



Provision of Free Sanitary Products Policy

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The Scottish Legal Aid Board

www.slab.org.uk

Contents

Policy Statement.....	3
Scope	3
Aim of the policy.....	3
Links to Other Relevant Policies and Guidance	3
Queries	3
Roles and Responsibilities for Staff and Managers	3
Period Poverty Procedure	3

Policy Statement

The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 states that the Act places a duty on local authorities, education providers and specified public bodies to provide access to free period products for anyone who needs them.

This would help contribute to increased dignity and equality in the workplace by making sure that nobody suffers the indignity and anxiety of not being able to access these essential sanitary items and to ensure everyone can fully participate in their working lives and/or access to public service.

We decided to follow the spirit of the Act and the associated guidance and developed this voluntary policy.

Scope

The policy applies to all staff and visitors to Thistle House, Edinburgh, and all Client Legal Services regional offices:

- Civil Legal Assistance Office - Aberdeen and Inverness
- Public Defence Solicitors' Office - Ayr, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Glasgow, Inverness, and Kirkwall.

Aim of the policy

To help contribute to increased dignity and equality in the workplace by making sure nobody suffers the indignity and anxiety of not being able to access essential sanitary items and to ensure everyone can fully participate in their working lives and/or access to public service.

Links to Other Relevant Policies and Guidance

N/A.

Queries

Any queries on entitlement and eligibility should be referred to reception@slab.org.uk.

Roles and Responsibilities for Staff and Managers

Facilities team

Source products and ensure display information is provided on sites.

Communication teams

Assist Facilities with creating display information for offices.

Finance

Facilities and Finance will consider the relevant costs and contract options including any impact on existing contracts.

Period Poverty Procedure

The Facilities team will order products and manage in line with the normal procurement process to replenish stock.

Facilities will be responsible for ordering a range of fragrance, and fragrance-free, sanitary products of different types, brands, and absorbency levels, and ensure they are placed in our office locations. They will pass on any order information and details to the respective Client Legal Services office managers to ensure they can replenish stock as required.

Once this policy is implemented, Facilities are initially going to check supply on a weekly basis to monitor uptake and ensure sufficient supply. The cleaning team will support Facilities by checking supply daily. Once there is a clearer indication of uptake, checks can be reduced to a monthly basis.

We considered the best way for us to provide free sanitary products, which is to provide a range of products in airtight containers which can be closed with a lid. These containers can be easily placed in our bathrooms and are easily and discreetly accessible by staff and visitors.

Each container will have a label attached which provides information about it containing free sanitary products for use. The label will also include the phone number and email address of reception in case people need to let staff know that supply is low, or in case they have any feedback about the products they'd like to share.

Labels on the containers encourage staff to report lack of supply or any other issues they experience to reception. Uptake is going to be monitored over a 12-month period to identify how much supply is going to be required and which products are preferred.

Financial impact

Final costs are difficult to quantify and will depend on the volume of use. Facilities and Finance will consider the relevant costs and contract options including any impact on existing contracts (for example the collection of sanitary bins). There will also be the cost of storage, distribution and replenishing in toilet areas.

Guiding principles

We used the following guidance principles when considering access to sanitary products for the development and implementation of this policy:

- Protecting people's dignity, avoiding anxiety, embarrassment and stigma;
- Making a range of products available in places that people use;
- A delivery model that is reflective of communities' views and needs;
- An efficient and effective approach which demonstrates value for money;
- Individuals being able to get sufficient products to meet their needs;
- Gender equality - ensuring anyone who menstruates can access products, including transgender men/non-binary individuals, and that language is gender inclusive;
- Awareness raising and education to both promote the 'offer' and attempt to change cultural norms.