

 <b>BRANDON UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>Turtle Ceremonial Fire Protocol</b>	<b>Approved by:</b> President’s Administrative Council  <b>Administered by:</b> Associate Vice-President, Indigenous Initiatives
<b>Administrative Policy &amp; Procedures</b>	<b>First Approved:</b> <i>August 06, 2025</i>	<b>Updated:</b> <i>New Policy</i>

## 1.0 Scope

This policy applies to anyone who would like to use the Turtle Ceremonial Fire. It provides information on the booking process and highlight responsibilities of the Host and Skaabe (Helper).

## 2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 **Host:** Individual who books the Turtle Ceremonial Fire and is hosting the ceremony.
- 2.2 **Skaabe:** Anishanaabe term for helper. They are an experienced individual responsible for caring for the fire from start to finish.
- 2.3 **Fire Keeper Teachings:** Received from Knowledge Keeper or Elder on respectful fire keeping responsibilities and protocols to follow.
- 2.4 **Ceremonial Fires:** Used to start a ceremony or event and offers a place to gather, reflect, and celebrate.
- 2.5 **Fire Use Kit:** This is a kit provided by Physical Plant that provides the tools and safety items required to host a fire.

### **3.0 Policy**

The Turtle Ceremonial Fire is intended to provide Brandon University faculty, staff, students, and community partners a gathering space for Indigenous ceremonial fires. The Indigenous Peoples' Centre oversees the booking process to ensure respectful cultural practices are followed.

#### **3.1 Booking Process**

To book the ceremonial fire, permission must be obtained from the Indigenous Peoples' Centre. To book, please email [IPC@BrandonU.ca](mailto:IPC@BrandonU.ca) with details of your request. Details should include the following:

- Who will be using it
- When will they be using it
- What are they using it for
- Why are they using it

#### **3.2 Respectful Cultural Practices**

- A Skaabe is required, who practices fire keeper teachings.
- No alcohol and drugs allowed.
- Do not cook food over fire pit.
- Do not throw garbage into the fire pit.
- Only natural wood to be used.
- Only traditional medicines such as tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweetgrass can be placed in the fire.
- Follow Seven Sacred Teachings.

#### **3.3 Host Responsibilities**

- Gain permission for the Turtle Ceremonial Fire use through the Indigenous Peoples' Centre.
- Contact the Administrative Assistant of the Vice-President Administration & Finance to confirm use of the space and avoid booking conflicts.
- Submit a FAMIS work order to Physical Plant to receive a fire use kit.
- Bring natural wood to use.
- At the conclusion of the fire and once safe to do so, follow-up with the Indigenous Peoples' Centre on disposing of ashes to ensure the ceremonial fire is ready for next user.

### **3.4 Skaabe (Helper) Responsibilities**

- Cleanse self and space with a ceremonial smudge before use.
- Always light the fire naturally.
- Remain alcohol and drug free during fire keeping duties.
- Care for the fire until fire is extinguished and place the cover back on top.
- At no time should a fire be left unattended until it is completely extinguished.
- Ensure no food or garbage enters the fire.
- Do not use water to put fire out. Let it burn down.

### **4.0 Accountability**

The Indigenous Peoples' Centre is responsible for the communication, administration, and interpretation of this policy.

### **5.0 Review**

Formal review of this policy will be conducted every five (5) years. This policy may be revised or rescinded if the President deems necessary or if there are changes within legislation which require such.