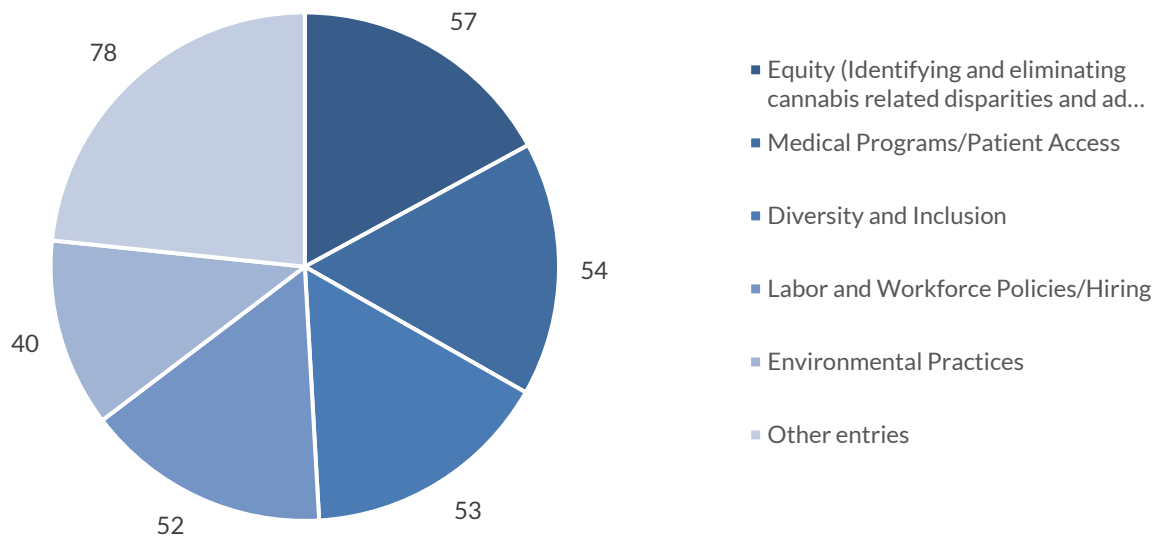


Figure 113. Survey 4- Important Issues for Cannabis Business' Corporate Social Responsibility

Would a cannabis business's Corporate Social Responsibility policy have an influence on how you felt about the business being located in or near your community?

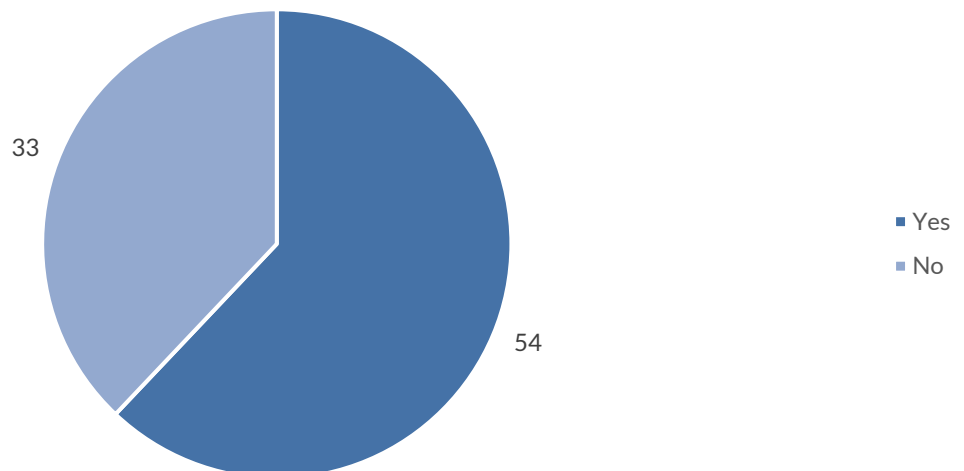


Figure 114. Survey 4- Corporate Social Responsibility Influence in your Community

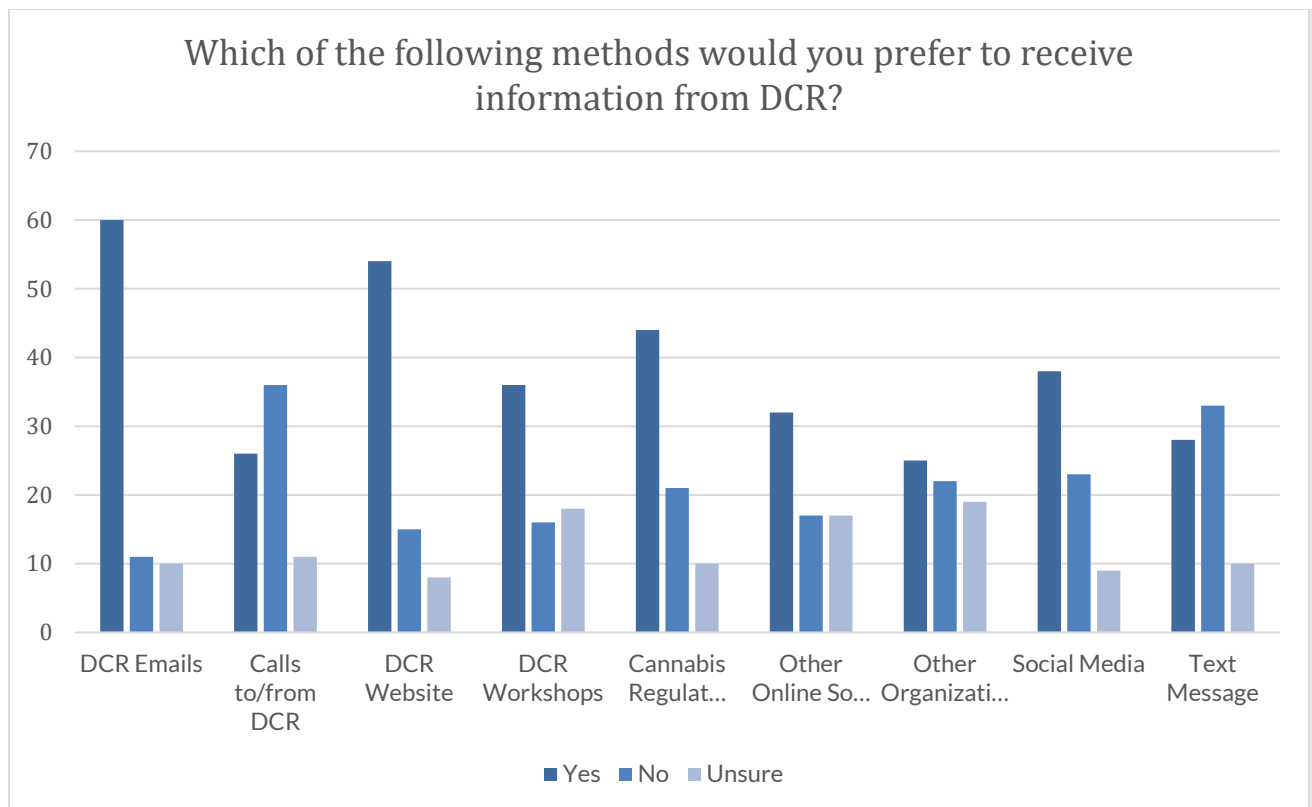


Figure 115. Survey 4- Receiving Information from DCR

### 6.3 Comment Box

SPARK provided stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on ‘all things cannabis’ via a SPARK Comment Box available through the SPARK VMR.

The SPARK Comment Box was announced at each SPARK Session to drive traffic. After eight SPARK Sessions DCR promoted the comment box via radio, social media, and newsletters. The following accounts helped reach a new audience outside of the SPARK stakeholders: Radio 93.9 KDAY, Power 106, Cali 93.9, LA Sentinel, LA Watts, Taste of Soul, and LA Weekly.

With approximately 171 responses, over 50% of all responses showed most interest in DCR’s Social Equity Program with further data showing over 25% of all respondents were current Social Equity applicants.

The comment box closed on July 16, 2021.

Full Comment Box results Appendix GG.

### 6.4 SPARK Stakeholder One-on-one Interviews

Through SPARK, MBI hosted professionally produced and recorded one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders in the cannabis industry and the local community. As a result of restrictions placed on in-person meetings due to COVID-19, the use of on-site interviews was limited. For those unable to be physically present, a video production kit was sent to them; they were assisted with set up by MBI's video production team. A list of questions was developed for each stakeholder prior to production. This list of questions was personalized for each interviewee. A full list of questions can be seen in Appendix HH.

Question topics included:

- The vision for social equity moving forward
- Business license policy changes
- Expanding qualification criteria for social equity applicants

The purpose of the one-on-one interviews was to capture stakeholder's feedback on cannabis policy and programming 'in real-time' and to empower the voices of key stakeholders and local community members involved in, and/or impacted by cannabis policy.

This video will be submitted to DCR for public dissemination.

Table 12. One-on-One Stakeholder Interviews

Interviewee	Date	Time	Type
Felicia Carbajal	Tuesday, July 13, 2021	10:00 a.m.	In Person
Cat Packer	Tuesday, July 13, 2021	11:00 a.m..	In Person
Rayna Plummer	Tuesday, July 13, 2021	1:00 p.m.	In Person
President Robert Ahn	Tuesday, July 13, 2021	3:00 p.m.	In Person
Alfred Terragano	Tuesday, July 20, 2021	10:00 a.m.	Virtual
Marissa Rodriguez	Tuesday, July 20, 2021	2:00 p.m.	Virtual
Madison Shockley	Tuesday, July 20, 2021	4:00 p.m.	Virtual
Karim Webb	Wednesday, July 21, 2021	11:00 a.m.	Virtual
Kelly Perez	Wednesday, July 21, 2021	3:00 p.m.	Virtual
Chaney Turner	Thursday, July 22, 2021	11:00 a.m.	Virtual
Whitney Beatty	Thursday, July 22, 2021	2:00 p.m.	Virtual
Dasheeda Dawson	Friday, July 23, 2021	3:00 p.m.	Virtual

Interviewee	Date	Time	Type
Maritza Perez	Wednesday, July 28, 2021	9:00 a.m.	Virtual
Sarah Armstrong	Wednesday, July 28, 2021	2:00 p.m.	Virtual
Shaleen Title	Friday, July 30, 2021	10:00 a.m.	Virtual
Dr. Imani Brown	Friday, July 30, 2021	3:00 p.m.	Virtual
Toi Hutchinson	Monday, August 2, 2021	11:00 a.m.	Virtual
Ingrid Archie	Friday, August 6, 2021	1:00 p.m.	In Person
VP Thryeris Mason	Friday, August 6, 2021	2:00 p.m.	In Person

Full transcriptions of the interviews can be found in Appendix II.

Summarized in Table 10 is feedback collected from stakeholders through SPARK. Please note: This table is a summarized compilation of selected feedback and comments submitted by stakeholders. Many comments have been consolidated by general topic and therefore may not represent each individual comment received.

Table 10. Program Findings

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
<b>Licensing and Regulation</b>	License Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased transparency in business license application process</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased transparency in business license application process timelines</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to Expedited business license application processing</li> </ul>
	Public Information, Engagement and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to information regarding the business license application process</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to assistance regarding the business license application process</li> </ul>

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for quicker responses from DCR staff regarding questions about the business license application process</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for quicker responses from DCR staff regarding questions about business license application status</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for improved Customer Service</li> </ul>
	Property Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders shared experiences regarding scarcity of locations compliant with City's requirements</li> <li>Stakeholders shared experiences regarding exploitation by Property-Owners</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Access to Property (Location's Compliant with City's Requirements)</li> </ul>
	Expanding Licensing Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to cultivation licensees</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to event licenses</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for access to onsite consumption licenses</li> </ul>
	Social Equity Program Resources and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for Equity Centered Cannabis Policies and Programs that address the impacts of the war on drugs</li> </ul>
<b>Social Equity Program</b>	Social Equity Program Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that prioritizes residents</li> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that includes relatives of individuals disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs</li> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity</li> </ul>

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
		<p>Program eligibility criteria that considers diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the inclusion of Social Equity Program eligibility criteria that considers Racial Equity</li> </ul>
	Social Equity Program Resources and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for continued Priority Application Processing for Social Equity Program participants</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded access to Technical Assistance</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded access to Financial Assistance</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded access to Pro Bono Legal Services</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for the evaluation and expansion of the Social Equity Program</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for the implementation of Tier 3 Requirements</li> </ul>
Corporate Social Responsibility	Responsible Business Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for establishment of Corporate Social Responsibility Requirements</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility Requirements</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for the implementation of Workforce and Hiring Requirements</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Community Engagement from Cannabis Industry</li> </ul>
Community Impact	Public Information, Engagement and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to information regarding Personal Cannabis Activity</li> <li>Stakeholders expressed a need for increased access to public</li> </ul>

Topic	Subtopic	Stakeholder Input
		information regarding Commercial Cannabis Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Community Engagement from DCR</li> <li>• Stakeholders conveyed a desire for the establishment of Stakeholder Working Group</li> <li>• Stakeholders conveyed a desire to establish efforts to monitor community impact</li> </ul>
	Cannabis Revenue Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Transparency regarding Cannabis Tax Revenue</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Transparency regarding the City's Use of Cannabis Tax Revenue</li> <li>• Stakeholders conveyed a desire for decreased Tax Rate</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for the establishment of a Community Reinvestment Fund</li> </ul>
	Enforcement and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Transparency regarding Cannabis Enforcement Data</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded Efforts to Address Unlicensed Commercial Cannabis Activity</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for improved Complaint Management</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for increased Industry Oversight &amp; Compliance Enforcement</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed a need for the prioritization of Public Health in Cannabis Regulation</li> </ul>

## 7. Conclusion

This report reflects tasks undertaken to collect feedback from key stakeholders and local community members through SPARK and related program findings. This report will be transmitted to the Department of Cannabis Regulation so that it may consider program findings and take action(s) or make recommendations to the City Council and Mayor.



MBI Media will present program findings contained in this report to the Department of Cannabis Regulation and the Cannabis Regulation Commission.

MBI Media would like to thank the Department of Cannabis Regulation for the opportunity to assist them in the implementation of their SPARK Program. By working with communities and stakeholders throughout the City of Los Angeles, we aim to increase opportunities for equity in cannabis within the Los Angeles community

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## APPENDICES