

TYPE:	Employment-Related
TITLE:	Indoor Indigenous Ceremonies on Campus
NO.:	EMPL-321
RESPONSIBILITY:	Chief Administrative Officer and Dean, Students
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	June 2024
REVISED DATE(S):	
REVIEW DATE:	June 2027

1. Introduction

Durham College (DC) is committed to supporting and encouraging Indigenous cultural and spiritual practices associated with the use of Traditional Medicines and Smudging. With the signing of DC's Indigenous Education Protocol and the creation of the Indigenization Statement, the College welcomes all members of its community to learn about and participate in Indigenous ceremonies.

2. Purpose

To ensure the practice of Indigenous traditions and ceremonies using smoke including Smudging and pipe ceremonies, will be protected, promoted and accommodated while ensuring acceptable indoor air quality for occupants of adjacent rooms and spaces.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. DC acknowledges and supports the importance of Indigenous traditional ceremonies and spirituality and respects the rights and freedoms of the entire community.
- 4.2. Ceremonies may be done in the context of teaching, counselling and for personal wellness. Campus members may participate in these ceremonies on a voluntary basis.
- 4.3. Members of the campus community are free to use the Traditional Indigenous Medicines in designated ceremony sites without pre-authorization.

- 4.4. DC has designated the First Peoples Indigenous Centre (FPIC) at the Oshawa campus as a dedicated indoor site to host Indigenous ceremonies using smoke ensuring the cultural needs of Indigenous Peoples are respected.
- 4.5. Under the Province of Ontario's *Smoke Free Ontario Act*, Indigenous persons have the right to use tobacco if it is being used for traditional Indigenous cultural or spiritual purposes. The College recognizes that Smudging and pipe ceremonies are a part of the Indigenous traditional way of life. As a result, the College has established the following procedure to ensure that the rights and freedoms of the entire community are respected.

5. Procedure

5.1. Designated ceremony site(s)

- 5.1.1. Agreement on other locations of designated Indigenous ceremony sites shall be made in a consultative manner, considering financial implications with representatives of the College from FPIC, the Durham College Indigenous Education Circle, Facilities and other departments as appropriate.
- 5.1.2. When an indoor location has been selected as a designated Indigenous ceremony site, signage shall indicate that the room is a place where Indigenous ceremonies will take place and it will provide contact information for individuals for further information.

5.2. Occasional use sites

- 5.2.1. When an Indigenous ceremony using smoke is planned for an indoor location other than a designated site(s) created under this policy, the following actions will occur:
 - 5.2.1.1 Event organizers will assess proximity to work areas or public spaces that are occupied by persons who could be negatively impacted by the smoke or scent from the ceremonies before selecting a site for occasional use.
 - 5.2.1.2 A Hot Work permit will be completed by the event organizer and sent to Facilities for approval. This online permit is available to college employees on ICE.
 - 5.2.1.3 If the Hot Work permit is approved, Facilities will notify the Office of Campus Safety (OCS) to confirm the fire alarm bypass and will copy the requestor for their information. A fire watch may be required as determined by Facilities Management and/or the Office of Campus Security should fire safety systems be offline and/or bypassed.

- 5.2.1.4 Event organizers will submit an Application for an On-Campus Event along with their approved Hot Work permit to the Manager, Risk Management at least ten (10) days prior to the event.
- 5.2.1.5 Facilities will inform the OCS at least three (3) days prior to the planned ceremony and provide authorization for the location to be used as an occasional use site.
- 5.2.1.6 The OCS will prepare and post signage at the entrance of the room two (2) days prior to the scheduled Indigenous ceremony using smoke to provide reasonable notice to occupants of adjacent rooms and spaces.
- 5.2.1.7 Once the scent and smoke have dissipated, the sign will be removed by the organizers of the event.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. DC acknowledges a collective responsibility to respect, support and implement this policy and procedure.
- 6.2. The Chief Administrative Officer and the Dean of Students, are responsible for ensuring that this policy and procedure is fully implemented.
- 6.3. Facilities will inspect the area and approve or deny the Hot Work permit. Once approved, Facilities will inform the OCS that the location has been approved as an occasional use site and provide OCS with signage for posting.
- 6.4. OCS will post the required signage at entrance to rooms prior to ceremonies at approved occasional use locations.
- 6.5. Event organizers will remove event signage when the smoke and scent from the ceremony dissipates.

7. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

- 7.1. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

7.2. Durham College strives to balance the needs of Indigenous Peoples rights to participate in ceremony and the rights of those individuals who may have scent sensitivities. Notification of the ceremony using smoke is intended to provide sufficient notice and the opportunity to work together when accommodations are required.

8. Non-compliance implications

8.1. Non-compliance would be counterproductive to DC's Indigenous Education Protocol and Indigenization Statement.

8.2. Non-compliance may result in violation of policies, procedures and directions related to this policy and procedure such as Smoke Free Ontario Act; Canadian Charters of Rights and Freedoms; and Ontario Human Rights Code.

9. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- [Hot Work Permit](#)
- [Application for On-Campus Event \(durhamcollege.ca\)](#)
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Smoke Free Ontario Act