

Mitchel Chargo Discusses Delay in Minnesota Cannabis Licensing Process via MJBizDaily and GreenState

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Hinshaw partner Mitchel Chargo was recently quoted in *MJBizDaily* and *GreenState*, reviewing the significance of news that Minnesota's recreational cannabis licensing process will be delayed for several months.

Chargo emphasized in *MJBizDaily* that the initial ruling on November 25, 2024, by the Ramsey County District Court imposing a stay on the social equity license preapproval lottery “essentially eliminated the head start advantage that was initially offered through this social equity license preapproval process,” allowing preapproved applicants to obtain a head start in raising capital, securing an operating facility, and planting seeds early. The litigation was commenced by license preapproval applicants who claimed their applications for entry into the lottery were improperly denied by the Office of Cannabis Management.

As a result of the Ramsey County District Court's imposition of a stay on the social equity license preapproval lottery, the Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) recently announced that the social equity license preapproval process has been canceled and that cannabis business licenses will now be issued through a lottery occurring sometime between May and June 2025, pushing back the timeline from the previously expected date of December 2024. “The OCM terminated the social equity license preapproval process altogether and decided to move forward with opening a standard licensing cycle for both social equity and general applicants beginning early in 2025,” Chargo explained in *GreenState*. “The [OCM's] decision was made to avoid further delay and risks to Minnesota's social equity program.”

Media Coverage

- [“Minnesota recreational cannabis licensing to be delayed for months”](#) was published by *MJBizDaily* on December 12, 2024.
- [“‘Painful pivot’: state scraps plan for pot market”](#) was published by *GreenState* on December 12, 2024.

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