



Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Complete Policy Title:

**Tobacco & Smoke-Free University
Policy**

Policy Number (if applicable):

n/a

Approved by:

Board of Governors

Responsible Executives:

**Provost and Vice-President (Academic);
Vice-President (Operations & Finance)**

Date(s) of Original Approval:

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Supersedes/Amends Policy Dated:

- December 7, 2017; eff. January 1, 2018

Policy-Specific Enquiries:

[Human Resources Services](#)

Disclaimer: If there is a discrepancy between this electronic policy and the approved copy held by the University Secretariat, the approved copy prevails.

Accessible Format Requests and General Policy Enquiries: policy@mcmaster.ca

MCMASTER'S COMMITMENT

1. McMaster University is committed to advancing health and societal well-being through research, teaching and community service. Promoting a healthy and safe environment is integral to the personal, professional and academic growth of students, faculty, staff and visitors. The University's commitment extends to the health and well-being of its students, staff, faculty, and the communities we serve.
2. As a smoke-free environment, the University is an environment that promotes health and wellness and ensures students, faculty, staff and visitors are not exposed to second-hand smoke.
3. Accordingly, the University does not permit smoking or the use of tobacco products in any University-owned or leased building, on University property, in any University-owned vehicle or in any vehicle while on University property, as outlined in the [Definitions](#) section.

PURPOSE

4. The primary purpose of this Policy is to enable the overall health and well-being of all members of the University Community. This Policy also serves to:
 - a) confirm the University's commitment to a healthy and safe environment;
 - b) diminish exposure to smoke, vapour, and tobacco and promote health and safety by prohibiting smoking and tobacco use on University property, including in vehicles;
 - c) support reduction and cessation of smoking, vaping, and the use of commercial tobacco products through education, culture change and increased access to leading practice resources and support such as counselling and medication;
 - d) acknowledge that some traditional spiritual or cultural ceremonies involve the use of ceremonial tobacco;
 - e) increase awareness about the detrimental impact smoking, vaping, and tobacco use has on health and well-being; and
 - f) establish the responsibility of roles, as outlined in this Policy, who are able to make or influence decisions at the University to comply with and enforce the policy.

SCOPE

5. This Policy applies to all Members of the University Community ("Community Members"). Community Members include but are not limited to students (graduate, undergraduate, and continuing education), staff, faculty, postdoctoral fellows, adjunct professors, visiting professors, sessional faculty, teaching assistants, clinical faculty, librarians, medical residents, volunteers, visitors, observers, contractors, and institutional administrators and officials representing the University.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

6. For the purpose of interpreting this Policy:
 - a) words in the singular may include the plural, and words in the plural may include the singular;

TOBACCO & SMOKE FREE UNIVERSITY POLICY

- b) members of the Administration may, where necessary and appropriate, delegate their authority;
- c) commonly-used terms in this Policy are defined as follows:
 - (i) **Smoking:** Inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other lighted or heated tobacco or plant product intended for inhalation, including hookahs (waterpipe) and cannabis, whether natural or synthetic, in any manner or in any form. This definition does not include emissions from University approved-for-use equipment (e.g., smoke machines, approved pyrotechnics).
 - (ii) **Tobacco Product(s):** Any substance containing tobacco leaf, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, hookah (waterpipe), shisha, snuff, chew, dip, bidis, blunts, clove cigarettes, or any other preparation of tobacco.
 - (iii) **Vaping Products:** Any product that may contain and/or deliver nicotine or any other substance (e.g., cannabis) intended for human consumption that can be used by a person in any manner for the purpose of inhaling vapour or aerosol from the product. The term includes any such device, whether manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, e-hookah, vape pen, or under any other product name or descriptor.
 - (iv) **Hookah:** Waterpipe and any associated products and devices which are used to produce fumes, smoke, and/or vapour from the burning of material including, but not limited to, tobacco, shisha, or other plant matter
 - (v) **University Property:** Any land boundary owned and controlled, or leased, by McMaster University, inclusive of buildings, learning places, public places, and workplaces.
 - (vi) **Vaping:** The action or practice of inhaling aerosol or vapour, which may or may not contain nicotine and flavouring produced by a device designed for this purpose.
 - (vii) **Vehicle:** Any and all modes used for transporting people or goods, such as a car, golf cart, truck, or bus.

POLICY REVIEW

- 7. As per the [McMaster University Policy Framework](#), the executive responsible will typically review this Policy every five years. Smaller and more frequent reviews may occur to ensure that this Policy is current and compliant with legislative requirements, current professional standards, and leading practices.

APPLICATION

- 8. This Policy will be interpreted in accordance with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), as amended from time to time. Community Members may seek accommodation under the applicable University policies, which include the [Policy on Workplace Accommodation](#), [McMaster University Guide and Procedures on Workplace Accommodation](#), and [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).
- 9. Smoking, vaping, and the use of tobacco products is prohibited in any vehicle, whether a personal vehicle or University owned vehicle, while on University property. Smoking, vaping, and using tobacco products in University-owned vehicles is prohibited at all times on or off University Property, in accordance with the [Smoke-Free Ontario Act](#).

TOBACCO & SMOKE FREE UNIVERSITY POLICY

10. The use of nicotine replacement therapy products, e.g. patches, for use in treating nicotine or tobacco dependence are permitted by the Policy.
11. Requests to use tobacco products for traditional or spiritual ceremonies can be made in writing to University Health & Safety (“UHS”), as set out under the “Procedures for Burning of Sacred Medicines” section of this Policy.
12. Those smoking, vaping, or using tobacco products in areas surrounding the University are expected to avoid littering and to respect municipal by-laws and provincial legislation. They are asked to be considerate of neighbouring residents, businesses, and institutions.
13. In the event that this Policy conflicts with another policy or legislation, the policy, provision, or law which is more restrictive of smoking/vaping will prevail.

PROCEDURES FOR BURNING OF SACRED MEDICINES

14. The University recognizes the unique relationship that many Indigenous cultures have with the use of tobacco as sacred medicine for traditional and spiritual purposes, and in accordance with *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*.
15. The Burning of Sacred Medicines is permitted in the Indigenous Studies Ceremonial Room (L.R. Wilson Hall) and the outdoor McMaster Indigenous Circle, the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (Arthur N. Bourns Building), and the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge (Michael G. DeGroot Centre for Learning and Discovery (MDCL)). Exemptions for other areas of the University will be granted by UHS’s “Procedures for Burning Sacred Medicines”, which is available on the UHS website. The purpose of this procedure is to support an environment that is inclusive and welcoming while ensuring that the burning of these medicines is conducted safely and in compliance with all applicable legislation and standards.

ACCOUNTABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

16. Reasonable care and diligence shall be exercised to prevent contravention of the laws of Ontario and this Policy. The University has identified roles and responsibilities as follows:
 - a) the **Provost and Vice-President (Academic)** and the **Vice-President (Operations & Finance)** are responsible for:
 - (i) ensuring that the parties or party responsible for the day-to-day implementation and enforcement of this Policy fulfill those responsibilities accordingly; and
 - (ii) monitoring this Policy and for ensuring compliance.
 - b) **Managers** will ensure their employees are notified of the Policy, provide the resources and support necessary to ensure compliance with this Policy, and take appropriate administrative action for non-compliance with the Policy. They will also provide direction to cessation support services when requested by employees.
 - c) **all departments** that engage in drafting and executing contracts are responsible for ensuring that their contracts for third-party work (contractors) on University property clearly state that the University

TOBACCO & SMOKE FREE UNIVERSITY POLICY

is a tobacco, smoke, and vapour-free environment. The [Office of Legal Services](#) can assist with drafting and negotiating the proper contract language.

- d) **University Health & Safety (UHS)** and [FHS Safety office](#) will administer requests for exceptions for traditional and spiritual ceremonies as identified above.
- e) **Community Members** are responsible for complying with this Policy and are encouraged to communicate this Policy to other Community Members. The success of this policy is dependent upon the courtesy, respect, and cooperation of Community Members, not only to comply but to continue to encourage the compliance of others.
- f) **Facility Services** will:
 - (i) post and maintain appropriate signs throughout the University. The type and location of signs shall comply with legislative mandates and the goals of the Policy. Requests for additional signage will be considered and addressed as appropriate;
 - (ii) provide adequate waste receptacles for areas on the perimeter of University Property;
 - (iii) monitor and remove smoking-related refuse found on University Property; and
 - (iv) [Security Services](#) will monitor and refer matters to the appropriate office to ensure compliance with this Policy, in accordance with the protocol approved by the Provost and Vice-Provost (Academic) and Vice-President (Operations & Finance) from time to time, and in compliance with regulatory provisions. Such a protocol may ultimately include education, warnings, fines and disciplinary proceedings in accordance with existing student, staff and/or faculty disciplinary procedures, as applicable.
- g) **Student Affairs** will ensure health promotion efforts are undertaken with respect to cessation and supports for students. They will also provide direction to cessation support services when requested by students. Student Affairs will also enforce the Policy where appropriate through application of the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).
- h) **Human Resources Services** will ensure health promotion efforts are undertaken with respect to cessation and supports for employee groups. They will also provide direction to cessation support services when requested by staff and faculty. They will also enforce the Policy where appropriate in accordance with established disciplinary policies and procedures and by the terms of existing contracts of employment or collective agreements, where applicable.

SUPPORTS

- 17. The University will undertake education efforts related to smoking and vaping cessation in partnership with Hamilton Public Health, as appropriate. To assist faculty, staff and students who wish to reduce or quit using, the University will offer cessation support.
- 18. Any concern or question about the interpretation or application of this Policy can be directed to:
 - a) [Student Wellness Centre](#) for cessation support for students;
 - b) [Human Resources Services](#) for cessation support for faculty and staff;

TOBACCO & SMOKE FREE UNIVERSITY POLICY

- c) [Facility Services](#) for signage, cleaning, and/or related physical property related matters; and
- d) [Security Services](#) for enforcement matters.

RELATED PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS

19. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following statutes, University policies and practices or collective agreement provisions. Any question of the application of this Policy or related policies shall be determined by the Vice-President (Operations & Finance), and/or the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), or their delegates, and in conjunction with the administrator of the other policy or policies. The University reserves the right to amend or add to the University's policies and statements from time to time. The below is not a comprehensive list.

- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [Smoke-Free Ontario Act](#)
- [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges](#)
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- [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- McMaster's [Workplace and Environmental Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Workplace Accommodation, Policy on](#)