

# Smudging Protocol

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Nipissing & Parry Sound  
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## Introduction

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Nipissing and Parry Sound (CASNPS) endeavors to ensure its practices and facilities are inclusive and culturally responsive. Smudging is welcomed as a common practice in any CASNPS facility, and the following guidelines have been established to assist with your practice.

## What is Smudging?

Smudging is a tradition, common to many First Nations, which involves the burning of one or more medicines gathered from the earth.

Smudging has been passed down from generation to generation. There are many ways to perform a smudge and different variations exist. Smudging allows people to stop, slow down, and become mindful and centered. This allows people to remember, connect, and be grounded in the event, task, or purpose at hand. Smudging also allows people to let go of negative feelings and thoughts. Letting go of things that inhibit a person from being balanced and focused comes from the feeling of being calm and safe while smudging.

The forms of smudging will vary from nation to nation but are considered by all to be a way of cleansing oneself. Smudging is part of "the way things are done" and is part of living a good life.

## Smudging Protocol:

Smudging is always voluntary. It is completely acceptable for a person to indicate that they do not want to smudge. That person may choose to stay in the room and refrain from smudging or leave the room during the smudge. Respect for all is the guiding principle in any Indigenous tradition.

While smudging does not typically pose a health risk, take steps before, during, and after smudging to accommodate the needs of those who may, for example, have severe asthma and respiratory issues, or other health concerns. Examples of steps include the following:

- a) Smudging in well-ventilated areas. Conference Room A, located at 457 Main Street West is equipped with an industrial ventilation system. To turn the fan on, simply select a time setting and the fan will automatically turn off once the time has lapsed. The fan switch is located above the light switch at the entrance of the room.
- b) If smudging is being performed in an area without and industrial ventilation system, please open a window and/or door.
- c) Please be aware of any fire concerns including the type of fire detection equipment, sprinklers, location of extinguishers, location of any combustible materials and emergency contact numbers; and avoid smudging underneath fire detection equipment (smoke detector and sprinkler head) and do not leave burning material unattended.
- d) Please post a sign outside the area indicating a smudge is in progress (attached).

