



This document is intended as an informational guide only. It does not replace or supersede the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) or Rules and Regulations, and does not constitute business or legal advice. This information is subject to change and may not be up-to-date or complete. Applicants are encouraged to conduct their own due diligence.

General Information:

Q: Where can I find more information about Social Equity Individual Applicant (SEIA) verification on the DCR's website?

A: On our [website](#), click on the Social Equity Program and scroll down to find and click on [Social Equity Individual Applicant Verification - Individual](#). You can also click on the image below.



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Individual Verification

- [2022 Individual Verification Window](#)
- [How to Obtain Verification](#)
- [Phase 3 Retail Round 2](#)
- [Resources](#)
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Q: How do I request to be verified as a Social Equity Individual Applicant (SEIA)?

A: An individual requesting to be verified as a Social Equity Individual Applicant (SEIA) must submit required information and supporting documentation via the online [SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form](#). Unless an accommodation is requested, the online SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form is the only way individuals can request to be verified. The City of Los Angeles will provide reasonable accommodation(s) to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and facilities for people with disabilities. To make a request, please contact us at dcr.sep@lacity.org or (213) 978-0738, at least ten business days before the submission deadline.

Q: Do I need to create a profile on the DCR Licensing Portal PRIOR to filling out the online SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form?

A: Yes, requesters must have an ACA Reference ID in order to proceed through the



online [SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form](#). ACA Reference ID numbers are assigned when an account is registered on the [DCR Licensing Portal](#) and can be found under the "[Account Management](#)" tab. This video tutorial on "[How to Look Up your Accela Citizen Access Reference ID Number](#)" may be helpful if you already have an account.

Q: Are the webinars recorded? If so, when will the recordings be available on the website?

A: In general, webinar recordings are posted on the DCR website within one week of the event. For example, the recording and presentation slides for the May 10, 2022, SEIA Eligibility Verification webinar can be found [here](#).

Q: Will there be another webinar reviewing the submission process?

A: Yes, the third and final webinar will be held on [June 14, 2022](#). You can RSVP to the webinar [here](#) and submit questions which will be answered during the webinar.

Q: When will the SEIA verification window open, and how do I apply?

A: The Department of Cannabis Regulation will accept SEIA Eligibility Verification requests for 60 calendar days beginning on May 26, 2022; the eligibility verification request process will close on July 25, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time. Eligibility verification requests will be accepted online only, unless an accommodation request is submitted to dcr.sep@lacity.org or **(213) 978-0738**, at least ten business days before the submission deadline. The City of Los Angeles will provide reasonable accommodation(s) to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and facilities for people with disabilities.

Q: Where should I start in the verification process?

A: First, you should review the requirements and review the resources available on the Department's website. Based on your review of the requirements, you should begin collecting documents for the criteria you believe you meet and will be required to submit to evidence eligibility. You must complete the [SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form](#) by July 25, 2022 at 4:00 P.M. Pacific Time (PT).

Q: Is there a fee to participate in the SEIA process?

A: The SEIA Eligibility Verification fee is \$597. Limited State-provided grant funding is available to provide SEIA Eligibility Verification fee waivers on a first-come, first-served basis. Once the state grant funding has been depleted, DCR will charge the SEIA Eligibility Verification fee of \$597.



Q: What are the guarantees through this process?

A: There are no guarantees. Submission of a SEIA Eligibility Verification request does not guarantee you will be verified as a Social Equity Individual Applicant; you must meet the criteria in Los Angeles Municipal Code section 104.20 and provide sufficient evidence of those criteria. Similarly, submission of an application does not guarantee a license will be issued.

Q. Will SEIAs who have been eligible since 2019 be prioritized?

A: Prior verification does not confer any priority to an individual to get verified under the updated criteria.

Q: How will I know if I'm verified as a Social Equity Individual Applicant?

A: If you are verified as a Social Equity Individual Applicant, your Accela Citizen Access/DCR Licensing Portal user account will be updated to reflect your verification status.

Previously Verified as SEIA?

Q: If I was previously verified as an SEIA in 2019, do I have to apply to be verified again?

A: If you wish to participate in the retail licensing lottery process, also known as the Phase 3 Retail Round 2 lottery, future Public Convenience or Necessity (PCN) processes, or plan to apply for a Social Equity commercial cannabis license after 2022, you need to request to be verified again. In 2020, the Los Angeles Municipal Code was amended and [updated eligibility verification criteria](#) were adopted by the City Council and Mayor.

Q: Do I need to be verified again for non-storefront delivery?

A: If you plan to submit a Temporary Approval Application in 2022, you will not need to be verified again; if you plan to submit a Temporary Approval Application in 2023 or later, you should plan to get verified under the updated criteria.

Q: If I was a PCN SEIA in Round 1, will I lose my current status as a verified Social Equity Individual Applicant?

A: If you are a previously-verified SEIA and have an existing record that relies upon that verification, this new verification period will not cause you to lose your SEIA status for that record only. However, if you wish to participate in the Phase 3 Retail



Round 2 lottery, future PCN processes, or plan to apply for a Social Equity commercial cannabis license after 2022, you need to request to be verified again.

Q: I was verified in 2019. Is it now mandatory that I have a cannabis conviction?

A: For individuals who were previously verified and who wish to participate in the upcoming Phase 3 Retail Round 2 lottery for retail licenses, you need to request to be verified again under the [updated eligibility verification criteria](#) **and** have a California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction prior to November 8, 2016 in order to register for the lottery. Please note that an arrest, prosecution or conviction for a violation of Proposition D is not a California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction. A California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction is not a requirement to apply for non-retail activities, although you must be verified again if you plan to submit a Temporary Approval Application after 2022.

Q: Can previous applicants who qualified as Tier 1 (only) re-apply for Tier 2 status, if applicable?

A: Applicants who were previously verified as SEIA in 2019 may apply to be re-verified. In 2020, the Los Angeles Municipal Code was amended and [updated eligibility verification criteria](#) were adopted by the City Council and Mayor.

DCR no longer verifies anyone under the old criteria; thus, the Tier 1 and Tier 2 designations are no longer used by DCR. If you wish to enter the retail lottery process, also known as Phase 3 Retail Round 2, you will need to be verified under the new criteria **and** have a California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction prior to November 8, 2016 in order to register for the lottery. Please note that an arrest, prosecution or conviction for a violation of Proposition D is not a California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction.

Q: I qualified as a Tier 1 Social Equity Applicant in 2019. I have the arrest record, and my income is still the same. Will I still be able to use the arrest records on file with DCR?

A: You will need to submit a new eligibility verification request, and re-submit any arrest records that were previously reviewed by DCR. Your Accela account will contain your previously submitted documents. You may download them from your Accela account and upload them to the current SEIA Verification Request Form.

Q: I previously qualified as a SEIA and already submitted a new application. What's going to happen with my application?

A: If you were previously verified as a SEIA and have an existing record that relies upon that verification, this new verification period will not cause you to lose your



SEIA status on the existing record.

Cannabis Conviction

Q: What happens if your cannabis arrest or conviction has been dismissed?

A: An individual may still qualify if they were arrested but not convicted. If your cannabis arrest was not prosecuted, a copy of the citation or other proof of arrest may be submitted. If you were convicted and it has been expunged, proof of the expungement such as a letter from the court or government agency that expunged the record may suffice. You must provide evidence of a Cannabis Arrest or Conviction in California for any crime under the laws of the State of California or the United States relating to the sale, possession, use, manufacture, or cultivation of Cannabis that occurred prior to November 8, 2016. An arrest, prosecution or conviction for a violation of Proposition D is not a California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction.

Q: Will an affidavit from a local agency qualify as evidence of a cannabis arrest or conviction?

A: An original or copy of an official government document from the citing agency will work. An affidavit or attestation will not be accepted.

Q: What if you were arrested after 2018?

A: To meet the eligibility verification criteria, the qualifying CA cannabis arrest or conviction must have occurred prior to November 8, 2016.

Q: I have a federal felony for cannabis cultivation. Does it qualify for social equity verification?

A: If the arrest or conviction occurred in California prior to November 8, 2016, it may qualify.

Q: Why has an arrest or conviction been added to the criteria to participate in the retail lottery?

A: In 2020, the City Council and Mayor [adopted the criteria](#) requiring a California Cannabis Arrest or Conviction prior to November 8, 2016 to participate in the retail lottery.

Q: Can two people apply together to meet the criteria? For example, one person who has a cannabis-related felony and one who is low income?



A: No. To be verified as a Social Equity Individual Applicant, an individual must individually meet two or more of the required criteria.

Q: If I don't have a cannabis arrest or conviction, which licenses can I apply for?

A: To register for the Phase 3 Retail Round 2 lottery, a SEIA needs to have a qualifying arrest or conviction prior to November 8, 2016. However, you may be verified as a SEIA without a CA cannabis arrest or conviction and apply for:

- Delivery Only
- Delivery Only (Microbusiness)
- Distribution
- Distribution - Transport Only
- Manufacturing - Type 6
- Manufacturing - N
- Manufacturing - P
- Manufacturing - S
- Cultivation - Processor
- Nursery
- Testing

Grants/Financial Assistance

Q: Will there be financial assistance for the SEIA Verification process?

A: The Department has a limited amount of state grant funding to provide eligibility verification request fee waivers. The \$597 social equity verification fee waivers will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Documentation

Q: What types of documents are needed to be verified?

A:

To evidence a Cannabis Arrest or Conviction, the following documents may be sufficient:

- A physical copy of the ticket or citation
- A court docket referencing your arrest or conviction



- A letter of expungement from the jurisdiction who expunged your cannabis conviction or arrest record

To evidence 10 years of cumulative residency in a [Disproportionately Impacted Area](#) as defined by [police reporting districts](#), the following documents may be sufficient:

- Tax or financial records, property deeds, mortgage or lease documents, government housing or assistance records, utility bills, education records, employment records, vehicle registrations, identification cards, etc.

To evidence status as Low Income in the [2020](#) or [2021](#) calendar year, the following documents may be sufficient:

- Your federal tax return for 2020 or 2021
- [Asset Attestation \(SEP-6003-FORM\)](#)

Please refer to the [SEP Eligibility checklist](#) that you can refer to to help you prepare for the verification process. For more information on your documentation you can contact DCR at dcr.sep@lacity.org or (213) 978-0738.

Q: How many pages of tax returns do you need?

A: All of them; the entire tax return including all schedules must be submitted. To establish eligibility as “Low Income,” you must provide complete tax returns for 2020 and/or 2021.

Q: After I submit all required documents, will the DCR reach out to me if they need additional information during verification period?

A: No, DCR will not reach out to you during the 60 day verification period. If you need to update your request form or provide additional documentation, then you may edit your SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form submission until the verification period closes on July 25, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time. All information and documents uploaded to the SEIA Eligibility Verification Request Form at 4 p.m. Pacific Time on July 25, 2022 will be reviewed by DCR to make an eligibility determination.

Low Income Requirements



Q: What qualifies as low income?

A: "Low Income" means both of the following definitions are met for either the [2020](#) or [2021](#) calendar year:

- (1) the Social Equity Individual Applicant meets the low income thresholds established in the annual U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income limits based upon the Area Median Income (AMI) for Los Angeles County based on household size; AND
- (2) the Social Equity Individual Applicant does not have Assets in excess of four times the AMI amount for their household.

Q: Can I use letters or documents showing that I received CalFresh/General Relief/SSI in 2020 or 2021 as proof of low income status?

A: No, each agency uses different criteria for their programs. Therefore, DCR relies upon tax filings to determine income. If you do not file taxes, you must request a Verification of Non-filing Letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You may request a letter [online](#) or by filling out [this form](#) and sending it to the IRS.

Residency Requirements

Q: What is a Disproportionately Impacted Area (DIA)? How do I locate the areas?

A: To demonstrate you meet the residency criteria, you will need 10 years of cumulative residency in a [Disproportionately Impacted Area](#) (DIA) as defined by [police reporting districts](#).

Information about DIAs can be found on DCR's Licensing Map using the "Social Equity Program" layer. [Licensing Map | Cannabis Regulation \(lacity.org\)](#)

Q: If I submit a document to prove 10 years residency in a DIA that is in my parents' name, what else do I need to submit to make sure that that document is accepted?

A: If the document is in your parent's name, then a birth certificate establishing them as your parent or your parent's federal tax returns for that year showing you as a dependent may establish a link.

Q: Do documents need to be submitted for every year you lived in a DIA?

A: Generally, one dated document is required for each year to demonstrate residency in a Disproportionately Impacted Area. Documents issued by a City agency, such as the Department of Water and Power may satisfy more than one year.



Q: If you were homeless during a period of time, does that count toward the 10 year requirement and how can I submit documentation?

A: You will need to get documentation from LAHSA, another homeless services agency, or provide other supporting documentation to demonstrate that you lived in a Disproportionately Impacted Area. If applicable, you should contact your caseworker to see what documentation they may be able to provide you.

Q: Can I use California Driver's License to verify residency?

A: Yes, a driver license may count as one document and evidence of residency for one year; a driver's license will only provide evidence for the calendar year that it was issued.

Q: Is it possible to get verified as a SEIA if I have never lived in the City of LA?

A: Yes, the City has a process to consider Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs) outside of the City of Los Angeles. DIAs in other cities, counties, or states throughout the country may be established if the analysis meets the following criteria:

1. Uses a contiguous geographic area
2. Uses the same methodology and criteria as the [City's expanded social equity analysis](#)
3. Provides all information, forms and/or documents used to prepare the study
4. Provides certified documentation from all law enforcement agencies.

Other

Q: If you are a part of an LLC with multiple owners, what are the ownership percentage requirements for the social equity business?

A: To qualify as a Social Equity Application under the updated criteria, the Social Equity Individual Applicant associated with the application must own 51% or more of the equity applying for a commercial cannabis license.

Q: Where can I find all of the resources available to help me through the verification process?

A: All SEIA Eligibility Verification resources can be found [here](#).

Q: Where can I find the SEIA Verification Checklist?

A: The checklist can be found [here](#).