

# 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".)

Member of the public

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Period poverty affects homeless people yet I'm told that this bill will not result in homeless women being given

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

free access to sanitary products and that they will have to remain dependent on charitable donations. This scheme should be supported with education on how to take care of yourself and how to manage money. This scheme should be temporary and not something that props up poverty rather than trying to deal with the root causes of it, ie lack of funding for social services, neglect of children in family homes and lack of education that deal with life skills. I believe that there should always be a place for this in secondary school as girls start to learn about periods but there is something wrong with our society if adult women are unable to afford to buy sanitary products for themselves. Also, what happens to the women who are struggling who are not at university or college? It seems to take care not of the most vulnerable but of those who are actually already in a privileged position in comparison to others.

## 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?

No

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Surely the need for free sanitary products is something that changes, and presumably, in a short term way. Some months you might have enough money and some months you don't? If you need a card, how long does it take to apply for it? You'll be bleeding before the card is issued. People will lose cards. People with cards will use them even if they don't need the sanitary products. What's to stop people getting sanitary products they don't need for free and selling them for money? Shouldn't you be talking to people who need sanitary products on a regular basis and providing some sort of support to help them sort their lives out? The cost of the card system and the fact that it provides no real benefit should make it not a viable option.

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

There is no need for a card scheme

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)?

Supermarkets. This way people can get them with their shopping and the government don't have to employ people or use buildings. It makes the person's life using the service a little more normal.

## 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

## 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)

No

**Please explain or give an example of your experience if you feel able to do so.**

I have gone without food and cannot imagine never having £1 for sanitary products in a way that my life would not be in need of much more help than to be given tampons.

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

I would not expect to claim free 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			

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

If women are unable to afford to purchase tampons, then how can it have an impact on retailers? If retailers see a drop in sales of tampons after the government introduce the scheme then you know people who can afford to buy them are choosing to take advantage and get them for free. The government is unlikely to do anything as sensible as asking supermarkets to distribute them for free so they will have significant costs of employees to manage this, card schemes, dealing with criticism from the press etc. If they ask schools to pay from these products from their budget then how will they afford to pay for education? They are already asking parents to pay for funding in part for school events. Tampons must cost the manufacturers pennies to make so why can't the government talk to the manufacturers about providing these products for free as part of their CSR programs? Or incentivise them to distribute them for free to those who need them via the supermarkets? I bet you one supermarket would be happy to pay for the privilege of being THE supermarket that supports women by distributing these to those in need (at no cost to them because the manufacturers are providing them for free). They'd scan them with a code at the checkout and then feed the statistics back to you. The benefit they'd gain would be increased footfall to their stores. Women have already said they are buying food rather than

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

sanitary products so it's not as if even those in the most need aren't valuable customers.

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

yes, as described in my previous replies.

## 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?

Negative

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

It reinforces the stereotype that people in poverty are dirty and unable to look after themselves. It feeds the idea that women cannot take care of themselves. It shows that women will receive support on issues while men's issues, increased suicide, lack of performance in education, anger management, etc are overlooked.

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

Make it clear that this is an issue not of poverty but of education and neglect. Many people in poverty do not struggle to manage to buy tampons.

## 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?

No

## Page 19: General

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

You should be prosecuting Tesco and Morrison for falsely advertising that they have "cancelled vat" and that they are paying the vat on sanitary products for women. Women are on twitter saying that they are now paying more for sanitary products from Morrisons and Tesco rather than buying them from Asda for less because they believe that there is no VAT on tampons from Morrisons or Tesco. These two large corporations

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

are feeding the public the wrong information to drive sales to their shops and drive up the price of sanitary products, resulting surely in more period poverty for women who are genuinely struggling.