

# 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".)

Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Claire Baker

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**

I support the proposals. It is important that anyone who needs period products is able to receive them when needed with no cost required. We know from the evidence from food banks that those who are struggling to feed themselves and their families also struggle to have access to period products, and that women living on low incomes can find it difficult and sometimes prohibitive to add these products to monthly expenditure. Menstruation is not a choice and everyone should be confident that their needs will be met.

## 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**

I agree that a universal card-based system could be an effective way to run a national scheme and would minimise any stigma and increase access.

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.**

The way in which the scheme could be run is open to debate and there is a need to balance resources with demand. However, patterns of behaviour suggests that those who need to access free products would benefit from the scheme while others would continue to buy products themselves. A scheme which proscribed who could benefit would always run the risk of excluding access for people who need it and would lack the flexibility that people may need sometimes in their lives to access the 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)?

At this stage there would need to be discussion with the agencies who may be involved but I would encourage location where people feel comfortable accessing this support.

## 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**

It is important that young people have access to adequate period products, that stigma is reduced and that

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)?

menstruation does not detract from their studies or result in them being absent from education because of lack of products.

## 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)

I prefer not to say

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
(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

Some agencies and local authorities have already introduced elements of the policy and it would be helpful to understand what the financial implications have been for them.

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

I believe that the benefits of providing dignity and confidence for people who are menstruating that their needs will be met regardless of their income is a positive outcome which cannot just be measured by the cost of this scheme. It is about fairness and support for individuals.

I would also be supportive of consideration being given to increasing the uptake of reusable menstrual products where appropriate which would reduce the overall cost for some people and have a positive environmental benefit in reducing waste.

## 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?

I don't anticipate a negative impact on equality

## 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

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

A model such as a card which enables the individual to exercise that wish if they need or want to would, I believe, regulate the uptake of the scheme. I don't believe it would have an increased environmental impact and believe that the social benefits would be positive.

## Page 19: General

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

*No Response*