



Haleigh's Hope Act

An Overview of Haleigh's Hope Act: Georgia's "Low-THC Oil" Medical Marijuana Law

In 2015, the Georgia General Assembly approved, and then-Gov. Nathan Deal signed, a law allowing registered patients and their caregivers to legally possess up to 20 fluid ounces of low-THC oil with their doctors' recommendations. The law was later expanded to add qualifying conditions.

Initially, this law had a major omission: it did not provide patients with safe, legal access to the medicine. However, in 2019, the legislature approved the Georgia's Hope Act, which provides for licensed and regulated in-state production of low-THC oils. That law is still being implemented as of spring 2020, and regulations have not been issued.

Because Georgia's law applies only to low-THC oils, MPP does not consider Georgia a full medical marijuana state.

What type of marijuana does the law allow?

The law only allows registered patients to use oils containing no more than five percent THC and at least an equal amount of CBD, though they may contain more CBD.

Who qualifies for this limited program?

Patients with the following medical conditions may register to possess low-THC oil:

- Cancer, if it is end stage or the treatment produces related wasting illness or recalcitrant nausea and vomiting
- ALS, when such diagnosis is severe or end stage
- Seizure disorders, related to diagnosis of epilepsy or trauma-related head injuries
- Multiple sclerosis, when such diagnosis is severe or end stage
- Crohn's disease
- Mitochondrial disease
- Parkinson's disease
- Sickle cell disease, when such diagnosis is severe or end stage
- Tourette's syndrome, when such syndrome is diagnosed as severe
- Autism spectrum disorder (patients under 18 must be diagnosed with severe autism)

- Epidermolysis bullosa
 - Alzheimer’s disease, when such disease is severe or end stage
 - AIDS, when such syndrome is severe or end stage
 - Peripheral neuropathy, when symptoms are severe or end stage
 - Patient is in hospice program, either as inpatient or outpatient
 - Intractable pain
 - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) resulting from direct exposure to or witnessing of a trauma for a patient who is at least 18 years of age
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Who can authorize patients to use low THC oil?

Only a physician licensed to practice medicine in Georgia may certify a patient to use low-THC oil. The physician must have a doctor-patient relationship with the patient, diagnose the patient with a qualifying medical condition, and be treating the individual for the specific condition requiring treatment.

Can minors with seizure disorders use low-THC oil under this law?

Yes. There is no age limit to becoming a registered patient.

Do qualifying patients need to obtain an ID card?

Yes. In order to enjoy the legal protections of this law, patients must be registered with the [Department of Public Health](#) and have their registration card in their possession. In addition, patients must ensure that their medicine is in a pharmaceutical container labeled by the manufacturer indicating the percentage of THC.

Can registered patients or their caregivers grow their own marijuana for purposes of producing low-THC oil?

No.

Does this law do anything else?

Yes. It authorizes the University System of Georgia to develop a clinical research program in compliance with federal regulations. Only individuals under 18 years old with medication-resistant epilepsy could participate. The participants must also have been born in Georgia or have been a resident of the state for at least 24 months prior to participation.

