



Retailer Principles

The Retailer Principles were formed and maintained by the VGA Retailer Working Group to serve as just, sensible, and clear guardrails to allow Vermont retailers to contribute to an economically viable, racially just, and agriculturally accessible world-renowned top-tier regulated cannabis industry that surpasses the reputation of Vermont's other cottage industries, such as beer and cheese. The principles are also a living document that reflects the immediate state and federal regulatory landscape, and as those change so will these principles.

1) Support a just and balanced regulated market structure, such as a reasonable excise tax and fair direct-market access for small local independent cultivators and manufacturers.

An example of this principle would be supporting policy for a market structure that is inclusive and not exclusive, for instance, supporting scale-appropriate production caps instead of limiting market access to new entrants, keeping licensee fees affordable, and ensuring consistent operations and regulatory accountability within the agency.

2) Recognize the harm caused by the criminalization of cannabis and the historically disproportionate impact on BIPOC, economically depressed, and other marginalized communities. Encourage and uplift individuals from those communities who may wish to participate in the market.

An example of this principle would be developing a diversity and inclusion plan for your business, bringing awareness to the history of criminalizing cannabis and systemic racism, and supporting continuing educational opportunities centered around BIPOC and other minority groups and community building.

3) Keep the supply-chain local by solely supporting and sourcing cannabis and cannabis products from small local independent cultivators and manufacturers.

An example of this principle is to strive to carry local small independent cultivators and manufacturers with the intent to contribute to the local multiplier effect and bring economic



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growth and community reinvestment through keeping dollars and decision-making in Vermont.

4) Be transparent in pricing. Maintain regular discussions with cultivators and manufacturers about discounting, and other pricing-related matters, to foster fair and balanced compensation, as well as brand and industry stability.

An example of this principle is communicating with a cultivator and manufacturer that their product is being placed on sale and explaining why. Though the product is in the custody of a retailer, initiating and maintaining clear and transparent communication with producers surrounding pricing matters fosters good relationships.

5) Designate benefits for medical patients and implement initial and ongoing continuing education for staff to assist the unique needs of the medical cannabis community.

An example of this principle is striking the excise and sales tax from purchases for patients and caregivers, increasing accessibility, safety, and privacy, holding special hours for the medical cannabis community, and supporting advocacy for more robust state medical improvements.

6) Establish in-store product presentation guidelines that focus on cultivators and manufacturers first on displays and menus. Encourage producers to brand themselves, and, when provided, use a cultivator's branding when retailing flower deli style. No rebranding that supersedes branding (if provided) of the cultivator or manufacturer.

An example of this principle is labeling bulk cannabis as the producer's product, not the retailer's product, such as including logos of producers over retailer logos, not creating labels that confuse the consumer.

7) Utilize fair advertising guidelines to promote cultivators, manufacturers, products, and communities over sales and retail brands.

An example of this principle is centering a cultivator's or manufacturer's brand when promoting products, educating consumers on the local artisan behind the products they enjoy, and fostering relationships between producers and the general public.



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8) Practice fair hiring and livable wage standards, no less than \$20/hour for full-time, and ensure comprehensive initial and continued education for all staff.

An example of this principle is using inclusive wording for job ads and throughout the hiring process, internal promotion, and standardized interviewing criteria that focus on accessing and prioritizing skills and competencies.

9) Refrain from undercutting the market through white or private-label production. If you are vertically integrated, don't solely stock the house brand.

An example of this principle is continuing to carry other local independent small cultivators and manufacturers if vertically integrated and not undercutting their price point.