

# Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

## Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Student (at school, college or university)

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

*No Response*

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

## Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Partially supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

I believe that this Bill provides a unique opportunity to enact a positive cultural change around menstrual products. I wholeheartedly agree with the intent behind the Bill and think it is shocking that women still have to miss out on education because of their periods. However, it is the nature of the products that I think could be changed. In Britain every year, more than 1 billion tampons and sanitary towels are used and disposed of. The vast vast majority of these are composed of non biodegradable materials. The Scottish Parliament should be very careful about supplying such environmentally damaging products. Instead, promotion and distribution of reusable silicone cups would be a far wiser move, in line with the Parliament's eco credentials. Providing every young woman in school with a single reusable cup would be a far far more cost effective measure than providing years worth of tampons and pads, as well as hugely reducing waste, saving costs downstream in landfill and sewage services. It would also contribute to a culture change from the default position of tampons as the period product of choice. As well as all this, many women report that silicone cups are a more pleasant product to use resulting in less cramping and abdominal pain. They also carry 0 risk of toxic shock syndrome and eradicate the risk of bleach and pesticides being absorbed into the body through the mucous membranes that tampon cotton comes into contact with. While not all women would want to try the cups and I believe free tampons and pads should still be offered (with the most eco friendly brands only), having silicone cups as the star player in this policy could be a very positive move.

## Page 8: Universal provision of sanitary products

Q2. Do you think a universal, card-based system (modelled on the c-card system for free condoms) would be an effective means of providing sanitary products for free to those who need them?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The card system works perfectly for condoms

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view in relation to a card-based system?

The card should be available only to those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

Q4. Do you have a view on which locations would be most suitable for dispensing free sanitary products (e.g. GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, health clinics)?

Everywhere that condoms are provided

## Page 11: Schools, colleges and universities

Q5. Do you agree that there should be specific obligations on schools, colleges and universities to make sanitary products available for free (via dispensers in toilets)?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Q5. Do you agree that there should be specific obligations on schools, colleges and universities to make sanitary products available for free (via dispensers in toilets)?

A centralised silicone cup distribution would be more effective

## Page 12: Personal experience (questions 6 and 7 are for individual respondents only)

Q6. Have you ever struggled to access or afford sanitary products during menstruation? (e.g. financial barriers, unexpected circumstances, health issues)

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary products

Q7. If sanitary products were available for free, which of the following would apply to you?

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary products

## Page 14: Financial implications

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
<b>(a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS)</b>		X				
<b>(b) Colleges and universities</b>		X				
<b>(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)</b>				X		
<b>(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)</b>				X		

Q9. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

Distribution of a single reusable silicone cup instead of years worth of tampons/pads

## Page 16: Equalities

Q10. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

Q11. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

*No Response*

## Page 18: Sustainability

Q12. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response:**

The bill will only be sustainable if the environmental impact of the products supplied is carefully considered

## Page 19: General

Q13. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

*No Response*