



*Human Resources*

***Use of Indigenous Medicines Procedure***

<b>PURPOSE</b>	The procedure outlines the steps to implement the Use of Indigenous Medicines Policy.
<b>SCOPE</b>	<p>This procedure applies to all City of Hamilton employees, including but not limited to: regular, temporary and contract employee (collectively called “employees”). This procedure also applies to volunteers, students and interns.</p> <p>This procedure applies in all City of Hamilton facilities and buildings and identifies designated locations where its application will be more prevalent.</p>
<b>DEFINITIONS</b>	<p><b>Sacred Medicines</b></p> <p>There are four sacred medicines common to many Indigenous nations that are used in ceremonies such as smudging or prayer pipe ceremonies. These sacred medicines are cedar, sage, sweetgrass and tobacco. Traditional tobacco is not the same as the tobacco that is processed for use in cigarettes, and in its original form is one of the four sacred medicines.</p> <p>It is important to note that Hamilton’s residents include Indigenous peoples who belong to nations and communities across North America and there may be other medicines that are sacred and used in a similar way. Traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders should be regarded as the ultimate resource for Indigenous ceremonial practices.</p> <p><b>Smudging Ceremony</b></p> <p>Smudging is an Indigenous spiritual practice which involves the burning of sweetgrass, sage, and/or cedar. Indigenous peoples who lead smudging ceremonies have gained knowledge and teachings about the sacred medicines. It is often carried out at the beginning of a meeting, event, or conversation for purification and to create a positive mind set. When preparations are made to smudge, the sacred medicines are lit with matches. The smoke is then used with the person’s hands in a ‘washing’ manner.</p> <p><b>Prayer Pipe Ceremony</b></p> <p>A prayer pipe ceremony is an Indigenous ceremony that is conducted by a pipe carrier. The ceremony produces smoke from the lighting of traditional tobacco. It is considered the most powerful way of communicating with the spirits as the smoke from the tobacco carries messages to the Creator.</p>

<p><b>Primary Staff Contact</b></p>	<p>Generally, four puffs of the prayer pipe are taken as part of the ceremony. Protocols for prayer pipe ceremonies vary among Indigenous nations.</p> <p>City employees, volunteers or students who are coordinating a meeting, appointment or event where the use of Indigenous medicines will occur are the Primary Staff Contact. City employees, or a designated Supervisor, who process facility or room bookings from the public are also considered a Primary Staff Contact in this procedure.</p>
<p><b>STEPS</b></p> <p><b>Before a Planned Event Where Indigenous Medicines will be Used:</b></p>	<p>The following process steps apply to this procedure for corporate facilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The 'Primary Staff Contact' must contact the Facilities Help Desk <a href="mailto:facilities@hamilton.ca">facilities@hamilton.ca</a> at least 5 business days in advance of the event, indicating the location and time of the meeting. (TIP: add extra 30 minutes to room booking to allow time for Facilities staff or Technicians to access the room after event has finished)</li> <li>2. Facilities Help Desk will assess the location to identify any work required to ensure proper ventilation, limit smoke from circulating in the building's HVAC system, and any fire system interventions required. Designated locations are identified in Appendix A to this procedure and include rooms that have been assessed by an external fire system technician.</li> <li>3. The Primary Staff Contact must post a sign on the room door, or other appropriate location, indicating that the location will be used for Indigenous ceremonial purposes. The sign (Appendix B) must be posted 24 hours in advance of the event.</li> <li>4. The Primary Staff Contact must familiarize themselves with the fire safety procedures for the particular location in advance of the ceremony. This includes becoming familiar with the location of the nearest fire extinguisher.</li> </ol> <p>If the Primary Staff Contact will not be present for the event, they must provide the fire safety plan in advance to the external group that has booked the facility.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Facilities will complete any required work orders before the event, and confirm completion with the Primary Staff Contact.</li> </ol>

	<p>The following process steps apply to this procedure for recreation facilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All rental application requests identifying the burning of sacred Indigenous medicines will be referred for Supervisor review.</li> <li>2. The Supervisor will contact the Facilities Help Desk <a href="mailto:facilities@hamilton.ca">facilities@hamilton.ca</a>, CCing the Facilities Supervisor at least 5 business days in advance of the event, indicating the location and time of the meeting.</li> <li>3. The Supervisor will notify group when the space has been confirmed, or recommend a more appropriate rental location at the recreation facility.</li> <li>4. The Supervisor will notify the Person in Charge of the facility on the day of the rental of the planned activities.</li> <li>5. The Person in Charge on the day of the rental will post a sign on the room door at least 2 hours in advance of the rental.</li> </ol>
<p><b>During and After a Planned Event</b></p>	<p>The following procedures will be used during and following a ceremony:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Use of a fire-proof vessel such as a shell or stoneware bowl that can withstand the heat of the medicines and matches are required. The vessel must rest on a non-combustible surface or base.</li> <li>7. The Primary Staff Contact can consult with the Person(s) leading the ceremony, their Supervisor or Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion, <a href="mailto:diversity@hamilton.ca">diversity@hamilton.ca</a> , ext 6314 to address any questions that may be raised by attendees.</li> <li>8. After the ceremony has concluded, remaining medicines shall be disposed of in a fire proof or non-combustible container by the person(s) leading the ceremony. Remaining medicines shall be allowed to cool down to an acceptable level for its safe removal from the building. Often the remaining medicines are returned to Mother Earth as is traditional custom.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Where Advance Notice of the Use of Indigenous Sacred Medicines is not Possible:</b></p>	<p>For Corporate Facilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Primary Staff Contact or designated city staff will contact Facilities Help Desk via <a href="mailto:facilities@hamilton.ca">facilities@hamilton.ca</a> or 905-546-2784 with the location.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Facilities Help Desk will coordinate an assessment of the location to determine how to accommodate the use of Indigenous sacred medicines.</li> <li>3. If the location does not comply with the City’s health and safety standards, consultation with the Primary Staff Contact and person(s) leading the ceremony will occur to determine options. Options may include choosing another room, conducting the ceremony outside, weather permitting, or other advice that may be provided by the person(s) leading the ceremony.</li> </ol> <p>For Recreation facilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The facility Supervisor or on-call Supervisor will be notified of a permitted rental that wishes to burn sacred Indigenous medicines.</li> <li>2. The Supervisor will follow internal procedures to identify spaces which have already been assessed by fire system technicians (i.e. Hamilton Fire Control). If there are no such spaces, the on-call Supervisor may direct to turn the fire monitoring systems offline for the duration of the ceremony.</li> <li>3. If #2 is not possible, the group may be referred to another facility or the list of approved corporate facilities.</li> </ol>
<b>RELATED DOCUMENTS</b>	<p>The following related documents are referenced in this Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use of Indigenous Medicines Policy</li> </ol>
<b>CONTENT UPDATED</b>	2017-12-18
<b>HISTORY</b>	<p>The following people and groups were consulted in the creation or revisions made to this Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy, Fleet and Facilities Management</li> <li>• Health, Safety and Wellness Specialist</li> <li>• Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>• Neighbourhood &amp; Community Initiatives</li> <li>• Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Elder-in-Residence, McMaster University</li> <li>• Tourism and Culture</li> <li>• Recreation Division</li> <li>• Hamilton Fire</li> <li>• Tobacco Control Program, Public Health Services</li> <li>• Hamilton Executive Directors Aboriginal Coalition</li> </ul> <p>This procedure was approved by Senior Leadership Team on January 31, 2018.</p>

### **Appendix A – Designated Locations**

The following locations below have been assessed and designated for accommodating the use of Indigenous medicines in ceremonies such as smudging.

Please note this list will expand as more locations have been assessed by fire system technicians.

<b>Lister Block 28 James St N</b>	Basement B05/B06 Room 554
<b>City Hall 71 Main St W</b>	Room 192 Room 193 Room 264 Council Chambers Room 830
<b>Ontario Works – Central 250 Main St E, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor</b>	Community Boardroom
<b>Ontario Works – Central 181 Main St W</b>	Classroom A Classroom B
<b>Recreation Facilities (Community Centres, Arenas, Halls)</b>	To be assessed each time there is a rental request.



Hamilton

# NOTICE

This location will be used for  
Indigenous ceremonial purposes.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

The City of Hamilton recognizes and supports the use of sacred Indigenous medicines in City facilities in ceremonies such as smudging or pipe ceremonies. The sacred medicines commonly used include cedar, sage, sweetgrass and traditional tobacco.

The amount of smoke associated with these types of ceremonies is minimal and lasts a very short time.

**For more information contact:**

<<insert Primary Staff contact email/phone or a designated Supervisor>>

*Nya:weh/Miigwetch/Marsi/Thank You*