

Smudging Policy

Policy Type: Corporate

Policy Owner: Vice President, Human Resources, Student Services and International

Approval Date: December 10, 2025

Effective Date: January 19, 2026

Replaces: Version 2021

Initial Year of Issue: 2013

Corresponding Procedure: [Smudging Operating Procedure](#)

Purpose

Cambrian College ("the College") welcomes, respects and supports the Indigenous cultural practices associated with the use of the four sacred medicines.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the sacred practice of smudging is respected and conducted in a manner that aligns with both cultural sensitivity and campus regulations.

Scope

This policy applies to all College employees, students, and visitors on college property. Designated approved areas for smudging ceremonies (the Wabnode Centre for Indigenous Services and the Sacred Arbour) are permitted without further authorization. Smudging in all other areas of college property is subject to this policy and corresponding operating procedure.

Definitions

College property: space – physical or digital – owned, controlled, or operated by the College.

Sacred medicine: sage, sweetgrass, cedar, and tobacco.

Smudging: an Indigenous practice of burning sacred medicines to purify people, as well as ceremonial and ritual spaces and ceremonial tools and objects.

Policy Statements

Cambrian College honours the tradition of smudging and supports its practice on College property according to the following principles:

1. The Wabnode Centre for Indigenous Services (Wabnode), including the Sacred Arbour on college property, are designated as the College's approved areas to perform smudging ceremonies.
2. Smudging in all other areas of college property will be subject to the [Smudging Operating Procedure](#) to determine approval, timing, location, communication, and notification to ensure a balance between cultural respect and safety.
3. Sacred medicines used in smudging ceremonies must be obtained through Wabnode to ensure that the plants were harvested in a traditional way.
4. Members of the College community may use the sacred medicines to practice a smudging ceremony; however, Cambrian tradition states that sage may only be used to honour women.
5. The Requestor is responsible for being aware of nearby combustible materials and knowing the location of the nearest fire extinguisher, fire alarm pull station, and emergency exits.
 - All materials remaining after a smudging ceremony must be fully extinguished and disposed of appropriately.
6. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the activation of the fire alarm system as well as other possible health and safety risks to the college community.
7. The College reserves the right to pass on some or all costs to anyone who is associated with violations of this policy.

Responsibilities and Accountability

Vice President, Human Resources, Student Services and International is responsible for:

- Implementing and ensuring overall compliance with this policy and associated procedure.
- Ensuring the development, review and availability of this policy and associated procedures.

Wabnode Centre for Indigenous Services is responsible for:

- Sharing the traditional knowledge and ways of the Indigenous people.
- Providing appropriate sacred medicines for Smudging ceremonies.
- Providing a culturally safe area for the College community.
- Approving requests for smudging outside of designated areas and communicating and ensuring proper notification.

Facilities is responsible for:

- Providing signage and posting and removing as appropriate.
- Providing enforcement in support of this policy.

The College Community is responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and corresponding procedures.

Administrators are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their staff adhere to this policy and applicable procedures.

Requestors are responsible for:

- Submitting requests for smudging ceremonies outside of designated approved areas.
- Obtaining sacred medicines through the Wabnode Centre to ensure they are harvested in a traditional and respectful way.
- Respecting cultural protocols.
- Ensuring safety and managing materials during smudging ceremonies.
- Communicating and coordinating with Facilities and others as required.
- Accepting accountability for any costs arising from violations of this policy.

Procedures/Forms

- [Smudging Operating Procedure](#)
- [Cambrian College Indigenous Education Protocol](#)

Related Policies

- [Workplace Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)

References

- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)
- [Human Rights Code, Ontario, RSO 1990, C H-19](#)
- [Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 26, Sched. 3](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSO 1990, c. 0.1](#)