

Steve Marshall
Alabama Attorney General



For **press** inquiries only, contact:

Amanda Priest (334) 322-5694

William Califf (334) 604-3230

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Attorney General's Office and ALEA Announce Operation Southern Shield

Operation successfully executed 83 search warrants across the state, seized 123,000 doses of kratom products

(Montgomery, Ala) – The Office of Attorney General Steve Marshall announced in partnership with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) the results of Operation Southern Shield, a joint statewide enforcement operation targeting the illegal sale of products containing kratom at retail locations across Alabama. The operation resulted in the execution of 83 search warrants and the seizure of nearly 123,000 doses of illegal kratom products.

“Alabama will not be a marketplace for dangerous, illegal substances,” said Attorney General Marshall. “We gave retailers every opportunity to comply, and those who chose to ignore the law are now facing the consequences. Operation Southern Shield executed 83 search warrants across the state and seized nearly 123,000 doses of illegal kratom products. Thanks to our strong partnership with ALEA we are using every tool available to protect Alabama consumers from addictive and illegal substances in gas stations across the state.”

ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor said, “Operation Southern Shield is the result of outstanding collaboration between ALEA, the Alabama Attorney General’s Office, local District Attorneys and our law enforcement partners across the state. Through this operation, investigators removed a significant quantity of illegal kratom products from Alabama communities and uncovered a broader distribution network extending beyond our state’s borders. These products have generated numerous complaints from citizens, are known to be highly addictive and are frequently packaged and marketed to attract children and young adults. Those who choose to profit from the unlawful sale of controlled substances should know that ALEA will continue to pursue these investigations aggressively. Protecting Alabama’s communities and keeping dangerous substances out of the hands of our youth remains one of our highest priorities.”

“A few months back Calera PD, along with the AG’s Office, had a meeting to listen to individuals and families whose lives have been destroyed by these products. These citizens made it clear that this threat must be attacked on two fronts,” Calera Police Chief David Hyché said. “Law enforcement going after those companies and individuals getting rich off other people’s misery and recovery and assistance for citizens who were trapped into addiction by products they assumed were safe.”

Over the course of several weeks, ALEA agents conducted undercover purchases at locations across the state and executed search warrants on retail establishments. The investigation expanded to identifying several wholesale distribution points, including two warehouse locations in Montgomery, where additional search warrants were executed. Agents also identified multiple out-of-state distributors shipping illegal kratom products into Alabama.

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Operation Southern Shield executed 83 search warrants statewide and resulted in the seizure of 63,995 bottles of products containing kratom, as well as approximately 59,000 additional doses seized from two wholesale warehouse locations in Montgomery.

Background

In May 2025, Attorney General Marshall and ALEA began receiving citizen complaints about products sold at gas stations across the state. Consumers reported the products were highly addictive. Investigators conducted undercover purchases of the product and subsequent lab testing by the Department of Forensic Sciences confirmed the products contained mitragynine (commonly referred to as kratom), a controlled substance under Alabama Code Sec. 20-2-93.

Several District Attorneys' Offices issued cease-and-desist letters to businesses and companies selling products containing kratom, including identifying one product by name, Boujee Bliss. Following the legal action, the product largely disappeared from stores around the state.

In January 2026, the Attorney General's Office and ALEA began receiving new complaints of similar products with comparable addictive qualities appearing at gas stations statewide. Undercover purchases and additional laboratory analysis by the Department of Forensic Sciences confirmed that these new products also contained kratom.

In March 2026, the Office, after coordinating with local District Attorneys around the state, issued a new cease-and-desist order identifying additional kratom contaminated products and distributed the letter to every retail location holding an Alabama Beverage Control (ABC) license in the state.

In May 2026, after identifying retail locations still selling illegal kratom products despite the cease-and-desist orders, ALEA commenced Operation Southern Shield to seize those products for additional investigation and potential criminal and civil action.