



Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Revised May 2022

Vision

Safe communities for Washington State

Mission

Promote public safety and trust through fair administration, education, and enforcement of liquor, cannabis, tobacco, and vapor laws.

Goals

- Ensure the highest level of public health and safety by continually improving and enforcing laws, regulations, and policies that reflect today's dynamic environment.
- Inform and engage licensees, stakeholders, and the public in addressing issues related to our mission.
- Promote a culture that inspires leadership and values a highly-motivated, competent, and diverse workforce that establishes the WSLCB as the employer of choice.
- Ensure operational and customer service excellence.

Values

- Respect and courtesy
- Professionalism
- Open communication
- Accountability and integrity
- Continuous improvement and meaningful results
- Customer focus

From the Board and Agency Director

This plan represents our agency roadmap for the coming five years, where we will place resources and how we will apply strategies for success.

Engaged Employees

These objectives, strategies and tactics come directly from staff and offer a clear plan that Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (WSLCB) employees understand, support and are inspired to implement. This plan will drive our everyday efforts to carry out our agency mission while striving for excellence in all that we do.

David Postman, Board Chair

Ollie Garrett, Board Member

Rick Garza, Director



Left to Right: Officers Alex Everson, Lt. Rick Smith, and Monith Leap standing in front of LCB Headquarters in Olympia, WA.



Licensing Specialist Jonathan Reinier leads a discussion on the Licensing and Regulation Division's program map.

Goals and Strategies

1 Ensure the highest level of public health and safety by continually improving and enforcing laws, regulations, and policies that reflect today's dynamic environment.

1. Agency staff have the statutory authority necessary to ensure public health and safety for alcohol, cannabis, tobacco and vapor products.
2. Build partnerships and collaborate with agencies, community groups and other organizations on common health and public safety issues.
3. Ensure that agency legislation, rules and policies allow for improved market access of medically-compliant cannabis.
4. Promote a rulemaking and regulatory environment that is equitable, inclusive and prevents impacts of structural bias as a result of input from diverse communities throughout the state.

2 Inform and engage licensees, stakeholders and the public in addressing issues related to our mission.

1. Enhance education and public dialogue via targeted messages using easy-to-access formats, virtual options and training tools to promote public safety compliance and safe communities to our diverse licensees and external stakeholders.
2. Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to develop and implement educational outreach to consumers, young adults, tribes and other underrepresented populations, with efforts that are informed by public health and prevention science.
3. Ensure that regulatory information and data sets are easily accessible and maximize transparency.
4. Be responsive to feedback from small business customers and licensees that represent communities of color, veterans, people with disabilities and other diverse groups regarding our processes.

3 Promote a culture that inspires leadership and values a highly-motivated, competent and diverse workforce that establishes the WSLCB as the employer of choice.

1. Integrate an agency-wide comprehensive Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Program to bridge gaps and address disparities based on feedback from agency employees.
2. Strengthen modern workforce strategies to provide greater flexibility in a mobile and hybrid work environment.
3. Promote Organizational Change Management (OCM) as a key part of the WSLCB culture to assist employees with adapting to operational changes.
4. Provide a robust employee health and wellness program that responds to the changing work environment.
5. Implement a plan to identify, assess and develop talent to support succession planning, leadership continuity, employee engagement and sustained performance.
6. Encourage leadership at all levels by establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes open and direct communication among and between all employees and stakeholders.

4 Ensure operational and customer service excellence.

1. Establish and support agency project governance and project standards agencywide.
2. Prioritize and support the successful completion of key transformation initiatives.
3. Provide stakeholders, customers and employees opportunities for feedback to improve performance and services that impact their industries.
4. Ensure that a continuous process improvement culture exists that focuses on performance results, accountability and best practices.

Our Story

In 1933, the Steele Act created the Washington State Liquor Control Board (WSLCB) to regulate the importation, manufacture, distribution and sale of alcohol. In July 2015, the name was changed to the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board to reflect new oversight of medicinal and recreational cannabis.

The three-member Board, appointed by the Governor, is charged to promote public safety and trust through the fair administration and enforcement of liquor, cannabis, tobacco, and vapor laws. The Board conducts their business through public meetings and work sessions with stakeholders, sets agency policy and budget decisions and adjudicates contested license applications and enforcement actions on agency licensees.

Significant changes in the agency's business have occurred over the years. Through the innovative leadership of the Board and its staff, the WSLCB has become a proven leader in public safety, adaptability, transparency and accountability that reflects today's dynamic environment.

Key changes included:

- The 2011 voter-enacted Initiative 1183 privatized the sale and distribution of spirits in the state. Within six months, the WSLCB successfully transitioned from a control state to an open state where liquor is distributed and sold by the private sector.
- In 2012, voter-enacted Initiative 502 directed the WSLCB to implement a legal recreational cannabis market. Through WSLCB's leadership and innovation, Washington State built from scratch a comprehensive system of producing, processing and retailing recreational cannabis to persons over age 21. The agency adopted rules and became the regulator that issues the licenses and enforces the law. The first retail recreational cannabis store opened as planned in the summer of 2014.
- To further public safety and align the medical cannabis market with the state-regulated recreational market, Senate Bill 5052 was signed by Governor Jay Inslee in 2015. This bill mandated that all medicinal cannabis dispensary sales be under the same regulatory framework as recreational cannabis retail outlets by July 2016.

These changes in state and agency priorities have been met head on by the WSLCB and created a culture of empowerment, open communication and leading by example. The agency's workforce is committed to public service and continuously seeks ways to improve processes to exceed customer expectations.

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