



## **Dianna Houenou** *(Way-noo)*

COMMISSION CHAIR  
NEW JERSEY CANNABIS REGULATORY  
COMMISSION

Dianna Houenou served as senior policy advisor and associate counsel in Governor Phil Murphy's office prior to being appointed to the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission. In that capacity she advised the governor on policy and legislative issues concerning criminal justice, military and veterans, community affairs, and immigrants' rights. She also played a significant role in establishing New Jersey's Office of New Americans and advancing the Murphy administration's criminal justice priorities, including expungement reform and cannabis legalization. Additionally, she supported multiple executive branch departments in developing and implementing legislation, executive orders, and new policy initiatives.

Before joining New Jersey state government, Chairwoman Houenou was policy counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey (ACLU-NJ) where she developed legislative-focused strategies for ACLU-NJ advocacy campaigns. As part of that function she led the organization's coalitions advocating for cannabis legalization and Newark police reform.

In addition to her role in setting New Jersey on the path to legalizing cannabis with focus on social justice, evidence of her successful work is evidenced by the restoration of voting rights for people on probation and parole, the law requiring the state's attorney general to investigate police-involved deaths, and the establishment of Fair and Welcoming policies in local towns and State government.

Dianna earned her bachelor's degree in chemistry and Afro-American studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and her juris doctor from the University of North Carolina School of Law.