

The Cannabis Payroll Buyer's Checklist

20 questions to ask before choosing a payroll & HR provider.



Use this with any provider you evaluate - including Paragon.

01 CANNABIS COMMITMENT

- ☐ Does the provider explicitly accept my type of cannabis business?
- ☐ How long has it actively served cannabis operators?
- ☐ Could changes to its banking or cannabis policy affect my service?
- ☐ Does it invest in the industry beyond selling software?

02 PAYROLL & COMPLIANCE

- ☐ Who handles payroll tax filing and tax notices?
- ☐ How does the system support multi-state or multi-EIN businesses?
- ☐ Can prior wages and taxes be consolidated if I switch mid-year?
- ☐ What happens when an urgent or off-cycle payroll is needed?

03 TECHNOLOGY & WORKFORCE

- ☐ Can payroll, HR, onboarding, timekeeping and scheduling work together?
- ☐ What integrations are available for systems I already use?
- ☐ Can the platform scale as locations and headcount grow?
- ☐ What reporting and workforce analytics are included?

04 SERVICE & SUPPORT

- ☐ Will I reach a person when payroll needs immediate attention?
- ☐ Who owns implementation and data migration?
- ☐ Am I running payroll myself, or can someone help me process it?
- ☐ What happens if my internal payroll or HR person leaves?

05 PRICING

- ☐ Is pricing publicly available?
- ☐ Are there cannabis-specific surcharges?
- ☐ What implementation, W-2, off-cycle or year-end fees should I expect?
- ☐ Am I paying per payroll run, per employee per month, or both?

TIP: Ask each provider for a realistic first-year total, not only the advertised starting price.

THE QUESTIONS MOST BUYERS FORGET TO ASK

Your payroll provider shouldn't exist in a vacuum.

Especially for a new licensee, payroll sits inside a much larger operating system. Ask what happens when you need help with the next thing.

BANKING

☐

Can you introduce me to cannabis-friendly banking resources?

CPA / ACCOUNTING

☐

Do you know CPAs or accountants who understand cannabis businesses?

BENEFITS + RETIREMENT

☐

Can you help me find benefits and retirement resources?

WORKERS' COMP

☐

What workers' compensation resources are available?

SYSTEM CONNECTIONS

☐

Can payroll connect with my accounting, POS, timekeeping or other systems?

INDUSTRY NETWORK

☐

Do you have relationships with other cannabis business specialists?

NEW LICENSEE NOTE

The company processing payroll may become one of your first pieces of business infrastructure. Ask what happens when you need help with the next thing - not just the next payroll.

Before you sign anything...

01

TOTAL EXPECTED COST

Not just the advertised starting price. Include base fees, PEPM, implementation, add-ons and year-end costs.

02

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Separate software from service. Confirm implementation, tax support, integrations, training and ongoing help.

03

WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG

Know who you contact, how quickly you can reach them and who owns resolution when payroll cannot wait.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Keep researching at your own pace

Choose the next step that matches where you are today.



01

STILL RESEARCHING?

Learning Center

Articles and practical education for cannabis employers.

paragonpayroll.com/learning-center

02

WANT TO SEE PACKAGES?

View Pricing

See published payroll and HCM package pricing.

paragonpayroll.com/pricing

03

WANT A QUICK ESTIMATE?

Pricing Estimator

Build a quick estimate without starting a sales conversation.

paragonpayroll.com/pricingtool

04

READY TO TALK?

Let's Talk

Connect with the Paragon team about your operation.

paragonpayroll.com/lets-talk

NOTES FROM YOUR PROVIDER CONVERSATIONS

A NOTE FROM PARAGON

This resource is designed to help cannabis businesses evaluate any payroll provider, including us. Product availability, pricing and provider policies can change, so confirm current details directly with each company before making a decision.