

Request to SWO Tribal Council

Amendment to Chapter 81 Medical Cannabis Code

Date: 5/18/2026

To: Tribal Leadership of Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate

Attn: Tribal Executives and Tribal Council

PO Box 509

Agency Village, SD 57262

From: Lake Traverse District EDA

Business: First Light LLC

Phone: (605) 694-2880

Email: laketraversecannabis1@outlook.com

RE: Request for Tribal Council Consideration and Adoption of an Amendment to Chapter 81 – Medical Cannabis Code

Dear Tribal Executives and Tribal Council:

I respectfully submit this formal request that the Tribal Council place on its agenda, consider, and adopt an amendment to **Chapter 81 – Medical Cannabis Code**. The purpose of the proposed amendment is to clarify and improve the Code to better protect patient access, community safety, and regulatory compliance while honoring SWO sovereign authority to regulate medical cannabis within its jurisdiction.

1. Background and Authority

Chapter 81 establishes the Tribe's framework for regulating medical cannabis. As implementation has progressed, certain provisions have created practical gaps and/or ambiguity that can hinder consistent administration, enforcement, and patient understanding. The Tribal Council has the authority to amend tribal law and codes through resolution or ordinance procedures established by the Tribe's Constitution, bylaws, and legislative rules of procedure.

Amendment Proposal to Chapter 81 Medical Cannabis Code

2. Proposed Amendment (Summary)

I request that the Council consider an amendment addressing the following items:

- **Definitions and scope:** Clarify key terms (e.g., “qualifying patient”).

3. Proposed Amendments Language (Draft)

Title II – Definitions; (81-02-01 Definitions): This amendment updates the definition of “Qualifying (or qualified) patient” in the Medical Cannabis Code to reflect a self-diagnosis standard for eligibility.

81-02-01 Definitions

Current language:

28. "Qualifying (or qualified) patient" means (i) ~~a person who has been diagnosed by a practitioner, in a bona fide practitioner-patient relationship with such person, as having a debilitating medical condition, and such practitioner has determined that the patient's health would benefit from use of Medical Cannabis in the treatment of such serious medical condition.~~

Proposed language:

28. "Qualifying (or qualified) patient" means (i) a person who has self-diagnosed as having a debilitating medical condition and has determined that their health would benefit from the use of Medical Cannabis in the treatment of such serious medical condition.

81-03-04 MEDICAL CANNABIS REGISTRATION

Current language:

~~An individual shall be considered a qualifying patient if (i) such person receives a written certification from a medical practitioner stating that in the practitioner's professional opinion the patient is likely to receive therapeutic or palliative benefit from the medical use of cannabis to treat or alleviate the patient's debilitating medical condition or symptoms associated with the debilitating medical condition, or (ii) such person holds a valid medical cannabis registry card issued by the Sisseton-Wahpeton tribal government. The Commission shall promulgate regulations regarding the process for obtaining such written certifications and the maintenance of a registry of qualifying patients and designated caregivers.~~

Proposed language:

An individual shall be considered a qualifying patient if (i) such person has self-diagnosed as having a debilitating medical condition and has determined that such person is likely to receive therapeutic or palliative benefit from the medical use of cannabis to treat or alleviate the debilitating medical condition or symptoms associated with the debilitating medical condition, or (ii) such person holds a valid medical cannabis registry card issued by the Sisseton-Wahpeton tribal government. The Commission shall promulgate regulations regarding the maintenance of a registry of qualifying patients and designated caregivers.

4. Rationale and Benefits

Adopting the proposed amendment would help the Tribe:

- **Improve clarity and consistency** for patients, caregivers, providers, and enforcement officials.
- **Reduce administrative burden and disputes** by eliminating ambiguity and aligning processes with operational realities.
- **Protect sovereignty and local control** by maintaining a clear, enforceable tribal regulatory framework.
- **Support responsible access** for qualifying patients while addressing community concerns.

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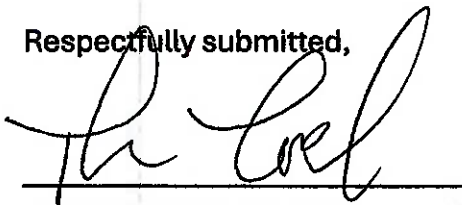
5. Requested Council Action

I respectfully request that the Tribal Council:

1. Schedule the amendment for discussion at a roundtable with Tribal Council, **(if needed)**.
2. Direct legal counsel to review the proposed changes to Chapter 81. **(SWO Legal Counsel - Comment back within 3 working days)**.
3. Adopt the amendment by resolution in accordance with SWO legislative procedures.
Set an effective date (May 28th, 2026).

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available to answer questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Name: Thomas LaBlanc

Title: Director of Operations

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MOTION NO. 63: made by Edmund Johnson Jr., second by Dallas Owen, question by Dionne Crawford, to authorize Christmas Bonuses in the amount of \$250.00 for SWO board, committee, and commission members, provided that they do not receive a bonus from another Tribal program or entity, with the Boards & Committees budget as the funding source.

WEIGHTED VOTE ON MOTION NO. 63: 12 For: Dallas Owen (3); A. Lydia Amos (2); Dionne Crawford (2); Curtis Bissonette (2); Louis Johnson (1); Tribal Vice-Chairman (1); Tribal Secretary (1). 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained. 0 Absent From Vote. 1 Not Voting: Tribal Chairman.

MOTION PASSED.

MOTION NO. 64: made by Curtis Bissonette, second by Dionne Crawford, question by Edmund Johnson Jr., to make the Wellness Center Project a priority for the next Tribal Council.

WEIGHTED VOTE ON MOTION NO. 64: 12 For: Dallas Owen (3); A. Lydia Amos (2); Dionne Crawford (2); Curtis Bissonette (2); Louis Johnson (1); Tribal Vice-Chairman (1); Tribal Secretary (1). 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained. 0 Absent From Vote. 1 Not Voting: Tribal Chairman.

MOTION PASSED.

MOTION NO. 65: made by Edmund Johnson Jr., second by Dionne Crawford, question by Dallas Owen, to declare an Economic Emergency and get the Medical Cannabis Project finalized and implemented.

WEIGHTED VOTE ON MOTION NO. 65: 12 For: Dallas Owen (3); A. Lydia Amos (2); Dionne Crawford (2); Curtis Bissonette (2); Louis Johnson (1); Tribal Vice-Chairman (1); Tribal Secretary (1). 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained. 0 Absent From Vote. 1 Not Voting: Tribal Chairman.

MOTION PASSED.

MOTION NO. 66: made by Dionne Crawford, second by Myrna Thompson, question by Curtis Bissonette, to go into Executive Session, at 11:47am.

WEIGHTED VOTE ON MOTION NO. 66: 12 For: Dallas Owen (3); A. Lydia Amos (2); Dionne Crawford (2); Curtis Bissonette (2); Louis Johnson (1); Tribal Vice-Chairman (1); Tribal Secretary (1). 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained. 0 Absent From Vote. 1 Not Voting: Tribal Chairman.

MOTION PASSED.

MOTION NO. 67: made by Dallas Owen, second by Curtis Bissonette, question by Louis Johnson, to come out of Executive Session, at 12:04pm.

