

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 3.2
(ID # 29170)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, October 28, 2025

FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Adoption of Ordinance No. 1004 Regulating the Sale and Distribution of Kratom Products. All Districts. [Total Cost - \$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt Ordinance No. 1004 Regulating the Sale and Distribution of Kratom Products within unincorporated areas of Riverside County.
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the ordinance within 15 days after adoption of the ordinance pursuant to California Government Code Section 25124.

ACTION:Policy

Jeff Van Wageningen, County Executive Officer 10/22/2025

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A			Budget Adjustment:	No
			For Fiscal Year:	25/26

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

Kratom (*mitragyna speciosa*) is a botanical product native to Southeast Asia that has been used traditionally for its stimulant and pain-relieving properties. Its two primary active alkaloids, mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), bind to the same opioid receptors in the brain as morphine and heroin. While low doses may act as a mild stimulant, high doses can cause sedation, dependence, and opioid-like withdrawal symptoms.

In recent years, highly concentrated and synthetic kratom-based products (marketed in the form of powders, capsules, gummies, and “energy shots”) have proliferated in the U.S. These products are commonly sold online, in smoke shops, and at convenience stores, often with no quality control or labeling standards. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has repeatedly warned that these products may be contaminated or adulterated and has not approved kratom for any medical use. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) lists kratom and 7-OH as “Drugs and Chemicals of Concern.” On July 29, 2025, the FDA formally requested that the DEA place 7-OH products on the federal controlled-substance schedule.

Research has shown that 7-OH is significantly more potent than morphine, binding to opioid receptors with higher affinity and producing stronger pain-relieving and euphoric effects. High-concentration 7-OH products have been linked to addiction, overdose, liver injury, and psychosis, including hallucinations and confusion. Los Angeles County health officials recently issued a public health alert after several deaths were tied to high-potency 7-OH products.

At the state level, Assembly Bill 1088 (Bains), which passed the Assembly 76-0 and is pending in the Senate Health Committee for 2026 consideration, would establish statewide standards for kratom and 7-OH products, including:

- Restricting sales to individuals 21 years and older.
- Child-resistant packaging requirements.
- Prohibition of marketing appealing to children.
- Potency cap consistent with the natural alkaloid concentration found in kratom leaves.

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Several California cities, including Jurupa Valley, Newport Beach, Oceanside, San Diego, and Solano Beach, and at least one county, Orange, have already taken local action.

The proposed ordinance for Riverside County, which has been considered and reviewed by the Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney's Office, Riverside University Health System (RUHS) Behavioral Health, RUHS Public Health, County Counsel, and the Executive Office seeks to balance public health protection with regulatory clarity for businesses. As drafted, the ordinance:

- Prohibits the sale, distribution, or possession of kratom and 7-OH products exceeding 2% 7-OH concentration.
- Prohibits the sale of kratom or 7-OH products to persons under 21 years of age.
- Bans packaging and marketing that are "attractive to children," including candy-style or cartoon labeling.
- Prohibits the sale of products containing synthetic or semi-synthetic kratom alkaloids.
- Requires age verification at the point of sale.
- Establishes penalties for violations, including misdemeanor prosecution, fines up to \$1,000, and potential business-license revocation.
- Effective 30 days after adoption.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

The ordinance enhances public safety by addressing emerging health risks linked to high potency kratom derivatives while maintaining a clear distinction between unregulated synthetic products and naturally occurring kratom. It provides law-enforcement authority to remove high-risk substances from retail circulation and establishes consistent countywide standards aligned with neighboring jurisdictions. The ordinance also promotes consumer protection and market transparency, helping ensure that any future kratom-related products are sold responsibly pending statewide regulation.

ATTACHMENT A. Ordinance No. 1004

Michelle Paradise
Michelle Paradise, ACEO

10/22/2025

Gregg Gu
Gregg Gu, Chief of Deputy County Counsel

10/21/2025