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States Where Kratom is Illegal in the United States, 2025 by Georgia Wrongful Death Attorney P.C.

Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*), a tropical tree native to Southeast Asia, has sparked significant debate in the United States due to its psychoactive properties, opioid-like effects, and potential for both therapeutic use and abuse. While kratom remains legal at the federal level, its status varies widely across states, counties, and municipalities, with some imposing outright bans and others enacting regulatory measures like the [Kratom Consumer Protection Act \(KCPA\)](#).

As of 2025, six states have banned kratom entirely, and several local jurisdictions within otherwise legal states have imposed restrictions. This article provides a detailed, well-researched overview of the states where kratom is illegal in 2025, the reasons behind these bans, ongoing advocacy efforts, and the broader context of kratom's legal landscape, drawing on current web sources and regulatory insights.

States Where Kratom Is Illegal in 2025

As of 2025, kratom is illegal to buy, sell, possess, or use in the following six states, often classified as a Schedule I controlled substance, akin to drugs like heroin or LSD:

1. Alabama

- **Status:** Kratom has been illegal since May 2016, classified as a Schedule I controlled substance under Alabama's Controlled Substances Act.
- **Details:** The ban was enacted due to concerns over kratom's opioid-like effects, potential for addiction, and lack of FDA regulation. Authorities cited health risks, including reported overdoses and side effects like seizures and hallucinations, as justification. The [American Kratom Association \(AKA\)](#) has been working to replace the ban with the KCPA, which would regulate rather than prohibit kratom, but progress remains slow due to strong opposition from lawmakers and medical professionals. Residents caught possessing kratom face serious penalties, including potential fines or imprisonment.



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- **Context:** Alabama's strict stance reflects its broader approach to combating opioid-related issues, with lawmakers arguing that unregulated substances like kratom pose significant public health risks.

2. Arkansas

- **Status:** Kratom has been illegal since 2016, listed as a Schedule I controlled substance.
- **Details:** The ban followed reports of health issues linked to kratom use, including hospitalizations and overdoses. Arkansas lawmakers have resisted efforts to legalize kratom, citing its unregulated nature and the FDA's lack of approval for therapeutic use. The AKA continues advocacy efforts, emphasizing kratom's potential as an alternative for pain management and opioid withdrawal, but the state's firm stance has not wavered. Possession or sale of kratom can result in severe legal consequences, similar to other controlled substances.
- **Context:** Arkansas's ban aligns with its conservative drug policies, prioritizing public safety over potential benefits advocated by kratom users.

3. Indiana

- **Status:** Kratom has been illegal since 2014, categorized as a synthetic controlled substance.
- **Details:** Indiana's ban stems from a misclassification of kratom as a synthetic drug, despite it being a natural botanical. The state's early adoption of the ban was driven by concerns over its accessibility in smoke shops and online, as well as reports of adverse health effects. Advocacy groups like the AKA argue that this misclassification ignores kratom's traditional use and potential benefits, but legislative efforts to reverse the ban have not succeeded. Possession, sale, or use of kratom carries significant penalties, including fines and potential jail time.
- **Context:** Indiana's strict drug laws and skepticism toward unregulated substances have kept the ban in place, limiting research and access.

4. Rhode Island

- **Status:** Kratom is illegal and classified as a controlled substance, though a KCPA bill is under consideration.
- **Details:** Rhode Island banned kratom due to its opioid-like properties and reported health risks, including overdose deaths. Despite the ban, a 2023 agreement by the [Rhode Island Department of Health](#) with the AKA suggests kratom may not meet the criteria for Schedule I status, opening the door for potential reversal. A pending KCPA aims to regulate rather than prohibit kratom, but as of 2025, the ban remains in effect. Enforcement is inconsistent, with some reports indicating 40% of surveyed tobacco and vape shops still sell kratom illegally.



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- **Context:** The state's cautious approach reflects concerns about addiction, but advocacy efforts may lead to regulatory changes in the near future.

5. Vermont

- **Status:** Kratom is illegal and listed as a controlled substance, though a KCPA is under consideration to lift the ban.
- **Details:** Vermont banned kratom due to its psychoactive effects and lack of FDA-approved therapeutic benefits. In 2023, the [Vermont Department of Health](#) agreed to reconsider kratom's Schedule I status, and a pending KCPA could legalize and regulate it. Until formal legal proceedings conclude, kratom remains illegal, with possession or sale carrying penalties similar to other controlled substances. Advocacy groups are pushing for reform, citing user testimonials about pain relief and opioid withdrawal benefits.
- **Context:** Vermont's progressive stance on other substances (e.g., cannabis) contrasts with its kratom ban, but evolving public sentiment may lead to changes.

6. Wisconsin

- **Status:** Kratom is illegal, classified as a Schedule I controlled substance.
- **Details:** Wisconsin banned kratom due to concerns about its addictive potential and reported health risks, including seizures and liver toxicity. The state's lawmakers have resisted efforts to legalize or regulate kratom, citing the FDA's warnings and lack of standardized product safety. The AKA is advocating for a KCPA to replace the ban, but no significant progress has been made as of 2025. Possession or sale can lead to serious legal consequences.
- **Context:** Wisconsin's conservative drug policies and focus on public health risks have maintained the ban, despite growing national debate over kratom's benefits.

Local Bans in States Where Kratom Is Legal

Even in states where kratom is legal, certain counties and cities have imposed their own bans, creating a patchwork of regulations. Notable examples include:

- California: Kratom is legal statewide but banned in San Diego (since 2016) and Oceanside.
- Colorado: Legal statewide, but Denver prohibits kratom for human consumption (though sale is allowed), and Parker and Monument ban sales.
- Florida: Legal except in Sarasota County, where it is banned.
- Illinois: Legal for those over 18, except in Jerseyville. Local bans are under review in DeKalb and Oak Lawn (as of June 2025).



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- Louisiana: Legal for those over 21, except in Ascension, Franklin, and Rapides parishes, where it is banned. A statewide ban is set to take effect on August 1, 2025, making Louisiana the seventh state to prohibit kratom entirely.
- Mississippi: Legal except in Union County, though over 30 counties and cities have restricted or banned it.

These local bans reflect concerns about kratom's safety and accessibility, often driven by reports of overdoses or public health campaigns. However, enforcement varies, and some banned areas still see illicit sales.

Reasons for Kratom Bans

States and localities have banned kratom due to several concerns, primarily driven by federal agency warnings and local health incidents:

- **FDA and DEA Warnings:** The [FDA has not approved kratom for any medical use](#), citing no evidence of therapeutic benefits and risks like addiction, seizures, liver toxicity, and overdose. The DEA lists kratom as a "drug of concern" and attempted to classify it as a Schedule I substance in 2016, though public backlash led to the reversal.
- **Health Risks:** Kratom's active compounds, mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine, bind to opioid receptors, mimicking effects of drugs like morphine. Reported side effects include nausea, vomiting, hallucinations, and, in high doses, seizures or coma. The [CDC linked kratom to 91 overdose deaths from 2016-2017](#), while other estimates suggest over 4,100 deaths from 2020-2022 involved kratom.
- **Addiction Potential:** Kratom is recognized as addictive, with withdrawal symptoms (e.g., cravings, muscle aches, nausea) similar to opioids. This has raised concerns about its role in the ongoing opioid epidemic.
- **Lack of Regulation:** As an unregulated dietary supplement, kratom products vary in potency and purity, increasing risks of contamination or inconsistent dosing.
- **Local Incidents:** Bans often follow high-profile cases, such as overdose deaths or hospitalizations, as seen in Alabama and Arkansas. In Louisiana, the 2025 ban was spurred by constituent stories of kratom-related harm.

Advocacy and Opposition

The debate over kratom's legality is polarized:



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- **Proponents:** The AKA and users argue kratom offers pain relief, energy boosts, and opioid withdrawal support with a lower risk of respiratory depression than traditional opioids. They advocate for the KCPA, which regulates product safety, labeling, and age restrictions rather than banning kratom. States like Arizona, Georgia, and Utah have passed the KCPA, setting a model for regulation.
- **Opponents:** Medical professionals, the FDA, and lawmakers cite kratom's risks, lack of clinical research, and potential to exacerbate addiction. They argue bans protect public health, especially in states with high opioid abuse rates.
- **Current Sentiment:** Posts on X reflect frustration with bans, particularly in Louisiana, where users criticize the August 2025 prohibition and warn against stockpiling due to possession penalties. Advocacy efforts continue in states like Rhode Island and Vermont, where KCPA proposals show promise.

Broader Context and Future Outlook

Kratom's legal status in 2025 reflects a fragmented regulatory landscape. While 44 states allow kratom (often with age or labeling restrictions), the six bans and numerous local restrictions highlight ongoing concerns about its safety. The lack of federal regulation leaves states to act independently, creating challenges for users and researchers. The FDA's planned clinical study on kratom's safety and pharmacokinetics may influence future policies, but as of now, no federal ban exists.

States considering bans or regulations in 2025 include:

- Connecticut, Illinois, and North Carolina: Proposed restrictions or bans are under review, with local advocacy pushing back.
- Michigan: Legislation to classify kratom as a Schedule II substance is pending.
- Mississippi: Additional counties may impose bans, though no statewide prohibition exists.

The AKA's efforts to promote the KCPA aim to standardize regulations, ensuring product safety and access while addressing health concerns. However, bans in states like Alabama and Wisconsin are unlikely to be lifted soon due to entrenched opposition. If therapeutic benefits are proven, states with rigid bans may face challenges adopting kratom-based treatments.



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Critical Perspective

Kratom's bans reflect a tension between public health caution and individual freedom. Critics of bans argue they limit access to a potentially safer alternative to opioids, especially for chronic pain or addiction recovery, and hinder research into its benefits. However, the lack of FDA oversight and inconsistent product quality fuel legitimate concerns about safety and abuse. States like Louisiana, set to join the banned list in August 2025, illustrate how local tragedies can drive policy, even when scientific consensus is lacking. The patchwork of laws creates confusion for users, who may face legal risks unknowingly, and underscores the need for federal guidance to balance risks and benefits.

Conclusion

In 2025, kratom is illegal in Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin, with Louisiana set to join this list on August 1, 2025. Local bans in cities like San Diego, Denver, and Sarasota County further complicate access. These prohibitions stem from concerns about addiction, health risks, and lack of regulation, despite advocacy for kratom's potential benefits. Users in banned states face serious penalties, while advocacy groups like the AKA push for regulatory frameworks like the KCPA. As the debate continues, consulting local laws and a healthcare professional before using kratom is essential. For further assistance or updates on kratom legality, contact the AKA or a legal expert.

Seek Justice for Kratom-Related Injuries or Losses – Act Now!

Have you or a loved one suffered injuries or tragic loss due to kratom use in Georgia or elsewhere? You may be entitled to compensation for medical expenses, emotional distress, or wrongful death. Our experienced kratom attorneys are here to investigate your case, hold negligent parties accountable, and fight for the justice you deserve. Time is critical, fill out our free, no-obligation consultation form today to discuss your kratom-related claim with our dedicated team. Don't delay; [complete the form to take the first step toward recovery and accountability!](#)