

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Fully Supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

People who menstruate are penalised for doing so (and I include Trans men in this). Part of life for most

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

women and girls includes menstruation, which generally allows reproduction, should one wish/be able to take that step. Society will not allow any hint of menstrual blood to be visible to the world outside of women and girls' underwear; most menstruators want to absorb the blood discretely. The only ways to stop menstruation deliberately are rather challenging to one's health: starving oneself, taking certain drugs, generally avoiding taking care of oneself. Not having enough menstrual products can lead to people leaving tampons in for too long, for example, where severe complications, even death, can ensue. Menstrual products can be expensive, and difficult to access for some women, girls and Trans men, especially given the unfathomable inclusion of VAT, what with them being a luxury and all. So, menstruation is prevalent among women and girls; they must take steps to contain that societal toxin from view; menstruation is natural and allows the continuation of the species; without endangering their health, women and girls who menstruate have no choice in the matter; sanitary products are vital; many are unable to afford or access them (remember, they have no choice in this). Free provision? About bloody time!

## 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**

Provides better access to menstrual products for people and means those who can afford to buy their own are free to do so.

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.**

Please see previous answer to Question 2.

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)?

Schools, universities, charities, religious buildings (e.g. churches, mosques), community centres, libraries, GP surgeries, hospitals, health clinics, food banks, Council buildings, pharmacies.

## 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

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)?

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

There is a duty of care to students and pupils in every respect, and particularly given the level of child poverty and the financial burdens on students, as well as the possible lack of access to menstrual products at home, it seems fair, sensible and right that they are provided with the absolute basics that allow them, at the very least, to be able to leave the house and attend classes during menstruation.

**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

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**

I am currently in a position where I don't need to claim for free menstrual products but it's vital that they are available at the point of need to those not as fortunate as I am.

**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	

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

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Just makes sense to me that local and national government would take up the bulk of the cost.

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

Reduce bonuses, perks and expenses for all government officials. Stop building unnecessary buildings. Share the wealth.

## 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**

It will make a difference to people's actual lives, which is fantastic, and will allow people menstruating to fully engage with life where a lack of products may have stopped them before. Not sure it will have any major effect on equality in terms of the opportunities for women, girls and Trans men, but it's a positive action nonetheless.

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

Reminding people that women, girls and Trans men have no damn choice in whether or not they menstruate, without being injurious to ourselves. Reminding people that menstruating is natural and involuntary. Councillors getting taxis to and from meetings, officials having long paid-for lunches and trips away for meetings that could be done via Skype, and general disregard for the resources of the people of Scotland are neither natural nor involuntary. Not quite in keeping with the community spirit Scotland's officials like to brag about.

## 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:**

Blood needs to be mopped up somehow. There may be impacts but will they be as damaging as the impact of no access to menstrual products?

## Page 19: General

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

Thanks for doing this - it's about time this was taken seriously and the inclusion of VAT challenged at a government level. Cheers!