

TOWNSHIP OF MAURICE RIVER

ORDINANCE NO. 703

AN ORDINANCE OF MAURICE RIVER TOWNSHIP, CUMBERLAND COUNTY,  
PROHIBITING THE OPERATION OF ANY CLASS OF CANNABIS BUSINESSES  
WITHIN ITS GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES AND AMENDING THE CODE OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF MAURICE RIVER CHAPTER 35, LAND USE

**WHEREAS**, in 2020 New Jersey voters approved Public Question No. 1, which amended the New Jersey Constitution to allow for the legalization of a controlled form of marijuana called "cannabis" for adults at least 21 years of age; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 22, 2021, Governor Murphy signed into law P.L. 2021, C. 16, known as the "New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization Act" (the "Act"), which legalizes the recreational use of marijuana by adults 21 years of age or older, and establishes a comprehensive regulatory and licensing scheme for commercial recreational (adult use) cannabis operations, use and possession; and

**WHEREAS**, the Act establishes six marketplace classes of licensed businesses, including:

- **Class 1 Cannabis Cultivator license:** Facilities involved in growing and cultivating cannabis;
- **Class 2 Cannabis Manufacturer license:** Facilities involved in manufacturing, preparation, and packaging of cannabis items;
- **Class 3 Cannabis Wholesaler license:** Facilities involved in obtaining and selling cannabis items for later resale by other licensees;
- **Class 4 Cannabis Distributer License:** Businesses involved in transporting cannabis plants in bulk from a licensed cultivator to another licensed cultivator, or cannabis items in bulk from any type of licensed cannabis business to another;
- **Class 5 Cannabis Retailer License:** Locations at which cannabis items and related supplies are sold to consumers; and
- **Class 6 Cannabis Delivery License:** Businesses providing courier services for consumer purchases that are fulfilled by a licensed cannabis retailer in order to make deliveries of purchased items to a consumer, and which service would include the ability of a consumer to make a purchase directly through the cannabis delivery service which would be presented by the delivery service for fulfillment by a retailer and then delivered to a consumer.

**WHEREAS**, *Section 31a* of the Act authorizes municipalities by ordinance to adopt regulations governing the number of cannabis establishments (defined in section 3 of the Act as a cannabis cultivator, a cannabis manufacturer, a cannabis wholesaler, or a cannabis retailer"), cannabis distributors or

cannabis delivery services allowed to operate within their boundaries, as well as the location manner and times of operation of such establishments, distributors or delivery services, and establishing civil penalties for the violation of any such regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, *Section 31b* of the Act authorizes municipalities by ordinance to prohibit the operation of any one or more classes of cannabis establishments, distributors, or delivery services anywhere in the municipality; and

**WHEREAS**, *Section 31b* of the Act also stipulates, however, that any municipal regulation or prohibition must be adopted within 180 days of the effective date of the Act (*i.e.*, by August 22, 2021); and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to *Section 31b* of the Act, the failure to adopt an ordinance, so shall result for a period of five years thereafter, that the growing, cultivating, manufacturing, selling, and reselling of cannabis and cannabis items shall be permitted uses in all industrial zones, and the retail selling of cannabis items to consumers shall be a conditional use in all commercial and retail zones; and

**WHEREAS**, at the conclusion of the initial and any subsequent five-year period following a failure to enact local regulations or prohibitions, the municipality shall again have 180 days to adopt an ordinance regulating or prohibiting cannabis businesses, but any such ordinance would be prospective only and would not apply to any cannabis business already operating within the municipality; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee of Maurice River has determined that, due to present uncertainties regarding the potential future impacts that allowing one or more classes of cannabis business might have on New Jersey municipalities in general, and on the Township of Maurice River in particular, it is at this time necessary and appropriate, and in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of the Township of Maurice River's residents and members of the public who visit, travel, or conduct business in the Township of Maurice River, to amend the Township of Maurice River's Land Use Ordinance and general ordinances to prohibit all manner of marijuana-related land use and development within the geographic boundaries of the Township of Maurice River; and

**WHEREAS**, officials from two prominent non-profit organizations that have been established for the purpose of advising New Jersey municipalities on legal matters such as have been presented by the Act (those organizations being the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and the New Jersey Institute of Local Government Attorneys) have strongly urged that, due to the complexity and novelty of the Act; the many areas of municipal law that are or may be implicated in decisions as to whether or to what extent cannabis or medical cannabis should be permitted for land use purposes or otherwise regulated in any particular municipality; and the relatively short duration in which the Act would allow such decisions to be made before imposing an automatic authorization of such uses in specified zoning districts subject to unspecified conditions, the most prudent course of action for all municipalities, whether or not generally in favor of cannabis or medical

cannabis land development and uses, would be to prohibit all such uses within the Act's 180 day period in order to ensure sufficient time to carefully review all aspects of the Act and its impact;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED,** that the Township Committee of the Township of Maurice River, County of Cumberland, State of New Jersey, does hereby amend Chapter 35, Land Development Regulations, so as to add the following:

**New Section 35-9.26**

**The Operation of Any Class of Cannabis Business Within the Township of Maurice River.**

- a) The operation of any class of cannabis business within the geographical boundaries of the Township of Maurice River, shall be a prohibited use.
- b) The Following six marketplace classes of licensed cannabis/marijuana business shall be prohibited in all zones of the Township of Maurice River:
  - **Class 1 Cannabis Cultivator license:** Facilities involved in growing and cultivating cannabis;
  - **Class 2 Cannabis Manufacturer license:** Facilities involved in manufacturing, preparation, and packaging of cannabis items;
  - **Class 3 Cannabis Wholesaler license:** Facilities involved in obtaining and selling cannabis items for later resale by other licensees;
  - **Class 4 Cannabis Distributer License:** Businesses involved in transporting cannabis plants in bulk from a licensed cultivator to another licensed cultivator, or cannabis items in bulk from any type of licensed cannabis business to another;
  - **Class 5 Cannabis Retailer License:** Locations at which cannabis items and related supplies are sold to consumers; and
  - **Class 6 Cannabis Delivery License:** Businesses providing courier services for consumer purchases that are fulfilled by a licensed cannabis retailer in order to make deliveries of purchased items to a consumer, and which service would include the ability of a consumer to make a purchase directly through the cannabis delivery service which would be presented by the delivery service for fulfillment by a retailer and then delivered to a consumer.
- c) The purpose of this ordinance is to protect the health and safety of Township residents and is deemed to be in the best interest of the Township and the residents of the Township of Maurice River.

d) This Ordinance is designed to regulate the purchase, sale, cultivation, manufacturing, packaging, transportation, and delivery of cannabis items within the Township of Maurice River. Cannabis, for the purpose of this Ordinance, is defined as cannabis (dry leaves and flowers), cannabis products, cannabis extracts, any other form of cannabis resin and marijuana.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND ENACTED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Maurice River, County of Cumberland, and State of New Jersey that this Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon the adoption and publication of notice of adoption as prescribed by law.

First Reading: March 18, 2021

Publication: March 24, 2021

Public Hearing: April 15, 2021

Adoption: April 15, 2021

Publication of  
Notice of Adoption: April 21, 2021