

NJORD Lithuania: Lithuania permits the manufacturing and distribution of medical cannabis

From 1 May 2019, it will be possible to manufacture, distribute and use medical cannabis for health care purposes in Lithuania according to the new amendments to the Law on the Control of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances of the Republic of Lithuania.

It will be possible to use the cannabis substances for health care purposes on the condition that they form part of a registered medicinal product. However, please note that the cultivation of cannabis plants in Lithuania remains forbidden.

The companies will be able to manufacture, import, export, sell (wholesale or retail) medicinal products containing cannabis substances after having obtained the relevant license or permit described below. When applying for one of the licenses, besides other requirements, the company will have to have appropriate premises for storing the medical cannabis; appoint a pharmacist responsible for the medical cannabis storage and turnover report and fulfil requirement of good repute. Therefore, its manufacturing, distribution and use will be tightly controlled, so there will be no legal way to obtain and use cannabis products for recreational purposes in the near future!

License to manufacture medical products containing cannabis

An applicant for a license to manufacture medical products containing cannabis will also need to have a general license to manufacture medical products. Both licenses are issued by the State Medicines Control Agency. When applying for the license to manufacture medical products containing cannabis, the company must, among other things, present the documents on the manufacturing and extraction processes, the quantities of the products to be produced and of the intermediate products, as well as their composition.

Considering that it is not possible to cultivate the cannabis plant in Lithuania, the manufacturer will also need to obtain a permit to purchase, store, transport, manufacture, process, import, and export minimum quantities of cannabis issued by the Ministry of Health. Please note that cannabis substances cannot be sent by post, so ordering a package with cannabis substances over the Internet may cause you some trouble.

The holder of a license to manufacture medical products containing cannabis will also be able to carry out wholesale, import and export activities of medical products containing cannabis without obtaining a separate license for wholesale, import and export of medical products containing cannabis.

License for wholesale, import and export of medical products containing cannabis

Companies applying for a license for wholesale, import and export of medical products containing cannabis will also need to have a general license for wholesale distribution of medical products. Both licenses are issued by the State Medicines Control Agency.

For each case of import and export of the medical cannabis it will be necessary to obtain a special permit issued by State Medicines Control Agency.

License for retail of medical products containing cannabis

Companies applying for a license for retail of medical products containing cannabis will also need to have a pharmaceutical activity license. Both licenses are issued by the State Medicines Control Agency.

Please note that hospitals and other personal health care establishments do not need to obtain any special license to be able to distribute medical cannabis drugs to their patients. As to individuals, they will be able to purchase medical products containing cannabis only with a doctor's prescription.

Permit for scientific research activities

The sector of scientific research activities with cannabis substances will face less strict regulations. Instead of a license, a relevant permit will suffice. Such a permit may be issued to a science and study institution or its partner.

Currently, there is some debate in the Lithuanian Parliament about legalising hemp products with a low THC, like different oils produced from hemp flowers, etc., due to some recent public debates on the issues faced by patients suffering from cancer, epilepsy and other illnesses. Thus, maybe in the future, Lithuania will take one step further towards the legalisation of medical cannabis and hemp products.