

★ IRISH LUCK! NO RAIN SEEN FOR ST. PAT'S

A guide to going green for the holiday

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Whether you're planning on going to a parade or deciding how much green to don, there are many ways to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

Here's what you need to know about the Irish holiday Friday and beyond as you make your plans:

Weather

If you are heading out for St. Patrick's Day, expect a partly cloudy day with mild temperatures with a morning low in the 30s, rising to the low to mid 50s toward the afternoon, according to the National Weather Service.

On Friday evening, there's a chance of rain. But if you're outside, the luck may be with you as the probability of rain

is slim.

By the weekend, the cloudiness will be gone, giving way to sunshine Saturday and a high in the mid 50s just in time for parades and other festivities. Sunday, although the high will be in the 40s, it will be windy, the weather service said.

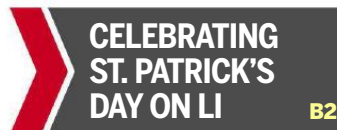
"It'll be a little breezy and a little cooler," said Bryan Ramsey, meteorologist with the National Weather Service. But other than that, he said, "you don't need to worry about rain."

Trains

To help accommodate the flux of paradegoers, the LIRR will run 10 additional trains Friday between Penn Station and Grand Central Madison, the MTA said. The trains will be on multiple branches. Outside of the listed changes,



Danielle Bermingham at Comsewogue band parade practice Thursday. ■ Video: newsday.com/longisland



trains will run on weekday service.

Find out more about the changes for St. Patrick's Day: new.mta.info/article/st-patricks-day-lirr-service

New York City parade

On Friday, New York's iconic St. Patrick's Day Parade will start at 11 a.m. at Fifth Avenue at East 44th Street and end on East 79th Street.

The annual tribute to St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ire-

land, has evolved into a large parade that will welcome more than 150,000 marchers.

And if you're watching on television or making your way to the parade in the Big Apple, be sure to check out Long Island's own Comsewogue High School Marching Band at the processional.

Long Island parades

Looking for a smaller way to take in the festivities on the Island over the weekend, shamrock out to these events and others with your best green outfits.

A few of the local parades include:

This year's "Am-O'Gansett"

Parade in Amagansett Saturday at noon proceeds down Main Street from the municipal parking lot. At the end of Main Street, it turns around and comes back up Main Street. For more information contact amagansettchamber.org.

In Brentwood, the procession starts on Saturday at Washington Avenue and Clarke Street at 1 p.m. For more information, call 631-273-4443.

Hampton Bays' parade starts on Saturday at 11 a.m. at Hampton Bays Elementary and will follow Ponquogue Avenue to Montauk Highway. For more information, hbstpatricksdayparade.com

With Matthew Chayes

Medical marijuana firms sue state regulators

BY SARINA TRANGLE
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A trade group representing medical marijuana firms filed a lawsuit Thursday challenging the state's decision to issue recreational retail licenses in phases.

The Coalition for Access to Regulated and Safe Cannabis filed a case in the state Supreme Court in Albany seeking to have the first type of retail license deemed "unconstitutional" and dispensary applications immediately opened to all businesses. The 2021 measure legalizing cannabis noted "the initial adult-use cannabis retail dispensary license application period shall be opened for all applicants at the same time,"

the suit notes.

But regulators created a conditional program to give a head start to New Yorkers impacted by the old marijuana laws. So far, the state has approved 66 conditional business licenses, including 13 on Long Island, for entrepreneurs who have — or are related to someone who has — a marijuana-related conviction. Applications are not open to other retailers, and proposed regulations could bar medical marijuana companies from selling to recreational consumers until late 2025.

"Regulators have neglected their responsibilities to enforce the [law] as written and instead focused on high-minded policymaking — a role that is reserved for our State's elected of-

ficials," coalition counsel David Feuerstein said in a statement.

The Office of Cannabis Management, which oversees the industry, declined to comment on pending litigation.

The coalition includes one physician, two people aspiring to join the New York cannabis field and some of the firms licensed to sell medical marijuana in New York, including Curaleaf, Green Thumb Industries, Acreage and PharmaCann, a spokeswoman said. These firms have operations in other states and all but PharmaCann are publicly traded, according to their websites.

In court papers, the coalition argues the state has been slow to usher in legal, recreational businesses. The group wants

the court to declare the conditional retail licenses "unconstitutional," immediately open up retail licenses to all applicants and require regulators to step up efforts to combat unlicensed cannabis businesses.

The lawsuit was widely expected, according to Neil Kaufman, whose Hauppauge-based law firm, Kaufman McGowan PLLC, represents investors and cannabis firms. He said medical marijuana firms were required to be vertically integrated — that is to handle everything from cultivation to processing to sales — when the substance became legal for patients. Now regulators are limiting vertical integration in the recreational sector and looking to hold back medical players,

Kaufman said.

"These companies bought these licenses for \$50 or \$100 million and then they invested tens or hundreds of millions of dollars more building their infrastructure," said Kaufman, adding that with full legalization, they expected to "realize the full fruits of their investments."

"Lo and behold, they were frozen out," Kaufman said. "What do you expect them to do?"

Osbert Orduña, a Suffolk resident licensed to open a conditional retail shop in Queens and co-chair of the tristate chapter of the National Hispanic Cannabis Council trade group, said opening applications up to everyone would "create pandemonium."