



## CROO 2024 Diversity Survey

The Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (410 ILCS 705/7-30) mandates the Cannabis Regulation Oversight Officer (CROO) survey the Illinois cannabis industry annually to assess the diversity of the owners and employees in the industry, as well as the contractors/subcontractors working within the industry.

The 2024 survey was distributed in May and answers received through September. Additional information about past surveys is available at the end of this document. Since 2021, CROO distributes two separate surveys: a mandatory survey for cannabis companies to complete and a voluntary survey for cannabis employees. The survey was sent to every company that operates a cannabis license (or multiple licenses), and every individual who is on record as having a cannabis employee license. Anonymous links were sent to companies to distribute to their employees and State inspectors provided QR codes linking to the employee survey.

For 2024, CROO recorded answers from 204 firms with 143 providing information about their owners, 51 providing information about directors, and 75 about executives. Additionally, 2,346 employees answered survey questions to self-identify their race, gender, and other demographic and employment questions.

### Highlights from the 2024 Diversity Survey:

- More companies participated (204 firms responding vs. 134 in 2023)
- 30% of companies were majority-owned by Black owners (**up** from 27% in 2023 and 0% in 2020)
- 17% of companies were majority-owned by women (**up** from 16% in 2023 and 3% in 2020)
- 41% of people with 5% or more equity in cannabis businesses were minorities (25% Black, 6% Hispanic, 6% Asian, and 3% additional or 2+ races)
- 23% of C-Suite executives (CEO, CFO, etc.) were identified as Black (**up** from 19% in 2023 and 1% in 2020)
- 7% of C-Suite executives were identified as Hispanic (**up** from 5% in 2023 and 2020)

<b>CROO Diversity Survey - Race</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Majority-Owned Firms</b> (firms with 51% or more equity)	<b>32</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>204</b>
White	100%	26%	31%	33%
Black	0%	25%	27%	30%
Coalition of Minority Races	0%	14%	14%	5%
Latinx / Hispanic	0%	5%	5%	5%
Asian	0%	2%	3%	4%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	0%	2%	2%	3%
Unknown	0%	27%	18%	21%
<b>Majority Owners</b> (people with 5% or more equity)	<b>~80</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>443</b>
White	88%	46%	50%	48%
Black	1%	25%	26%	25%
Latinx / Hispanic	1%	8%	7%	7%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	2%	0%
Asian	0%	4%	5%	6%
Middle East/North African	0%	0%	2%	1%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	0%	4%	5%	2%
Unknown	9%	13%	5%	11%
<b>Minority Owners</b> (people with under 5% equity)	<b>~170</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>243</b>
White	71%	49%	58%	55%
Black	0%	16%	13%	15%
Latinx / Hispanic	13%	3%	3%	3%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	1%	0%
Asian	2%	3%	6%	2%
Middle East/North African	0%	0%	0%	1%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	2%	3%	1%	0%
Unknown	11%	26%	19%	22%
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>~100</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>239</b>
White	90%	57%	65%	63%
Black	6%	15%	20%	16%
Latinx / Hispanic	2%	4%	5%	6%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	1%	3%	6%	2%
Middle East/North African	0%	2%	1%	2%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	1%	2%	1%	2%
Unknown	1%	15%	2%	8%
<b>C-Suite Executives</b> (company-reported race)	<b>~140</b>	<b>~50</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>231</b>
White	80%	53%	61%	55%
Black	1%	16%	19%	23%
Latinx / Hispanic	5%	5%	5%	7%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	1%	0%	0%
Asian	2%	4%	6%	7%
Middle East/North African	0%	4%	2%	1%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	1%	3%	4%	1%
Unknown	11%	13%	3%	6%

<b>CROO Diversity Survey - Race</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Senior Managers</b>	<b>~180</b>	<b>~200</b>	<b>~60</b>	<b>62</b>
White	70%	69%	72%	71%
Black	8%	7%	11%	6%
Latinx / Hispanic	4%	9%	3%	11%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	3%	4%	2%	5%
Middle East/North African	0%	0%	2%	2%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	2%	1%	2%	0%
Unknown	14%	7%	8%	5%
<b>Supervisors / Middle Managers (agents-in-charge)</b>	<b>~700</b>	<b>~950</b>	<b>~600</b>	<b>677</b>
White	55%	69%	64%	71%
Black	7%	7%	6%	8%
Latinx / Hispanic	3%	12%	11%	11%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	1%	1%
Asian	0%	3%	2%	2%
Middle East/North African	0%	0%	0%	0%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	2%	1%	2%	1%
Unknown	34%	7%	15%	6%
<b>Frontline Employees</b>	<b>~4,000</b>	<b>~2,250</b>	<b>~1,400</b>	<b>1,535</b>
White	49%	64%	52%	79%
Black	10%	9%	9%	6%
Latinx / Hispanic	5%	13%	11%	8%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	1%	0%
Asian	1%	2%	2%	1%
Middle East/North African	0%	0%	1%	0%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	3%	1%	2%	2%
Unknown	33%	8%	23%	4%
<b>Frontline (Part-Time) (only requested in 2020)</b>	<b>~1,000</b>			
White	47%			
Black	21%			
Additional Races / 2+ Races	3%			
Unknown	30%			
<b>Illinois – Statewide (U.S. Census total population for state)</b>				
White	61%	60%	60%	61%
Black	15%	15%	15%	13%
Latinx / Hispanic	18%	18%	18%	19%
Native American/Native Hawaiian	0%	0%	1%	1%
Asian	2%	6%	6%	6%
Middle East/North African	0%	0%	1%	1%
Additional Races / 2+ Races	2%	3%	1%	1%
Unknown	2%	0%	0%	0%

<b>CROO Diversity Survey - Race</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>C-Suite Executives (self-identified)</b>				<b>71</b>
White				56%
Black				18%
Latinx / Hispanic				7%
Native American/Native Hawaiian				0%
Asian				7%
Middle East/North African				1%
Additional Races / 2+ Races				1%
Unknown				8%

<b>CROO Diversity Survey - Gender</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Majority-Owned Firms (firms with 51% or more equity)</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>204</b>
Men	97%	50%	69%	66%
Women	3%	12%	16%	17%
Nonbinary*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	0%	38%	15%	18%
<b>Majority Owners (people with 5% or more equity)</b>	<b>~80</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>443</b>
Men	82%	70%	70%	66%
Women	18%	19%	25%	17%
Nonbinary*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	0%	11%	5%	18%
<b>Minority Owners (people with under 5% equity)</b>	<b>~170</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>243</b>
Men	71%	59%	64%	65%
Women	29%	19%	23%	16%
Nonbinary*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	0%	22%	13%	20%
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>~100</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>239</b>
Men	83%	67%	76%	72%
Women	17%	20%	23%	21%
Nonbinary*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	0%	13%	6%	7%
<b>C-Suite Executives (company-reported gender)</b>	<b>~140</b>	<b>~50</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>231</b>
Men	71%	57%	72%	72%
Women	27%	18%	25%	23%
Nonbinary*	0%	0%	2%	0%
Unknown	2%	25%	1%	4%
<b>Senior Managers</b>	<b>~180</b>	<b>~200</b>	<b>~60</b>	<b>62</b>
Men	57%	52%	44%	61%
Women	38%	43%	45%	29%
Nonbinary*	1%	0%	2%	3%
Unknown	4%	5%	9%	7%

<b>CROO Diversity Survey - Gender</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Supervisors / Middle Managers (agent-in-charge)</b>	<b>~700</b>	<b>~950</b>	<b>~600</b>	<b>677</b>
Men	50%	47%	46%	49%
Women	31%	46%	40%	41%
Nonbinary*	1%	3%	2%	3%
Unknown	18%	4%	12%	8%
<b>Frontline Employees</b>	<b>~4,000</b>	<b>~2,250</b>	<b>~1,400</b>	<b>1,535</b>
Men	42%	44%	37%	32%
Women	32%	48%	37%	31%
Nonbinary*	1%	4%	4%	3%
Unknown	25%	4%	22%	34%
<b>Frontline (Part-Time) (only asked in 2020)</b>	<b>~1,000</b>			
Men	39%			
Women	51%			
Nonbinary*	1%			
Unknown	9%			
<b>Illinois – Statewide (U.S. Census total population for state)</b>				
Men	49%	49%	49%	49%
Women	51%	51%	51%	51%
Nonbinary*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>C-Suite Executives (self-identified in 2024)</b>				<b>71</b>
Men				69%
Women				18%
Nonbinary*				1%
Unknown				11%

## Details and limitations:

<b>CROO Diversity Survey – Survey Details</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Release dates</b>	<b>Dec 2020- Mar 2021</b>	<b>Dec 2021- July 2022</b>	<b>May 2023- Aug 2023</b>	<b>May-Aug 2024</b>
<b>Total Responses from Companies</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>204</b>
Estimated Response Rate	~100%	~100%	~100%	~100%
Number of Companies Reporting				
Owners	32	86	118	143
Directors	32	78	34	51
C-Suite Executives	32	81	54	75
Employees	32			
<b>Total Responses from People/Employees</b>		<b>4,480</b>	<b>2,103</b>	<b>2,346</b>
Estimated Response Rate		45-55%	~20-25%	20-25%
Employee Locations:				
Corporate / Headquarters		768	210	207
Dispensaries		1,105	595	902
Cultivation / IDOA-Licensed Locations		1,968	1,048	840
Other Locations		638	250	84
Laboratory				39
Employee Positions:				
C-Suite Executives		~50	~60	71
Senior Managers		~300	~60	62
Supervisors / Middle Managers		~950	~600	677
Frontline Employees		~2,250	~1,400	1,535
Unknown / Other Employees		~925	~1,000	

\* The tilde (~) symbol means numbers are approximations used for the analysis.

\* In 2020, the CROO Diversity Survey only went to companies with no employees self-identifying their demographics. That year, CROO asked cannabis companies to divide employees into full-time and part-time categories.

\* In 2024, the CROO Diversity Survey gathered data from both C-Suite Executives through self-identified and company-provided responses. The results were largely consistent and both are shown above.

## **More information about CROO Diversity Surveys:**

### **2020:**

- 2020 Diversity Survey was sent only to license-holding cannabis firms operating in December 2020-March 2021.
- Responses by company: 32 companies
  - o Estimated response rate: 100%
  - o Firms were instructed to and responded for as many principal officers holding equity in their business as possible.
- Responses by cannabis employees: none
  - o No cannabis employees, other than those assisting with the company responses, directly answered survey questions.
  - o Reported workforce: 5,000 full time and 1,000 part time
- In 2020's survey, majority owners were defined as the largest owners holding at least up to 51% of the firm's equity; minority owners were all other equity holders.

### **2021-2022:**

- 2021 Diversity Survey was sent to license-holding cannabis firms in December 2021-July 2022, including new firms that received their licenses in 2021.
- Responses by company: 142 companies
  - o Estimated response rate: nearly 100%
- Responses by cannabis employees: 4,480 people responded
  - o Estimated response rate: 45-55% (implied cannabis workforce: 8,100-10,000)
  - o Employee responses by location:
    - 768 responses were from employees at corporate or headquarter offices (17%)
    - 1,105 responses were from cultivation center or IDOA-licensed locations (25%)
    - 1,968 responses were from dispensary employees (44%)
    - 638 responses were from other cannabis locations (labs, etc.) (14%)
  - o Employee responses by position:
    - ~50 reported working at the C-Suite (CEO, COO, etc.) level (1%)
    - ~300 reported working at the senior manager level (7%)
    - ~950 reported working at the supervisor / middle manager (agent in charge, etc.) level (21%)
    - ~2,250 reported working were frontline employees (agents, cultivators, etc.) (50%)
    - ~925 did not report their job title (21%)
- In 2021's survey, firms were instructed to and provided the top 10 equity holders if they were people.

### **2023:**

- 2023 Diversity Survey was sent to license-holding cannabis firms in May 2023-August 2023, including new firms that received their licenses since 2021.
- Responses by company: 134 companies
  - o Estimated response rate: nearly 100%
  - o 118 providing answers on owners
  - o 34 on directors
  - o 54 on executives
  - o Companies licensed but still seeking initial funding and developing plans may be underrepresented in the results. These underrepresented companies are primarily Social Equity Applicants with diverse owners.
- Responses by cannabis employees: 2,103 people responded
  - o Estimated response rate: 20-25% (implied cannabis workforce: 8,400-10,500)
  - o Employee responses by location:
    - 210 responses were from employees at corporate or headquarter offices (10%)
    - 595 responses were from cultivation center or IDOA-licensed locations (28%)
    - 1,048 responses were from dispensary employees (50%)
    - 250 responses were from other cannabis locations (labs, etc.) (12%)
  - o Employee responses by position:
    - ~60 reported working at the C-Suite (CEO, COO, etc.) level (3%)
    - ~60 reported working at the senior manager level (3%)
    - ~600 reported working at the supervisor /middle manager (agent in charge, etc.) level (29%)
    - ~1,400 reported working were frontline employees (agents, cultivators, etc.) (65%)
    - ~1,000 did not report a specific job title but used CROO categories (47%)

- Nonbinary questions:
  - 66 people identified as non-binary /gender non-conforming
  - 333 people identified as being members of the LGBTQIA+ community
  - 40 people identified as transgender
  - Nonbinary questions were intended to count gender identity for those who do not identify as men or women, particularly those who identify as transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC).
- In 2023's survey, firms were instructed to and provided the top 10 equity holders if they were people.
- In 2023's survey, firms included lists of people on their Boards (if applicable) and C-Suite Executives. That included ~160 directors for 34 boards and ~200 executives for 54 companies.

The **2024 Diversity Survey** is the fourth demographic survey issued and analyzed by the Cannabis Regulation Oversight Officer. The survey was sent to cannabis firms, which reported on the diversity of their owners, directors, and C-Suite executives, and to cannabis employees that work at such firms.

Each company provided demographics of their top 10 owners, all directors, and executives as a required part of the Diversity Survey. Senior managers to frontline staff self-reported their own demographics. The employee demographics were voluntarily answered. All responses are counted, regardless of Illinois residency. Demographics of the managers and employees are self-identified survey responses by the cannabis workers, including those in cultivation, dispensaries, corporate offices, and all other employees responding to the survey. The statewide demographics are based on the U.S. Census 2023 estimates.

Note that "Additional Races" may include Asian and additional races that were less frequent in the survey data. Individuals who self-identified as multiple races were categorized into Black or Hispanic/Latina/o/x groups, if possible, to help interpretation and follow the U.S. Census' ethnicity categorization so that Black percentage includes Hispanic (*i.e.*, 61% identified White, non-Hispanic; 15% Black, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic).

Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

U.S. Census, Table V2023, American Community Survey Community Estimates for 2022, available at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/IL>.

Of the 2024 survey results:

- Responses by company: 204 companies
  - Estimated response rate: nearly 100%
  - 143 provided information about their owners
  - 51 provided information about their directors, if they had corporate boards
  - 75 provided information about their executives (note: the company-provided demographics were fairly consistent with the self-identified demographics reported on the employee survey)
- Responses by cannabis employees: 2,346 people responded
  - Estimated response rate: 20-25% (implied cannabis workforce: 9,400-11,700)
  - Employee responses by work location (% of total in parentheses):
    - 207 responses from employees at corporate or headquarter offices (9%)
    - 902 responses from dispensary employees (38%)
    - 656 responses from cultivation center or craft grower employees (28%)
    - 106 responses from transportation employees (5%)
    - 78 responses from infuser employees (3%)
    - 84 responses from other employment locations (4%)
    - 39 responses from laboratory (2%)
  - Employee responses by position:
    - 71 responses from C-Suite executives (*i.e.*, CEO, CFO, COO) (3% -- note: these demographics were fairly consistent with the company-provided demographics on the firm diversity survey)
    - 62 responses from senior managers (*i.e.*, regional directors, vice presidents) (3%)
    - 677 responses from supervisors and middle managers (*i.e.*, agents-in-charge and other managerial job titles) (29%)
    - 1,535 responses from frontline (65%)
  - Nonbinary questions:
    - 61 people identified as non-binary /gender non-conforming
    - 315 people identified as being members of the LGBTQIA+ community
    - 35 people identified as transgender



- Nonbinary questions were intended to count gender identity for those who do not identify as men or women, particularly those who identify as transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC).

Additional information on minorities, women, veterans, people with disabilities, residency in Disproportionately Impacted Areas, and past involvement with the criminal justice system is collected in both the company and employee diversity surveys.

Questions and comments may be sent to [FPR.CROO@illinois.gov](mailto:FPR.CROO@illinois.gov)