

SMUDGING

Smudging is a purification ceremony performed by many Indigenous performing artists that involves burning any of the four sacred medicines: tobacco, sage, sweet grass and cedar.

As the cleansing smoke rises, the Ancestors are welcomed into the space. Many Indigenous artists include this ceremony in their practice to prepare themselves and the venue for a performance.



Garret C. Smith in *Medicine Boy* by Waawaate Fobister
Photo by Nadya Kwandibens

There are distinct Nations across Turtle Island (North America) with unique ceremonies and traditions.

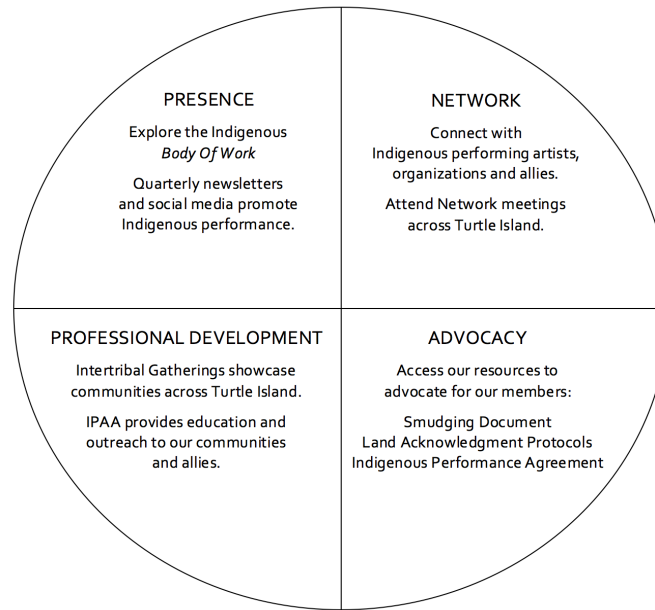
Not every Nation Smudges although many Indigenous performing artists include this ceremony in their practice.

This document is an introduction to inspire individuals to do their own research into the history and the people Indigenous to the land upon which we stand.



Incorporated in 2005
IPAA is a national arts service organization.

Claiming space for all
Indigenous performing artists.



Join us: membership@ipaa.ca

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INDIGENOUS PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE

SMUDGING DOCUMENT



A resource to facilitate the relationship between Indigenous performing artists and venues by acknowledging the protected practice of burning traditional medicines as it relates to the performing arts.

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SMUDGING DOCUMENT

This resource is a living document that will be updated regularly. Out of respect for oral cultures that evolve with each story and teaching our resource will be responsive to the changing ecology of Indigenous performance.

Contact us: info@ipaa.ca

An electronic copy of this document with hyperlinks connecting you to our citations can be found here:

<http://ipaa.ca/resources/smudging-document/>



Keith Barker and Lena Recollet at IPAA's 10th Anniversary gathering
Photo by Brittany Ryan

Smoke Free-Ontario Act

Smudging is protected in Ontario because no provision of an Act that prohibits smoking in a public place prohibits an Indigenous person from holding lighted tobacco / medicines.

Ontario Human Rights Code

Section 1: Every person has a right to equal treatment without discrimination because of race, creed, sex, etc.

A person who experiences discrimination can file an application to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

Canadian Human Rights Commission

Anyone who works for or receives services from a business or organization that is regulated by the federal government can make a complaint to Canadian Human Rights Commission.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has explicitly listed Smudging as a religious right.

Is Smudging safe?

The **Smoke-Free Ontario Act** (SFOA) was enacted as of May 31, 2006 in order to "protect the health of all Ontarian's."

In SFOA, Smudging was alluded to as "holding lighted tobacco", although Indigenous performing artists may select any of the traditional medicines.

In SFOA, the Ontario government has specifically exempted Smudging from regulations governing other smoking activities.

What about allergies and scent sensitivities?

By exempting Smudging from smoking regulations the SFOA in Ontario has pledged to protect Smudging rights even in highly sensitive and regulated areas such as hospitals.

If hospitals and correctional centres can set aside an indoor area despite concerns of fire hazard or allergy, then venues, which are designed to accommodate various performances, should also be able to safely allow Smudging.

Smudging in hospitals

In Vancouver, **St. Paul's Hospital** has created a space for Smudging. Calgary hospitals have designated sites for Smudging, usually in the chapels. In Ontario, Hamilton Health Sciences prohibits use of tobacco products on all of its sites and properties. However, an indoor area is provided for Smudging and the burning of tobacco and other ceremonial medicines is granted.

Smudging in correctional centres

Correctional Services Canada ensures inmates have access to tobacco and ignition sources for personal Smudging in individual cells, rooms, and common areas.

Institutional leaders have a responsibility to promote and facilitate regular ceremonies, including Smudging with traditional medicines.

Smudging in Buddies In Bad Times Theatre

"We allow Smudging in our venue. Our building has a mix of smoke detectors and heat sensors as part of our integral fire safety and alarm systems. We take precautions to make sure the smoke does not linger too long directly under a smoke detector, but it is not usually enough to trigger the detector. We are happy to have the building Smudged."

Adrien Whan, Technical Director
Buddies In Bad Times Theatre

Smudging in the Aki Studio

"Anyone is welcome to Smudge in the Aki Studio, on or off stage. The Smudge must be carried in a fireproof container such as an abalone shell, ceramic container or ashtray. The ashes can be brought up to the Native Earth Performing Arts office and placed in a paper towel to be buried outside."

Debbie Courchene, Space Technician
Native Earth Performing Arts, Aki Studio