

**THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AND CANNABIS BOARD**

IN THE MATTER OF	
A NEW LICENSE APPLICATION REGARDING	Case No. 26-CC-00007
TK 539, LLC	ABRA License No. 129362
T/A ALOHA	Medical Cannabis Retailer's License Board Order No. 2026-718

BEFORE: DONOVAN ANDERSON, *Chairperson*
SILAS GRANT, JR., *Board Member*
TERI JANINE QUINN, *Member*
RYAN JONES, *Member*
DAVID MEADOWS, *Member*
James Turner, *Member*

PARTIES: TK 539, LLC t/a Aloha, at premises 539 8th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003, *Applicant*

Saleh Salim, *Applicant*

Cameron Mixon, Counsel, *on behalf of Applicant*

ORDER DENYING MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION

On July 22, 2026, the Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Board (Board) issued Order No. 2026-640, finding TK 539, LLC t/a Aloha (“Aloha” or “Applicant”) and its sole owner, Saleh Salim, unfit for licensure under 22-C DCMR § 5400.1 and denying the application for a Medical Cannabis Retailer’s License at 539 8th Street SE. On August 3, 2026, the Applicant filed a Motion for Reconsideration (Motion) seeking to have the Board reconsider Order No. 2026-640 and reinstate the application. For the reasons set forth below, the Motion is **DENIED**, and the Board’s denial of the application in Order No. 2026-640 is **AFFIRMED**.

The Applicant advances four grounds in its Motion: (1) that the denial is inconsistent with the Offer in Compromise (OIC) incorporated in Order No. 2025-533; (2) that the Applicant entity has different ownership from the establishments involved in Order No. 2025-1165 and that Mr. Salim was not responsible for the underlying violations; (3) that Board precedent approving other applicants previously subject to Summary Closures requires approval here; and (4) that, if fitness remains a concern, the Applicant should be permitted to reinstate the application and immediately transfer the license to a third party. None of these grounds establishes that the Board erred or should otherwise amend its prior decision.

I. The Board properly considered the ownership history of Mr. Salim’s other establishments.

Before issuing or renewing a license, the Board must determine that the applicant “is of good character and generally fit for the responsibilities of registration.” 22-C DCMR § 5400.1(a); see also Order No. 2026-640 at 3. The medical cannabis program is directed to establish standards for evaluating applicants that include “an applicant’s knowledge of District and federal law relating to cannabis,” and the Board is charged with revoking or suspending licenses of persons who violate the governing law. D.C. Code § 7-1671.05(b)(17)(A). Consistent with these provisions, the Board may deny a license where the preponderance of the evidence shows that the applicant has permitted conduct in violation of the Act or its implementing chapter. 22-C DCMR § 5423. Character and fitness is thus an individualized, evidence-based inquiry into whether an applicant can be trusted to operate a licensed medical cannabis business in compliance with District law.

The record establishes that three summary action closures were executed against establishments owned by Mr. Salim — TK 1203 t/a Budz and Roses, TK DC, Inc. t/a Tobacco King, and TK DC 934 Inc. t/a Tobacco King — each for operating as an unlicensed cannabis retailer and selling untested and improperly labeled cannabis products. Order No. 2026-640 at 3. Each of those grounds — selling untested cannabis and selling cannabis lacking a proper label — is a statutorily enumerated “imminent danger to the health or safety of the public” that authorizes summary closure of an unlicensed establishment. D.C. Code § 7-1671.08. Mr. Salim was the owner of record at the time of each closure, and each matter was resolved by an OIC he personally signed requiring the cessation of illegal cannabis sales. Order No. 2026-640 at 2-3. This ownership history is squarely within the Board’s authority to consider in assessing character and fitness.

The Applicant argues that Mr. Salim's day-to-day involvement in these establishments was limited and that the violations were attributable to other operators. Motion at 2. The Applicant, however, bears the burden of establishing fitness through substantial evidence. Order No. 2026-640 at 3. The Applicant could have come forward with substantial evidence of non-involvement — corporate records, management agreements, or testimony demonstrating that others controlled the offending conduct — but chose to rely on Mr. Salim's own characterization of his role. The Board is not obligated to credit that unsupported assertion, particularly where Mr. Salim was the owner of record at each closure and personally signed each OIC.

In any event, whether Mr. Salim was personally involved in each violation, the Board may conclude that an owner lacks good character and fitness where the establishments he owns are repeatedly involved in the unlawful cannabis trade and the record reveals a sufficient pattern. An owner who permits — or fails to superintend against — recurring illegal cannabis activity across multiple establishments is not fit to hold a license, whether the conduct reflects complicity or an inability to manage. It is reasonable to conclude that a history of repeat violations of this kind renders the owner unfit for licensure.

II. The Applicant's cited precedents and the OIC in Order No. 2025-533 are distinguishable and do not bind the Board here.

The Applicant contends that the Board has approved applications from other entities previously subject to Summary Closures — Hotbox DC, LLC; Healing Herbs, LLC; All the Buzz; and Columbia La La Juice Corp. — and that denying this application departs from that precedent without explanation. Character and fitness, however, is determined individually, on a case-by-case basis, because the character of each applicant necessarily differs from one application to the next. The existence of a prior Summary Closure in another applicant's history does not make that applicant similarly situated to Mr. Salim.

This Applicant is distinguishable. The record here reflects not an isolated infraction but three separate summary closures across three establishments, each resolved by an OIC that expressly required Mr. Salim to cease illegal cannabis sales — commitments that did not prevent the next closure. On this record, the Board's review of the facts leads it to conclude that the Applicant has no genuine intent to comply with District law and instead intends to use a licensed medical cannabis business to shield

continued narcotics trafficking or, in the alternative, that the Applicant is so incapable of, and negligent in, managing his establishments that he cannot be trusted to superintend a licensed medical cannabis business against diversion and other illegal activity. That factual finding is what distinguishes this matter from the applications the Applicant cites, and it is a sufficient and reasoned basis for the different outcome.

Nor does the OIC incorporated in Order No. 2025-533 compel reinstatement. That the OIC did not, by its terms, preclude the Applicant from *applying* for a Medical Cannabis Retailer's License does not entitle the Applicant to *receive* one. Every applicant must independently satisfy the character-and-fitness standard of 22-C DCMR § 5400.1 before a license issues. Preserving the right to apply is not a waiver of that standard, and reserving the ability to seek a license does not oblige the Board to disregard the conduct underlying the summary actions when it later evaluates fitness. Moreover, the two summary actions resolved by Order No. 2025-1165 post-dated Order No. 2025-533 and reflect the recurrence of the very conduct the earlier OIC required Mr. Salim to cease.

Furthermore, the Applicant's invocation of the District's social equity goals does not alter this analysis. Motion at 2-3. Social equity provisions govern eligibility and priority in the licensing process; they do not displace the independent statutory and regulatory requirement that every applicant demonstrate good character and general fitness for the responsibilities of registration.

III. The Applicant's stated intent to run the business himself or to immediately transfer the license is not relevant to the character and fitness determination.

Finally, the Applicant offers to reinstate the application and immediately transfer the license to an arm's-length third party upon issuance. Character and fitness attaches to the Applicant. Before the Board may issue, transfer to a new owner, or renew a license, it must make the required determinations as to the applicant. D.C Code § 7-1671.06. The regulations further require that an applicant demonstrate it is the true and actual owner of the facility and intends to carry on the business for itself, not as the agent of an undisclosed party. 22-C DCMR § 5400. An applicant cannot cure a failure to meet the character and fitness standard by promising to hand the license to someone else after it issues; the Board does not issue a license to an unfit applicant on the expectation of a later transfer.

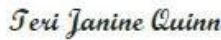
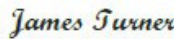
Whether Mr. Salim intends to operate Aloha himself or to transfer it immediately, the analysis is the same: the Applicant must satisfy 22-C DCMR § 5400.1, and it has not.

All applicants are held to this standard, and the Applicant's transfer proposal provides no basis to reconsider the denial.

ORDER

Therefore, the Board, on this 16th day of September 2026, finds TK 539, LLC t/a Aloha and Saleh Salim, unfit for licensure under § 5400.1 for the reasons stated above, and that the **APPLICATION** is **DENIED**.

The Board further **ADVISES** the Applicant that in accordance with this determination, they will be prohibited from having additional successive applications considered pursuant to 22-C DCMR § 5418 and that future applications may be summarily denied based on the Board's findings in this Order. Moreover, the Applicant is advised that future applications filed by the Applicant may be summarily denied based on the findings in this Order.

OFFICIAL VOTE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AND CANNABIS BOARD		
Board Members	Decision	Signature
Donovan Anderson (Chairperson)	Approve	
Silas Grant, Jr.	Not Present	
Teri Janine Quinne	Approve	
Ryan Jones	Approve	
David Meadows	Approve	
James Turner	Approve	
Additional Comments: N/A		

NOTICE

Any party adversely affected may file a Motion for Reconsideration of this decision or other motion permitted by law within 10 days of service of this Order. The opposing party may file a response within 7 days. If a response is filed, the movant may file a reply within 3 days. All filings should be served on all parties to the matter and delivered to the Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration, 899 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 4200-B, Washington, DC 20002, or by email to abca.legal@dc.gov. The failure to properly serve the other parties or to present all matters of record that have allegedly been erroneously decided in the initial motion for reconsideration may result in the waiver of those matters being considered. Further, multiple and repetitive motions may be summarily denied or not considered. In addition to filing a Motion for Reconsideration, pursuant to § 11 of the *District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act*, Pub. L. 90-614, 82 Stat. 1209, D.C. Official Code § 2-510 (2001), and Rule 15 of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, a party that is adversely affected may have the right to appeal this Order by filing a petition for review, within 30 days of the date of service of this Order, with the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, located at 430 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20001.

The timely filing of a Motion for Reconsideration stays the time for filing a petition for review in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals until the Board rules on the motion. *See* D.C. App. Rule 15(b) (2004). The Superior Court of the District of Columbia may have jurisdiction to hear appeals in non-contested cases or in matters where that court is specifically provided jurisdiction by law. Finally, advisory neighborhood commissions (ANCs) are advised that their right to appeal or challenge a decision of the Board may be limited by the laws governing ANCs. *See e.g.*, D.C. Code § 1-309.10(g).