



Australian Government
**Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing**

Consultation Paper

Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016 and Narcotic
Drugs (Licence Charges) Regulation 2016



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Consultation Process

Focus of this consultation

The Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016 (the ND Regulation) and the Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Regulation 2016 (the Charges Regulation) (the legislative instruments) are set to sunset on 1 April 2027. This means that the legislative instruments need to be remade either as they are or with amendments.

We are seeking feedback on the legislative instruments through written submissions from stakeholders. Feedback provided during this period will be considered for the sunsetting and remaking process for the legislative instruments.

The objective of this consultation process is to evaluate whether the legislative instruments are effectively fulfilling their intended purpose before they are remade.

This Consultation Paper sets out background information on the legislative instruments and previous amendments made to the legislative instruments.

Request for feedback and comments

You are invited to provide feedback and comments on the remaking of the ND Regulation and the Charges Regulation.

Responses can be submitted through the [Consultation Hub](#) from **22 June 2026 to 19 July 2026**.

Enquiries can be directed to the Office of Drug Control (ODC) at ODC.Consultation@health.gov.au

Remaking of the Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016 and Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Regulation 2016

Introduction

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the Department) is undertaking consultation on the proposed remaking of the ND Regulation and the Charges Regulation. These legislative instruments support the legislative framework that governs the cultivation of cannabis and the manufacture of narcotic drugs for medicinal and scientific purposes, as well as related charges administered by the ODC. As these legislative instruments are scheduled to sunset on 1 April 2027, the Department is seeking stakeholder feedback to determine whether the legislative instruments are effectively fulfilling their intended purpose before they are remade.

Sunsetting of legislative instruments

Legislative instruments are automatically repealed after a fixed period, subject to some exceptions. This automatic repeal is called sunseting, and the Australian Government's sunseting provisions are set out in Part 4 of Chapter 3 of the *Legislation Act 2003*. Sunseting provides the government with the opportunity to review legislative instruments to ensure laws and regulations remain efficient and effective.

Background

Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016

The *Narcotic Drugs Act 1967* (the ND Act) gives effect to Australia's obligations under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs 1961 (the Single Convention), as in force from time to time. The objective of the Single Convention is to establish a framework both to prevent abuse and diversion of narcotic drugs, and to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs for medical and scientific purposes.

The ND Act regulates the cultivation of cannabis plants for the production of cannabis and cannabis related products for medicinal and scientific purposes, and the manufacture of other narcotic drugs, such as those derived from the opium poppy, of which Australia is one of the world's leading suppliers of raw material.

The purpose of the ND Regulation is to make regulations necessary for carrying out, or to give effect to, the regulatory framework for the licensing of the cultivation, production and manufacture of narcotic drugs, as provided for under the ND Act.

Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Regulation 2016

The *Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Act 2016* (the Licence Charges Act) enables the Australian Government to impose charges relating to a medicinal cannabis licence granted under the ND Act.

The purpose of the Charges Regulation is to make regulations relating to the charges payable by a licence holder in relation to a medicinal cannabis licence that is in force and the number of charges payable under the Licence Charges Act.

Together, the Charges Regulation and the fees prescribed in the ND Regulation form part of the ODC's cost recovery framework for the medicinal cannabis licence and permit scheme under the ND Act.

Amendments to the Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016 and Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Regulation 2016

Table 1 and Table 2 outline previous amendments to the ND Regulation and the Charges Regulation.

Table 1. Previous amendments to the ND Regulation

Name	Summary of amendments	Date in force
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Fees) Regulations 2025 (F2025L00417)	The amendment further adjusts application, variation and inspection fees for medicinal cannabis licences and permits to support cost recovery for administering the medicinal cannabis regulatory scheme under the Act (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-6) .	01 July 2025
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Fees) Regulations 2024 (F2024L00645)	The amendment increases application and inspection fees for medicinal cannabis licences and permits, removing some document-definition requirements, and applying the revised fee arrangements to applications and inspections to support cost recovery (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-6) .	01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Fees) Regulations 2023 (F2023L01026)	The amendment revises application, variation, and inspection fees for medicinal cannabis licences and permits to better recover the cost of administering the medicinal cannabis regulatory scheme under the Act (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-11) .	01 August 2023 – 30 June 2024
Therapeutic Goods Legislation Amendment (2022 Measures No. 1) Regulations 2022 (F2022L00243)	The amendment supports the safe use and clearer regulation of extemporaneously compounded medicinal cannabis products, while reducing regulatory burden and providing clarity to industry - Sch 1 (items 1,2) .	31 March 2022 – 31 July 2023
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Medicinal Cannabis) Regulations 2021 (F2021L01751)	The amendment aims to reduce regulatory burden and streamline licensing and permit arrangements for medicinal cannabis to improve patient access to medicinal cannabis products - Sch 1 .	24 December 2021 – 30 March 2022

Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Fees) Regulations 2021 (F2021L00757)	The amendment increases fees for medicinal cannabis licences, permits, various and related inspections for the 2021-22 financial year, in line with indexation and cost-recovery requirements for administering the medicinal cannabis scheme (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch (items 1-3) .	01 July 2021 – 23 December 2021
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Cannabis-Related Manufacture Licences and Permits) Regulations 2020 (F2020L01328)	The amendment extends the medical cannabis cost-recovery framework by applying fees and updated application arrangements to cannabis-related manufacture licences and permits, completing implementation of the 2019-20 activity-based costing review - Sch 1 (items 1-10) .	01 November 2020 – 30 June 2021
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Fees) Regulations 2020 (F2019L01485)	The amendment updates and restructures fees for licences, permits and variations under the Act to achieve full cost recovery following an activity-based costing review of the ODC (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-10) .	01 January 2020 – 31 October 2020
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Review Recommendations) Regulations 2019 (F2019L01485)	The amendment aims to remove duplication, simplify licence and permit application processes, and clarify and align regulatory terminology - Sch 1 (items 1-36) .	01 January 2020 – 14 July 2020
Narcotics Drugs Amendment (Cannabis) Regulations 2018 (F2018L00106)	The amendment primarily focuses on enabling export, streamlining licensing arrangements, and making technical and administrative refinements to improve regulatory consistency and operation - Sch 1 (items 1-60) .	14 February 2018 – 31 December 2019
Narcotic Drugs Amendment (Licence Charges) Regulation 2016 (F2016L01894)	The amendment provides for matters relating to the payment and recovery of licence charges for cannabis licences, including classes of cannabis research licences - Sch 1 .	10 December 2016 – 13 February 2018

Table 2. Previous amendments to the Charges Regulation

Name	Summary of amendments	Date in force
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment (Charge Amounts) Regulations 2025 (F2025L00416)	The amendment increases annual licence charges and inspection-related charges to support ongoing cost recovery for administering the medicinal cannabis regulatory scheme (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-4) .	01 July 2025
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment Regulations 2024 (F2024L00644)	The amendment increases annual licence charges and inspection-related charges to support ongoing cost recovery for administering the medicinal cannabis regulatory scheme (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-5) .	01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment (Charge Amounts) Regulations 2023 (F2023L01029)	The amendment updates licence charge amounts, implementing a revised cost-recovery model for the medicinal cannabis regulatory scheme following the 2022 fees and charges review (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-4) .	01 August 2023 – 30 June 2024
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment (Medicinal Cannabis Licences) Regulations 2021 (F2021L01752)	The amendment aligns licence charge categories and transitional arrangements with the new single-licence medicinal cannabis framework introduced in December 2021 (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 .	24 December 2021 – 31 July 2023
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment (Charge Amounts and Other Measures) Regulations 2021 (F2021L00752)	The amendment increases and indexes annual licence charges for medicinal cannabis-related licences for charges to support cost recovery for administering the medicinal cannabis scheme (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-7) .	01 July 2021 – 23 December 2021
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment (Cannabis-Related Manufacture Licences) Regulations 2020 (F2020L01327)	The amendment extends annual licence charges to cannabis-related manufacture licences, including introducing commercial and non-commercial categories and capped charges for non-commercial licences (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-7) .	01 November 2020 – 30 June 2021
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendment (2020 Measures No. 1) Regulations 2020 (F2020L00901)	The amendment updates cannabis licence charges following a 2019-2020 activity-based costing review to align charges with regulatory effect and compliance history (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1-5) .	15 July 2020 – 31 October 2020
Narcotic Drugs (Licence Charges) Amendments (Cannabis) Regulations 2018 (F2018L00318)	The amendment increases the annual licence charge for both types of cannabis licences issued under the Narcotic Drugs Act 1967 (based on the annual review of fees and charges in line with the government's Cost Recovery Framework) - Sch 1 (items 1, 2) .	21 March 2018 – 14 July 2020

Proposed changes

The legislative instruments will be remade with drafting edits to continue to support the operation of the ND Act and the Licence Charges Act. Only necessary changes arising from the consultation will be considered as part of the remaking process.

Next steps

Any feedback provided will inform the remaking of the sunseting instruments.

Consultation responses can be submitted via the Department's [Consultation Hub](#).

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All information in this publication is correct as at June 2026