

Policy Name:	Smudging Policy		
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Chapter:	7, Smudging Policy	Responsible Office:	Office of Facilities Management
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Policy Statement

NSCAD is committed to building and maintaining a culture that values and embraces equity, diversity, and inclusion. We acknowledge our presence in the traditional lands of Mi'kmaki, the unceded territories of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik peoples in this region, territories that are subject to Treaties of Peace and Friendship signed with the British Crown in 1725.

NSCAD acknowledges that the use of sacred medicines (tobacco, sweet grass, sage and cedar) by Indigenous people forms part of Indigenous culture and heritage. This policy outlines the University's guidelines for the use of these sacred medicines in the act of smudging and ensures that such medicines are used in the safest possible manner, with little or no adverse impact to other building occupants and in compliance with applicable legislation and standards.

Reason for Policy

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, Canadian Human Rights Act, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples include legal protections for the fundamental right of Indigenous peoples to freely practice their religious and spiritual traditions, and to be treated equally and with dignity.

Smudging is a practice that connects people to the Creator and provides communities with a way to gain spiritual protection and blessings, as well as to improve spiritual health. The smoke created by burning sacred herbs is thought to purify the body and soul and bring clarity to the mind. NSCAD recognizes the importance of smudging to individuals and its value in supporting healthy communities.

NSCAD also recognizes that the smoke produced in smudging may be a physical irritant to some members of the community or may set off alarms used in the maintenance of a safe campus.

The goal of the policy is to limit any need for restriction of smudging, by providing a framework for safe and respectful observance.

Policy Applies to

This policy applies to all individuals on campus at NSCAD University including but not limited to employees, students, contractors, volunteers, and visitors.

Who Should Read this Policy

- All members of the university community
- All regular staff and faculty members

Contacts

- Department of Facilities Management
- Human Resources
- Office of Academic Affairs & Research
- Office of Opportunity and Belonging

Definitions

Small Group: A small group is constituted of a group of 4 or less.

Smudging: Smudging is an Indigenous ceremony passed down through generations and engaged in by Indigenous people. The burning of sacred medicines creates a small plume of smoke that is used to purify the body, mind and ceremonial or personal space and to cleanse away any negative energy and emotions. Smudging is always voluntary.

The use of these Traditional and Sacred Medicines for ceremonial purposes is separate and distinct from the 'recreational' use of tobacco, and other substances, and as such is not subject to the same restrictions outlined in the Tobacco & Smoke Free University Policy.

Traditional and Sacred Medicines: sage, sweet grass, cedar and tobacco.

The Policy

1. Private Ceremonies and Small Group, during business hours

Smudging is most often done in private or small groups and for brief duration.

When: between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday except Statutory Holidays

Where: offices or small meeting rooms only

Individuals using Traditional and Sacred Medicines in this manner are expected to:

- 1.1 Call Facilities Management at 902-233-2493 to disable smoke detection system. This can be done remotely but will require up to 30 minutes notice.
- 1.2 Post a 'Smudging Notice' on the office or meeting room door, whenever possible.
- 1.3 Keep their door closed during the Smudging Ceremony.
- 1.4 Once the ceremony is completed, contact Facilities Management at the number above to reactivate the smoke detection system.
- 1.5 Individuals who burn Traditional and Sacred Medicines must also take steps to fully extinguish and or dispose of all materials remaining after the burning of sacred medicines.

Individuals who wish to burn Traditional and Sacred Medicines are expected to make all reasonable efforts to notify anyone in the vicinity that may be negatively impacted by smoke.

Smudging is not allowed after hours, during weekend or Holidays as it will not be possible to disable the smoke detection system.

2. Large Events or Ceremonies

Advance notification will be required for smudging for large events or ceremonies held in common areas or spaces that will be shared by non-participants or bystanders, and/or ceremonies where smudging will be expected to take place for an extended period of time.

- 2.1 Complete [Request for Smudging Form](#) (Can be found on NSCAD Form Portal), which will require information such as type of event, location, number of participants. The form shall be submitted 7 business days ahead of the events. Requester will be notified with 48 hours following the submission.
- 2.2 Facilities will monitor the smoke detection system and will install Smudging Notice with date and time so participants and/or bystanders can be made aware of the smudging ceremony ahead of time.
- 2.3 Individuals who burn Traditional and Sacred Medicines must also take steps to fully extinguish and or dispose of all materials remaining after the burning of sacred medicines.

3. Fire and Life Safety:

- 3.1 Individuals participating should be aware of their nearest fire extinguisher, fire exit, and fire alarm pull station.
- 3.2 While the smoke detection system is disabled, the person hosting the ceremony is responsible to actively look for evidence of smoke and fire in the room they are occupying. Should significant smoke or fire be found, the occupant shall pull down the closest fire alarm pull station.

4. Restricted Areas:

Smudging is prohibited in the following area:

- All studios and shops (wood, metal, plastic)
- Classrooms (unless approved as a large event or ceremony, refer to item 2 above).
- Washrooms
- Corridors

Forms and Tools

- Request for Smudging Form
- Smudging Notice

8.7 Smudging Policy <https://navigator.nscad.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/8.7-Smudging-Policy.pdf>