

Indigenous Cultural Ceremony Policy					
<b>Approved By:</b>	Executive Group (EG)				
<b>Approval Date:</b>	2025 08 27	<b>Effective Date:</b>	2025 08 27	<b>Review Date:</b>	2027 08 27
<b>Responsible Portfolio/Unit/Committee:</b>	Equity and Inclusion				
<b>Responsible Officer(s):</b>	Director, Indigenous Affairs				

## 1.0 Purpose

NOSM University respects and supports Indigenous cultural ceremonies on campus that involve the use of the four sacred medicines (sage, cedar, tobacco, and sweetgrass). Such events include, but are not limited to counselling sessions, opening/closing prayers for events or meetings, smudging. NOSM U recognizes and welcomes these cultural ceremonies, as they are part of the Indigenous traditional way of life.

*Under Section 13 of the Ontario Smoke Free Act, smudging, smoking, or holding lighted tobacco by First Nations and Métis persons for traditional First Nations and Metis cultural or spiritual purposes is permitted.* As such, NOSM U permits the burning of any or all of the four sacred medicines in connection with Indigenous spiritual practices for personal use or at cultural and educational events.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all members of the NOSM University community, which includes, but is not limited to, staff, faculty, professional staff, librarians, Board Members, stipendiary faculty, medical residents, all NOSM University - registered and visiting learners (dietetic interns, postgraduate residents, undergraduate students), volunteers, visitors, observers, and third-party contractors) while they are acting in a capacity defined by their relationship with the University, as well as institutional administrators and officials representing NOSM University.



## 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

#### 4.1 Responsibilities of Staff.

Staff must advise their supervisor if the cultural ceremony poses a health risk to them and to work with their supervisor on a reasonable accommodation (i.e. working from home or finding an alternate work location on campus).

## 4.2 Responsibilities of Supervisors

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring proper accommodations are made for employees with identified health risks. The supervisor shall work with Indigenous Affairs, Human Resources and/or Facilities, if needed.

### 4.3 Indigenous Affairs Unit

The Indigenous Affairs Unit will work with all interest holders to ensure cultural ceremonies are respected and staff with identified health risks are accommodated and ensure appropriate and ample notice of a cultural ceremony is provided to the NOSM University community.

#### 4.4 NOSM University Facilities

When an event takes place outside of normal business hours (8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.), Indigenous Affairs Unit will notify NOSM U Facilities who will inform the security departments of Laurentian and Lakehead Universities.

## 5.0 Related Documents

*Ontario Smoke - Free Act – Section 13*

Laurentian University's *Smudging and Ceremonial Practices Policy*Lakehead University's *Indigenous and Aboriginal Cultural Ceremonies Policy*

Ontario Human Rights - <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-based-creed/11-indigenous-spiritual-practices>

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action - #43, #45, #62, and #63**  
regarding reconciliation and education.

## 6.0 Getting Help

Queries regarding the interpretation of this document and resolution of issues should be directed to:

Equity and Inclusion  
Northern Ontario School of Medicine University  
Email: [adei@nosm.ca](mailto:adei@nosm.ca)

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Version	Date	Authors/Comments
1.0	2025 08 27	Original. Approved by Executive Group.