

# 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".)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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Fully Supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Access to period products are a human right.

## 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; its use should be restricted (e.g. by limiting the number of products that may be claimed each month)

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

Universal access is a more egalitarian way of providing dignity and respect to those who needs it. Income and access to income are two different things. This method would support everyone if they chose or had to use the card. Means testing for period products would further stigmatise women.

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)?

Pharmacies would be the most appropriate as well as foodbanks, community hubs/centres

## 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)

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No

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

I haven't but my mother did. We were on a limited income and she contracted TSS by using tampons for long periods of time. Tampons were most cost effective than towels. We lived in a lone parent household so my mother would prioritise my needs before hers.

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**

Universal access would give women the option to use if needed. Many women would only do this if they had no option.

## 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)						
(b) Colleges and universities						
(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)	X					
(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)						

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I think companies should be working with the government to provide products in locations such as schools, universities, refuges. They make substantial profits from women so they should be willing to reinvest in supporting women.

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

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I think more work with companies should be explored to have a less impact on the public purse as possible. We should also think about raising tax in different areas to alleviate costs.

## 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

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The bill is promoting visibility of a topic that has a hidden stigma. Any visibility/discussion around menstruation is a positive step in the right direction.

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

Stop using the term period poverty. Women on limited incomes should not be scapegoated or be blamed for the cost of universal provision. We need to reinforce positive messages that access to products is a human right for all women. Of course women on limited incomes should be first to benefit but they should not carry the burden of "costing" the public more money.

## 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?

Glad to have been able to take part in this, thank you