

NEWS BITES

MAY 2026

LAPPA NEWS

PUBLICATIONS

Model Laws

LAPPA is set to release two model acts: the Model Involuntary Commitment for Substance Use Disorder Act and an update to the Model Opioid Litigation Proceeds Act, first published in 2021. Keep an eye out for individual announcements related to the models' respective release dates, and as with all of LAPPA's models, once published, the full model texts will be available on LAPPA's [website](#).

Fact Sheets

[Aminita Muscaria \(Fly Agaric\)](#): Amanita muscaria is a psychoactive mushroom with a bright red cap covered in white spots or warts that is native to the temperate and boreal forests of the northern hemisphere. A. muscaria mushrooms are also called “fly agaric” mushrooms due to their traditional use as an insecticide. Though A. muscaria is a psychoactive mushroom, it is not a classic psychedelic like the mushrooms of the Psilocybe genus, which are commonly referred to as “magic mushrooms.” The renewed interest in psilocybin-containing mushrooms in the 21st century due to their potential use in treating various mental and physical health conditions has sparked consumers' interest in other types of mushrooms, including A. muscaria, that are more legally accessible. As A. muscaria use increases, there have been public health concerns regarding unregulated sales of A. muscaria products and the lack of consumer knowledge about how A. muscaria differs from psilocybin-containing mushrooms.

[Novel Psychoactive Substances – Orphines: Brorphine, Cychlorphine and Beyond](#): LAPPA continues to monitor the emergence of novel psychoactive substances appearing on the illicit drug market in the United States. The term “novel” does not denote a new, never-before-seen substance but rather a substance that is newly available in the drug market. The newest fact sheet in LAPPA's series on novel psychoactive substances examines orphines, a class of potent synthetic opioids. Orphines are a class of synthetic opioids first developed by Janssen Pharmaceuticals in the 1960s, discovered to have anesthetic properties. Drug policy experts believe that orphines are originating from clandestine laboratories in China and that their sudden rise in the illicit drug market is an attempt by clandestine chemists and international drug trafficking organizations to avoid international legal and regulatory barriers. The high potency of orphines demonstrates the need for enhanced surveillance, increased testing capabilities, and timely public health alerts.

50-state Summaries

Inhalants – Summary of State Laws: Inhalants are substances that produce intoxicating chemical vapors that people inhale. These substances are often found in products that are legal to purchase and use and include common household items like glue, cleaning fluid, spray paint, magic markers, and cooking spray. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, there are four categories of inhalants: (1) volatile solvents; (2) aerosols; (3) gases; and (4) nitrites. Inhalants produce vapors that can be inhaled, either directly from open containers or by soaking rags in the substance and then “huffing” the rags. Users can also spray aerosols directly into their noses or mouths or onto pieces of clothing and into a paper or plastic bag, balloons, or other devices known as “snappers” and “poppers” and inhale the fumes. Depending on the substance, inhalants can “produce effects similar to alcohol, sedatives, or the early stages of anesthesia.” Substances can also cause a short feeling of being high or a feeling of light-headedness, distorted vision, or disorganized thinking. As of April 2026, forty-seven states, the District of Columbia, and Guam criminalize the possession and/or use of inhalants with penalties ranging from low-level misdemeanors to low-level felonies, usually for repeat violations.

FEDERAL NEWS BITS

Changes Coming to Federal Regulation of Marijuana and Psychedelics: On April 23rd, acting U.S. Attorney General Todd Blanche signed an order immediately reclassifying medical marijuana products as Schedule III controlled substances on the federal controlled substances act; those products were previously included on Schedule I, along with drugs with no currently accepted medical use like cocaine and heroin. Healthcare advocates have been encouraging this reclassification for years, arguing that the Schedule I label made it impossible to research the potential health benefits of marijuana. Polling consistently shows that a small majority of Americans favor relaxing restrictions on marijuana, but that majority has started to shrink in recent years, particularly when it comes to full legalization of recreational use. In a recent interview, Sara Carter, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President, clarified that despite the reclassification, marijuana is still illegal on the federal level, and moving medicinal marijuana to Schedule III only allows for more research on the substance. One week prior to the rescheduling of medical marijuana, President Trump signed an Executive Order that will increase access to certain psychedelic drugs for research purposes as well as support new clinical trials for ibogaine, psilocybin, and other drugs known as serotonin receptors. This move was met with some controversy as some drug policy experts claim there is little to no evidence that these drugs alleviate any conditions and warn expanding access to these substances could have unintended public health consequences.

DEA Issues Emergency Scheduling Order: As a result of increasing trafficking and abuse of novel psychoactive substances across the United States, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) emergency scheduled bromazolam, a synthetic benzodiazepine that is used to make counterfeit Xanax tablets. The emergency order places bromazolam into Schedule I under the Controlled Substances Act in recognition of the fact that it currently does not have any accepted medical use and has a high potential for abuse. Bromazolam is now subject to all administrative, civil, and criminal sanctions that apply to Schedule I controlled substances for those who manufacture, distribute, reverse distribute, import, export, engage in research, conduct instructional activities or chemical analysis, possess, or propose to handle bromazolam. Bromazolam has been widely reported in the illicit drug market across the country, and it is one of the most identified benzodiazepines in illicit drug seizures tested by the DEA. Adverse health effects include slurred speech, loss of control of bodily movements, altered mental state and respiratory depression. LAPP has a series of fact sheets on novel psychoactive substances, including [Bromazolam](#), which can all be accessed on LAPP’s [website](#).

NATIONAL NEWS BITS

Deaths Linked to Cychlorphine on the Rise: Authorities in Tennessee identified the newly emerging synthetic opioid known as N-Propionitrile Chlorphine (cychlorphine) in toxicology findings of 41 recent deaths. The Knox County Regional Forensic Center recently reported that the deaths occurred from July 2025 to February 2026 across 11 counties and that five additional fatalities remain under review. Officials in Knox County suspect that cychlorphine has been circulating longer than experts initially realized and warn that many available test strips do not detect the compound without implementing targeted test methods. Cychlorphine can be up to 10 times more potent than fentanyl and is not currently approved for human use. As with many new and emerging drugs, rapid testing for cychlorphine is not yet available, making it more difficult for emergency responders to administer treatment and more difficult for officials to identify overdose patterns. Public health officials and law enforcement agencies are monitoring seized drug submissions and mortality data to determine the prevalence of cychlorphine in the illicit drug market, in the hopes of containing the spread of this dangerous new synthetic compound. Read more about cychlorphine in LAPP's recently released fact sheet [Novel Psychoactive Substances: Orphines – Brorphine, Cychlorphine, and Beyond](#).

New Fentanyl Test Launched: Labcorp, a global leader in providing laboratory testing services, recently announced the launch of the first rapid fentanyl test of its kind and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The visual urine test assesses fentanyl exposure by detecting norfentanyl, the primary fentanyl metabolite, which remains present in urine for up to 48 hours after exposure. The test delivers results in 10 minutes, which will permit healthcare providers to provide targeted care in emergency departments, hospitals, and clinics when there is a suspected fentanyl exposure. Fentanyl exposure is a growing concern in Labcorp's own data showing that approximately four percent of pre-employment screenings tested positive for fentanyl, and nearly 10 percent of patients receiving opioid use disorder treatment tested positive for the synthetic opioid.

STATE NEWS BITS

California: A jury has convicted a San Jose couple of murder for the death of their 19-month-old daughter who died of a fentanyl overdose in 2023. The parents were the first people in Santa Clara County history to be charged with murdering their child by exposure to fentanyl, and having been found guilty, the couple now face 15 years to life in prison. The toddler died in 2023 after being left alone in a room with illicit drugs, and an autopsy showed that she had approximately 25 times a lethal amount of fentanyl in her bloodstream as well as undigested fentanyl in her stomach. Two individuals who supplied the toddler's parents with the drugs have also been charged with murder, and their cases are pending.

Connecticut: All products containing kratom and six other substances (7-OH, bromazolam, flubromazolam, nitazenes, tianeptine, and pheninut) – collectively known as “gas station heroin” – are now classified as Schedule I controlled substances in Connecticut and are thus illegal to possess, manufacture, sell, or distribute in any form. All these substances come in a wide variety of consumable forms including beverages, tinctures, pills, and gummies and acquired the moniker “gas station heroin” because they are widely available across the country on gas station convenience store shelves and, when consumed, have similar effects on the body as opioids such as heroin. Connecticut joins the growing list of states either severely restricting or outright banning the sale of products containing kratom and/or the additional above-named compounds.

New Jersey: Cooper EMS, a nationally recognized emergency medical services program that provides basic and advanced life support to the city of Camden, New Jersey, has become the first emergency medical services system in the U.S. to carry and administer long-acting injectable buprenorphine in ambulances. Cooper EMS paramedics are now authorized to administer not only sublingual buprenorphine (oral medication) but also

injectable extended-release buprenorphine in the field. This will allow patients to receive one week to one month of continuous opioid use disorder treatment coverage from a single encounter with Cooper EMS, potentially initiating a sustained recovery.

Virginia: After years of delay, lawmakers approved legislation establishing a legal framework for regulated retail sales of cannabis in Virginia. If Governor Abigail Spanberger signs the bill, Virginians age 21 and older will legally be able to purchase cannabis products throughout the commonwealth beginning on January 1, 2027. Legislators legalized adult possession of up to one ounce of cannabis in 2021, and Virginia law also allows people to grow up to four plants at home, but former Governor Glen Youngkin repeatedly vetoed bills that would have allowed retail sales. Under the current legislation, businesses involved in cultivation, processing, wholesale distribution, retail sales, and microbusiness operations are required to obtain licenses from the commonwealth's Cannabis Control Authority, and licensed establishments must display official decals showing that they are authorized to sell marijuana products.

NOTABLE STUDIES

Kratom Poisonings Skyrocketing: Research published in a recent edition of the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) and Prevention's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report shows that calls to poison centers in the U.S. related to kratom increased by a staggering 1,200 percent in the 10-year period from 2015 to 2025. The psychoactive herb is not currently regulated by the federal government, and it is estimated that as many as two million Americans consume kratom, which is readily available in a variety of forms in gas stations across the U.S. – though many states have begun restricting sales or banning kratom products all together. Signs of kratom poisoning can include high blood pressure, vomiting, heart attack, tremors, seizures, delusions, hallucinations, liver damage, and increased heart rate. Click [here](#) to read the study from the CDC, [here](#) to read LAPP's 50-state summary on kratom, and [here](#) to read LAPP's fact sheet on kratom.

ABOUT THE LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC POLICY ASSOCIATION

The Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association (LAPP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to conduct legal and legislative research and analysis and draft legislation on effective law and policy in the areas of public safety and health, substance use disorder, and the criminal justice system.

LAPP produces up-to-the-minute comparative analyses, publications, educational brochures, and other tools ranging from podcasts to model laws and policies that can be used by national, state, and local criminal justice and substance use disorder practitioners who want the latest comprehensive information on law and policy. Examples of topics on which LAPP has assisted stakeholders include naloxone laws, law enforcement/community engagement, alternatives to incarceration for those with substance use disorder, medication for addiction treatment in correctional settings, and the involuntary commitment of individuals with alcohol or substance use disorder.

For more information about LAPP, please visit: <https://legislativeanalysis.org/>

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