

# 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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

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 am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Emma Trottier

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?

Fully Supportive

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

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

No woman or girl should be punished for having her period, or left to feel ashamed or stigmatised because she is unable to afford or incapable of accessing period products. Menstrual care is health care, and providing free menstrual products will better women and girls' health in Scotland. Not only that, removing barriers to access and ensuring women have the products to meet their needs means that Scotland would be further securing women and girls' right to human dignity and supporting their fuller participation in society.

## 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

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

The card should be available to anyone; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

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

Women and girls are best placed to decide when they need support accessing period products, and they are certainly best placed to decide what menstrual products they need every month (or more regularly). One of the challenges women and girls currently face is being unable to access a range of period products. For example, women will often rely on heavy absorbency tampons throughout their entire period, including when their flow is light. This can result in mild to severe health problems, ranging from BV to the deadly Toxic Shock Syndrome. Any universal program should give women and girls unlimited access so that they can choose how to manage their periods safely and with dignity.

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)?

There should be many different types of locations available, including the list presented as examples. Locations should be chosen with women and girls' realities in mind, and be places where women and girls feel safe and comfortable accessing period products.

## 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)?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Schools, colleges and universities should be providing menstrual products free for all its students. As an institution that aims to educate, schools, colleges and universities should be removing barriers to women and girls' education. Importantly, while the costs should be covered, schools and universities should also improve

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access to menstrual products (e.g., the locations where women and girls can access free menstrual products). As much as this as an access issue because of cost, it is also an access issue because of location and the unavailability of menstrual products across campuses.

## 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)

Yes, occasionally

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

I would not expect to claim free products

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

As I can now afford the products that I need to manage my period safely, I wouldn't expect to claim free products. I want to make sure the Scotland is reaching the women and girls who need support in accessing menstrual 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
(a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS)		X				
(b) Colleges and universities		X				
(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)		X				
(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)				X		

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

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

There will be costs, but the increase financial cost of providing free products should not outweigh the human cost of failing to act.

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

*No Response*

## 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?

Yes

## Page 19: General

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

*No Response*