



## Information about the Low THC Oil Registry in Georgia

**Any physician licensed in Georgia can sign for a patient.** If the doctor has not enrolled patients in the Low THC Oil Registry previously, then he or she will have to register first and get a login for the system. This process is necessary for the state to verify that the doctor is licensed and in good standing with the Georgia Composite Medical Board. This verification process typically happens immediately when requested by the physician.

**The registration process is very simple.** The forms and a lot of useful information can be found on the Department of Public Health (DPH) website. The link is <https://dph.georgia.gov/low-thc-oil-registry>. If the doctor isn't familiar with the process and what is required of them, you can refer them to the very detailed physicians guide on the website that will walk them through the process step-by-step.

- ***The patient/caregiver must fill out the Low THC Oil Waiver form.*** This form must be notarized and given to the doctor. It is an acknowledgement by the patient/caregiver that this treatment is not FDA approved and that they will not hold the doctor or the state responsible. The signed hardcopy does not actually get sent to the DPH. *The doctor should keep this waiver form in the patient's file.*
- ***The doctor submits the Physician Certification form online.*** This form is also located on the website, but does not need to actually be printed/signed by the doctor. The physician submits their part to the DPH electronically through the online registration system. The doctor is simply certifying that the patient HAS the condition. He or she cannot actually "prescribe" the oil since it's not an FDA approved medication.

**The card request is typically processed by the DPH fairly quickly.** The website says to allow up to 15 days for processing, but many patients receive a phone call within a day or two after the doctor submits it in the system. If it has been more than two weeks and you haven't heard from the DPH, you may want to follow up with the doctor first to make sure they actually submitted it. The doctor is able to check the status of the card for any patients they have submitted in the system. When someone from the DPH does call, they will verify your information before printing the card(s). They will then mail it to one of the 18 local health department offices for you to pick up in person at the location closest to you. Someone from the local office will call you to let you know when it has been received there and is available for pickup.

**There is \$25 fee for each card and the card is valid for two years.** That fee is to be paid when the card is picked up. You must show photo ID to pick up the card.

**Each patient or caregiver will be issued a card with their own name on it.** If the card is for a child or someone that isn't responsible for their own healthcare, then it will be registered to the "caregiver" for that individual. It's a good idea for both parents (or anyone else that may be responsible for a child) to get a card. If an adult has multiple people caring for them, it may make sense to get a card for each of those individuals. In order to be truly protected, anyone that may be in possession of the oil should have a card in their name. Unfortunately, the \$25 fee does apply to each card printed.

**The signing physician is required to submit a report to the DPH for each patient twice a year.** This process can be very burdensome for the doctors and may make some not want to sign for many patients. The report itself is very simple, but it does take time for the doctor or their staff to complete and they typically need to reach out to the patient to gather the requested information.

**Your doctor likely won't help you find the medicine and most do not help with dosing.** You will be on your own to find a reputable source for the oil and get dosing information from that provider. Some doctors will take an interest and want to get involved with finding the right strain and dosing, but most will not because they don't have enough knowledge to be able to help, are worried about their license, or various other reasons. The law does not require them to do anything more than certify that the patient has the condition.

**Any general practitioner or specialist physician can sign for a patient.** The intent is that the patient is registered by a doctor that they have an existing relationship with and that doctor is treating them for the qualifying condition. However, there is no requirement that it has to be a specific type of doctor (specialist vs. primary doctor). For example, some seizure patients have been registered by a neurologist and some have used a pediatrician/general practitioner. The best scenario is that you have a doctor that knows you well, understands your condition, and is willing to learn with you. If one of your own doctors is not willing to submit the registration, then there are other physicians that will see patients specifically for the purpose of helping them get registered.

**Medical facilities and schools will typically not permit anyone other than the cardholder to administer the oil to the patient.** While it is legal to possess the oil with a card, staff at hospitals and health care facilities may not be familiar with the law. They may tell you that it is not permitted there at all, so be prepared to explain how the law works. Schools will not let nurses administer it to students and often won't even allow the oil on school property since it is still considered illegal at the federal level.

**It is not officially legal for anyone to sell cannabis oil with more than 0.3% THC in Georgia.** Products with less than 0.3% THC can be ordered online and shipped since they fall under the federal classification for "hemp" but many patients need more THC. Our law allows up to 5% and those products are harder to find without breaking federal law by bringing it back from another state or using other means to get it. This lack of access is a major issue with our law and why we must continue to fight for a true medical cannabis program with in-state cultivation and distribution.

**Here is the full list of conditions included in our medical cannabis law in Georgia as of 2017:**

Conditions included under HB 1 in 2015	New conditions added in SB 16 in 2017
Cancer (when "end stage" or the treatment produces related wasting illness, or recalcitrant nausea and vomiting)	Autism (for all adults, only when "severe" for children)
ALS (when "end stage or severe")	Alzheimer's (when "end stage or severe")
Seizure disorders	AIDS (when "end stage or severe")
Multiple sclerosis (when "end stage or severe")	Epidermolysis Bullosa
Crohn's disease	Peripheral Neuropathy (when "end stage or severe")
Mitochondrial disease	Tourette Syndrome (when "severe")
Parkinson's (when "end stage or severe")	Any patient in hospice care
Sickle cell disease (when "end stage or severe")	