



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

**Department:** BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**DISTRICT 5**  
**File #:** 23-805

Board Meeting Date: 10/3/2023

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** David J. Canepa, District 5 and Noelia Corzo, District 2  
**Subject:** Adopt a resolution in Support of Providing Free Menstruation Products in Select County Building Restrooms

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution to provide free menstruation products in select County building restrooms.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The County currently provides toilet paper, soap, paper towels, and other essential supplies free of charge in public facility restrooms necessary for personal hygiene and maintaining public health. Menstrual hygiene products, like tampons and sanitary napkins, are essential health items for all individuals who menstruate. The County does not currently provide these items free of charge in public facility restrooms.

Other jurisdictions and public entities have recently begun providing supplies in public restrooms. These include:

- **School Districts.** On October 8, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 367, which enacted the Menstrual Equity for All Act of 2021 and took effect on July 1, 2022. Under this bill, California public schools with students in grades six through twelve, community colleges, and the California State University System must provide free menstrual products in restrooms starting in the 2022-2023 school year and post certain related notices.
- **Libraries.** On April 5, 2022, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established a pilot program to provide period hygiene products, diapers, and other personal care items at select Los Angeles County Library venues. This ongoing effort was developed in collaboration with local non-profit organizations that provided the commodities for free distribution. On March 23, 2023, the San Mateo County Libraries Joint Power Authority announced a similar, self-funded program.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Lack of equitable access to menstruation hygiene products represents a major barrier to the health, well-being, and full participation of women, transgender, and nonbinary people who menstruate in our

community. 86% of women in the U.S. report that they have started their menstruation cycle in public without the necessary supplies. Lack of access to period hygiene products disproportionately impacts people from lower socioeconomic statuses. As such, the County's commitment to equity requires a careful examination of how it may help reduce barriers to accessing these products.

Passing this Resolution will direct the County Executive to formulate and implement a pilot program to provide free menstruation products in select County facility restrooms for a period of eighteen months. During this limited pilot program, the County will collect and analyze information on the program's effectiveness, determine whether a broader implementation across additional County facilities is feasible, and explore partnerships with community groups to defray costs.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The budget for this pilot program is \$5,000:

- Est. \$975 for display boxes if each box is \$25 with 2-3 boxes per bathroom.
- Order 1,000 menstrual supplies per building for \$3510 without tax & shipping (Aunt Flow).
- Leftover funds would be used for tax & shipping and if possible, order extra backstock of supplies.