



**Department of Justice and Public Safety**  
**Adult Custody Services**

Policy: **Indigenous Traditional Spirituality and Elder services F5**  
Effective: March 2003  
Revised: December 2022

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

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Adult Custody Services is committed to providing professional practices that respect human rights and ensure safety for all. To be successful we will deliver fair practices, incorporate transparent policies and procedures, ensure independent quality assurance processes, and provide program access that allows for educational, cultural, traditional, and faith-based services as well as mental wellness and community re-entry assistance.

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**PURPOSE**

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To ensure reasonable opportunities, and support, are provided for clients in all institutions to participate in indigenous spiritual traditions and practices.

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**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

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[Charter of Rights and Freedom - Religion](#)

[Human Rights Act of NB](#)

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**SCOPE**

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This policy applies to all employees of the Adult Custody Services division of the Department of Justice and Public Safety.

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**POLICY GUIDELINES**

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The Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees everyone the fundamental freedom of conscience and religion.

The New Brunswick *Human Rights Act* states:

*"No professional association or business or trade association shall exclude any person from full membership or expel or suspend or otherwise discriminate against any of its members because of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of origin, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation or gender".*

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**PROCEDURE**

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**Sacred articles**

Clients have the right to possess sacred articles, and the respectful treatment of these articles, in all institutions, providing they do not compromise safety and security.



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**Elder services**

Reasonable efforts will be made to secure the services of an Elder to address indigenous spiritual needs. Arrangement may be made through the Director of Adult Custody Services to assist with expenses on a case by case basis.

**Approved Elders**

Elders providing programming must be recognized as a spiritual leader in their local indigenous community.

**Assistance**

Staff will be informed of the Elder and the Elder's role, so they may provide support and assistance.

**Elders' role**

Elders will provide for, and personally direct, spiritual traditions and ceremonies such as the:

- Smudging Ceremony
- Sacred Circle
- Pipe Ceremony
- Social Gathering
- Feasting.
- Fasting.
- Others as are requested.

**Traditional ceremonies**

All Centres will maintain a sufficient supply of sacred and tradition medicines for smudging ceremonies. Smudging ceremonies will be scheduled. Clients should be permitted to smudge in times of personal crisis or need when operationally feasible.

**Training**

An Elder may be called upon to provide staff training and assist in the better understanding of indigenous spiritual practices.

**Program approval**

Elders will obtain institutional approval before finalizing plans for ceremonies. Elders may bring spiritual medicines (i.e. Tobacco) into the facilities for use during any approved ceremony.

**Indigenous Pathways group collaboration**

Deputy Superintendents will arrange to hold a quarterly focus group with indigenous clients that will be:

- Facilitated in an appropriate space within the facility
- To review what are most important needs while in custody
- To review what are most important upon priorities for release/community reentry?

**Community partnership**

Superintendent will establish community-based linkages with appropriate stakeholders with the Indigenous communities they serve designed to assist with on-going collaboration and community reintegration



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**Spiritual medicine**

Clients will be permitted to retain spiritual medicine & items including but not limited to sweetgrass, sage, cedar, and red willow (although its burning may be restricted to designated areas) with the approval of the Superintendent.

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**RELATED POLICY**

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F7 Volunteer Services

E10 Client Guide

E11 Client Visits

F1 Classification

Adult Institutional Policy Manual N.B