

SMUDGING

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

Smudging is a purification ceremony
that involves the burning of two of the four
sacred medicines, sweet grass and sage.

As the cleansing smoke rises,
the ancestors are welcomed into the space.



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

Not every nation Smudges
although many Indigenous performing artists
include this ceremony in their practice
to prepare for a performance.

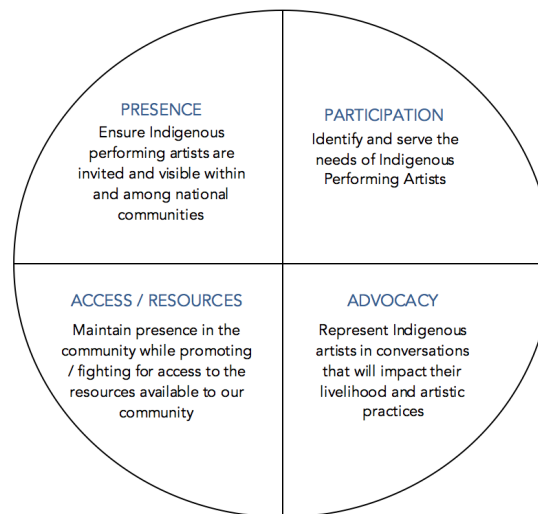
This document is an introduction
to the ceremony of Smudging and how venue
managers can support Indigenous performing artists
who require this as part of their performance practice.



Incorporated in 2005
IPAA is an Indigenous arts service organization.

Claiming space for all
Indigenous performing artists.

IPAA's guiding principles



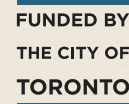
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INDIGENOUS PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE

SMUDGING DOCUMENT

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A resource to educate performance venues
on the protected practice of burning
ceremonial medicines as it relates
to the performing arts.

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

Smoke Free Acts

While these Acts prohibit smoking in public places, many of Canada's provincial acts explicitly allow Indigenous peoples to hold lighted medicines for ceremonial purposes.

Human Rights Codes

Provincial and Territorial Codes affirm that every person has a right to equal treatment without discrimination because of race, creed, sex, etc.

Canadian Human Rights Commission

Anyone who works for or receives services from a business or organization 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.**

**"Smudging is in the spirit of our creation stories and
our way of life." Elder Pauline Shirt (Plains Cree)**

SMUDGING DOCUMENT

Research by University of Toronto student lawyers Jane Zhang & Mimi Chen with supervision by Matthew McPherson (OKT LLP)

This resource is a living document and is updated regularly.

Out of respect for oral cultures that evolve with each story and teaching
we are responsive to the changing ecology of Indigenous protocols and performance.

The most recent and electronic copy of this document (including hyperlinked citations) can be found here:

www.ipaa.ca/resources/smudging-document

Is Smudging safe?

Yes! The exemption of Smudging from smoking regulations protects this ceremony in sensitive areas such as hospitals.

The [Foothills Hospital](#) in Calgary and [St. Paul's Hospital](#) in Vancouver have designated areas for Smudging.

In Ontario, [Hamilton Health Sciences](#) prohibits commercial tobacco use on all of its properties. However, an indoor area is provided for Smudging with ceremonial medicines.

What about allergies & scent sensitivities?

During an [In Vitro Study](#) medicinal herbs were observed to reduce aerial bacterial populations by 94% within 60 mins. with the disinfecting effect maintained for up to 24 hours.

Advocacy

We acknowledge the good work of late Ojibwe Elder Art Solomon and advocates for Smudging to be recognized as a protected practice in Canada.

Smudging in correctional centres

[Correctional Services Canada](#) ensures inmates have access to sacred medicines and ignition sources for Smudging. Institutional leaders have a responsibility to promote and facilitate regular ceremonies, including Smudging with traditional medicines.

Smudging in performance venues

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

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

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