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PSILOCYBIN SOON AVAILABLE THERAPEUTICALLY IN OREGON

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In November of 2020, Oregonians legalized the substance found in "psychedelic mushrooms" called psilocybin, making the state the first in the nation to legalize the substance. Now, lawmakers say the state is close to allowing its use for therapeutic purposes.

Experts claim the drug may be helpful in fighting depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and addiction. The Oregon Health Authority is currently working towards a system that would allow the drug to be administered therapeutically. However, the state only has through the end of this year to implement these procedures, according to Measure 109. So far, lawmakers claim they are right on schedule.

The Road to Legalization

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The process began the first of the year in 2021, and by March, the governor-appointed Psilocybin Services Advisory Board held their first meeting. In June, Angela Allbee was selected by the OHA to oversee the Oregon Psilocybin Services section.

"We are the very first state in the United States to set up a comprehensive regulatory framework for psilocybin services," Allbee commented to KGW8. "We've got a lot of work to do."

OHA spokesperson Jonathon Modie claimed Allbee's team is constructing a training program, a system to track the product, proper licensing, and a case management system – all of which is required by Measure 109. Additionally, policies and procedures will need to be established for license and compliance departments.

Allbee added that the notion of using this particular drug for therapy is not as new as it may seem. "Indigenous communities have practiced psilocybin for centuries," she said. The drug is also legal throughout many other areas of the world.

To prepare themselves, Allbee mentioned the advisory board has held listening sessions, created surveys, appointed guest speakers, and conducted science-based research. She reiterated that the board is advisory, and will simply be sending recommendations into OHA.

"We consider those recommendations and we draft rules," she said. "We're really focused on the values of equitable access to services and safety."

"Rulemaking advisory committees will be held in February 2022 to discuss draft rules for training programs/testing," said Modie. "OHA plans to adopt rules by June 1, 2022, so the agency can begin accepting applications and for training program curriculum approval."

Allbee added that the remaining rules will begin to be constructed in September, with an estimated final rollout by the end of the year to ensure licensing applications can begin to be accepted in January 2023. Licenses will need to be completed for facilitators, manufacturers, testing labs, and service centers.

Application approval, according to Modie, is the essential step towards Oregonians having access to the services.

"This includes licensed manufacturers cultivating psilocybin and producing psilocybin products," he said to KGW, "licensed testing labs testing psilocybin products, licensed manufacturers selling tested products to licensed service centers, and licensed service centers opening their doors for psilocybin services in collaboration with licensed facilitators who will work with clients."

The timeline for this process is difficult to predict, he said. However, you can sign up for email updates on the subject.

(https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORDH5/subscriber/new?topic_id=ORDHS_932)

By [Rebekah Harlow](https://www.corvallisadvocate.com) full access
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