

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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**

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

Young women have limited financial independence and low incomes. With free access to sanitary products this group of women will not feel the need to disclose to those who exert control over their finances their need for money for sanitary products or to hide their needs and suffer the financial implications in other ways.

## 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?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I would like to read about what actual mechanism is in place to stop a group of school pupils going into the toilet, emptying the sanitary products machine and throwing them around a corridor etc.

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.**

The system should be free for reasonable use. Excessive use could lead to unnecessary waste. I do appreciate that some women might need to obtain supplies for other women, however in this instance they should be allowed to have a proxy card.

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)?

The examples given all suggest that sanitary product use is a medical issue. It's a normal part of life. I would suggest pubs, clubs, restaurants and shopping centre toilets

## 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

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

I would expect to claim free products occasionally

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I would expect to claim them only when required unexpectedly. I would also like to add that women who have experience a miscarriage and who for obvious reasons would not have sanitary products with them would massively benefit from there being freely available sanitary products for emergencies.

## 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**

I think for each of these groups it is difficult to give a definitive answer.

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?

Slightly positive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Offers women the opportunity to go about their daily lives without having to carry sanitary products at all times at certain times of the month.

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

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

The bill offers the opportunity for investment in biodegradable sanitary products. it is possible to get eco-friendly sanitary products however buying them individually is expensive. Buying in bulk for statutory provision could mean these were secured at a lower cost. It might not be the cheapest option but it would reduce overall waste costs. In particular it is possible to get biodegradable nappy sacks so why not sanitary disposal bags?

## Page 19: General

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

*No Response*