



Medical Cannabis Institute (MCI) Frequently Asked Questions

Can I get my cannabis products at ARA?

No ARA is not a dispensary. The MCI offers certifications in MD and VA and advice and guidance to residents of DC, MD, and VA.

I live in DC; do I still need to get certified?

Residents of DC self-certify to their need for medical cannabis online or in person at the Department of Health and this process does not require the involvement of a physician or other medical provider.

Does insurance pay for my certification or cannabis?

If you have an insurance plan that participates with ARA, then your certification will be covered as part of your office visit which is usually paid by insurance minus any co-pays/deductibles.

Insurance (including Medicare and Medicaid) does not pay for medical cannabis.

How long is the process to get certified?

The process in MD takes 1-2 weeks to complete. In Virginia, it is done at the time of the visit.

How long is the certification valid?

The physician certification is valid for 1 year in MD and VA.

Can my visit to the MCI be done virtually?

The MCI requires an in-person appointment for the initial visit then subsequent visits may be done virtually.

What is the minimum age for medical cannabis certification?

The MCI treatment team can now help any person over 21 who resides in DC, MD, and VA who wishes to be certified to use medical cannabis.

Should medical cannabis be held if one is pregnant?

Patients who are pregnant, may become pregnant, or are breastfeeding are discouraged from using medical cannabis and will not be certified by the MCI.

Are there any medications that cannot be taken with medical cannabis?

Yes, there are certain medications that cannot/should not be taken with cannabis and all medications are checked at the time of the MCI consultation and appropriate recommendations are made.

How often do I have to be seen at the MCI?

The law requires that MD and VA residents be seen annually at the time of re-certification although a patient can be seen as often as they need to. Yes, there are certain medications that cannot/should not be taken with cannabis, and all medications are checked at the time of MCI consultation and appropriate recommendations are made.

How can I find out where the dispensaries are located?

You can go to the website www.weedmaps.com or to the DC, MD, or VA medical cannabis commission websites.