MIT45

THE SUPPLIER STANDARD

What top-quartile smoke shops do differently

A four-question vetting framework for choosing kratom suppliers after the federal action on 7-OH.

PUBLISHED BY MIT45 · AUGUST 2026

THE GAP

Two shops, three miles apart.

Same foot traffic. Same wall. Same category. Over the next twelve months, one of them will quietly eat a write-down on product it can no longer legally sell. The other won't.

The difference between those two stores is not luck, and it is not location. It is a standard.

Since the federal government moved on 7-hydroxymitragynine — 7-OH — the kratom category has split in two: suppliers who can prove what is in their product, and suppliers who hope you never ask. The FDA recommended scheduling. The DEA followed with a temporary Schedule I action covering 7-OH above defined thresholds, along with a set of named derivatives — MP, MGM-15, and MGM-16. Product above the line did not become a slow seller. It became contraband.

The stores that came through the shakeout clean were not the ones with the best instincts. They were the ones that asked the same four questions of every supplier, every time, before a single SKU touched the shelf — and treated any missing answer as the answer.

This report is that standard, written down. Four questions. Sixty seconds of math. One page you can hand to the next rep who walks through your door. None of it requires a chemistry degree. All of it protects the two things at stake on every purchase order: your cash and your exposure.

How to use this report

- **Pages 3–4.** The four questions — and what good and bad answers sound like.
- **Page 5.** The threshold math — the sixty-second pass–fail check.
- **Page 6.** The turn math — why the cheapest case usually earns the least.
- **Page 7.** Red flags and green lights, at a glance.
- **Page 8.** The worksheet. Print it. Use it on every supplier — including the ones already on your shelf.

Four questions. No partial credit.

Ask them in order, of every supplier — including the brands already on your counter. Fail any one of the four, and the product does not go on the shelf.

01 QUANTIFY IT

> **Ask:** *"What is the 7-OH content of this exact product — in parts per million dry weight, and in milligrams per article?"*

Adjectives are not specifications. "Enhanced," "full-spectrum," "ultra" — none of it survives an inspection, an insurance question, or a lab. Regulators, labs, and courts share one language — a number — and any supplier serious about this category can produce one for every batch.

The number also tells you what you are holding: naturally occurring 7-OH in leaf shows up in trace amounts — tens of parts per million — while spiked product runs orders of magnitude higher. One line on one document separates the two.

A good answer. A number, on paper, tied to the batch in front of you.

A bad answer. "It's compliant." "It's all natural." A raw-leaf spec sheet standing in for the finished product.

02 TEST THE FINISHED GOOD

> **Ask:** *"Show me the batch-specific certificate of analysis for the finished product — for the lot you are selling me — from an independent lab."*

Input testing proves what went into the kettle, not what came out. Chemistry can change in processing, and a raw-material COA attached to a finished product is the oldest trick in the category. Two documents matter together: the input COA on the extract, and the finished-goods COA on the sealed unit. Testing both ends demonstrates nothing changed in between; testing one end asks the store to assume. A real panel covers alkaloid quantification — mitragynine and 7-OH — plus identity, heavy metals, microbials, and an adulterant screen.

A good answer. Both documents, batch-matched, independent lab.

A bad answer. A COA older than the batch. An in-house-only result. "We'll send it after the order."

03 SCREEN THE DERIVATIVES

> **Ask:** *"Does your testing screen for synthetic 7-OH and the named derivatives — MP, MGM-15, MGM-16 — and will you attest to that in writing?"*

As the line tightened on 7-OH, part of the category moved sideways — into semi-synthetic derivatives engineered to slide past the definition. The federal action names them. A supplier who does not screen for them cannot promise you they are absent. They can only promise they didn't add them on purpose — and an intention is not a test result.

A good answer. A panel that lists them, plus a signed attestation.

A bad answer. "We don't add anything."

04 PUBLISH THE RECORD

> **Ask:** *"Where can I look up this batch's results publicly — right now, from my phone?"*

The difference between a supplier who publishes every result and one who emails PDFs on request is the difference between a standard and a story. If a document only appears when someone asks, assume every document you receive is the best one they have. A public batch lookup means the record existed before your question did — and it is your fastest answer when an inspector, an insurer, or a landlord asks what is on your shelf.

A good answer. A URL, a lot number, and thirty seconds on your phone.

A bad answer. "COAs available upon request."

The questions cost you four minutes with a rep. The failure modes cost you a shelf, a write-down, and a conversation with an inspector. There is no partial credit.

THE MATH

Sixty seconds, pass or fail.

As of this writing, the operative federal lines are:

- **Botanical leaf material —** 0.050% 7-OH by dry weight. That is 500 parts per million.
- **Processed forms —** extracts, shots, tablets, gummies — 0.050%, or 1.00 milligram of 7-OH per article, whichever is crossed first.

The check:

1. Take the batch COA. Find the 7-OH line.
2. Reported in parts per million? Compare to 500. (1% = 10,000 ppm.)
3. Reported per article? Compare to 1.00 mg per unit.
4. If the rep cannot express the number in those units, the check is over — and so is the meeting.

PRODUCT	THE COA READS	THE LINE	THE CALL
Leaf powder	78 ppm 7-OH, dry weight	500 ppm	Pass — trace, naturally occurring range.
Extract shot	0.6 mg 7-OH per bottle	1.00 mg / article	Pass on per-article — confirm concentration too.
“Enhanced” tablet	15 mg 7-OH per tablet	1.00 mg / article	Fail — fifteen times the line. Off the shelf.

States layer their own rules on top of the federal action, and several moved on 7-OH before Washington did. When the federal line and your state’s line differ, the stricter line is your line.

THE ECONOMICS

The cheapest case is a price.

The shelf is a P&L. Case price is the number reps lead with, because it is the only number that flatters them. The number that pays your rent is annual gross margin per facing — velocity, times margin per unit, times fifty-two.

	FACING A — SUPPORTED, COMPLIANT	FACING B — CHEAPEST CASE
Unit cost	$6.00	$4.50
Retail	$12.00	$10.00
Margin per unit	$6.00	$5.50
Velocity	24 units / week	10 units / week
Gross margin per week	$144	$55
Gross margin per year, one facing	**$7,488**	**$2,860**

Illustrative round numbers. Run your own facing at the bottom of the page.

The $1.50-a-unit "saving" costs this store $4,628 a year on a single facing. Velocity diverges for reasons that never appear on an invoice: brand recognition that pulls customers to the counter, restock reliability that keeps the facing full, price stability that doesn't train your customers to buy online instead, and a rep who still exists after the sale.

Now add the risk term. Suppose the cheap case fails the threshold math six months in. A store carrying $3,000 of that inventory at cost takes a hundred-percent write-down the day it comes off the shelf — plus an empty facing while the set is rebuilt. At $1.50 a unit of savings, that store needs to move two thousand units just to climb back to zero. Top-quartile stores never run that race, because the four questions cost less than the first lap.

Your facing: _____ units / week × $ _____ margin × 52 = $ _____ / year

AT A GLANCE

Walk away, or lean in.

WALK AWAY WHEN	LEAN IN WHEN
– The COA covers raw material only, or predates the batch on your shelf.	– Batch-specific finished-goods COAs, with public lookup by lot number.
– Alkaloid content is described in adjectives, not numbers.	– 7-OH quantified in writing, against the federal thresholds.
– Testing is in-house only, or "available upon request."	– Input and finished good both tested, by an independent lab.
– The rep can't answer the four questions without calling someone.	– A written attestation: no synthetic 7-OH, no MP, MGM-15, MGM-16.
– The price sits far enough below market that someone is skipping a cost — usually testing.	– Price stability and restock reliability you can verify with other stores.
– A "new formula" appears right after a regulatory action.	– Reformulations announced in advance, with fresh COAs, before they ship.
– The brand undercuts its own retailers online.	– A published channel posture that protects the counter you're giving them.

THE WORKSHEET

Take this page to the next rep meeting.

Supplier: _____ **Product / SKU:** _____ **Date:** _____

01 QUANTIFY IT

7-OH content: _____ ppm dry weight · _____ mg per article

☐ Under 500 ppm ☐ Under 1.00 mg per article ☐ Batch-specific, in writing

02 TEST THE FINISHED GOOD

☐ Finished-goods COA received, batch-matched ☐ Independent lab

☐ Input and finished good both tested

☐ Panel covers alkaloids, identity, heavy metals, microbials, adulterants

03 SCREEN THE DERIVATIVES

☐ Panel screens synthetic 7-OH, MP, MGM-15, MGM-16

☐ Written attestation received

04 PUBLISH THE RECORD

Public lookup URL: _____

☐ Verified this batch from my phone

Any box unchecked is the answer. Not on the counter.

THE SPONSOR

We wrote this standard because we already run it.

MIT45 supports the DEA's temporary scheduling action on synthetic 7-OH and its named derivatives. We hold ourselves — and believe the category should hold every supplier — to a standard with six parts:

- **Scientific separation —** botanical kratom is not synthetic 7-OH, and the two are never blended or blurred.
- **Quantified limits —** MIT45 products carry the lowest naturally occurring 7-OH in the market, averaging 80 parts per million dry weight or less.
- **Input-to-finished-good testing —** extract is independently tested before it enters production, and finished goods are tested again to confirm nothing changed in manufacturing.
- **Independent verification —** third-party labs — not in-house assurances.
- **Public disclosure —** every result, published for any consumer or regulatory agency to review, 24/7/365.
- **Zero tolerance for hidden derivatives —** screened, attested, in writing.

Run the four questions on us first. That is what they are for.

The line is clear. Synthetic 7-OH is not botanical kratom.

Batch results: mit45.com/product-coas Wholesale: sales@mit45.com | 866-648-4555

Provided by MIT45 for general informational purposes for retailers; not legal advice. Federal and state requirements are summarized as of August 2026 and are subject to change — verify current thresholds with counsel before relying on them.