



**Public  
Library**

Colchester-  
East Hants

# Memo

To: Municipal CAOs

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From: Tiffany Bartlett

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Date: April 14, 2023

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Re: Free Menstrual Products in Public Libraries

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## Background

In December 2022, the Provincial Government announced more help for Nova Scotians struggling with the rising cost of living.

As part of government's cost of living support, the Province is providing Nova Scotia public libraries with funding to reduce the hardship lower-income people experience around period poverty. CEHPL received \$25,000 from the Province for this initiative in April 2023.

## What is Period Poverty?

A growing social issue impacting our community, period poverty describes the struggle many people (women, girls, transgender) face while trying to afford menstrual products. Difficulty affording menstrual products can cause people to stay home from school and work, with lasting consequences to their education and economic opportunities.

## Free Menstrual Products in Libraries

Starting April 19<sup>th</sup>, CEHPL will make menstrual products (pads and tampons) available to the public for free in all library washrooms (Lloyd E. Matheson Centre's atrium washrooms for Elmsdale Library).

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*Note: These FAQs were developed to help support staff with the rollout of this program.*

### Why is the Library offering free menstruation products?

We are doing this to make it easier for our community members to access the products they need. We recognize that period poverty is a real concern for many in our community, and we are proud to support this movement for free menstrual product availability across the country.

### What if people take too many?

Libraries that have launched similar services do not see over-consumption. Most people take what they need, and if someone takes a larger amount, that is ok.

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**Why are they included in the Men's washroom?**

This service is focused on access – there may be situations where someone menstruating will use the men's washroom, or a man might grab products for someone in their life.

**What if people that can afford to buy them, start taking them?**

That is ok. There may be situations where someone is caught without products or they are taking products for someone else. We will not judge or make assumptions.

**What if someone is uncomfortable with seeing these products?**

You can gently remind them that menstruation impacts many people in our community, and it's part of being a healthy human. There is no shame around menstruation.

**Who is funding this?**

Funding for this initiative has been provided by the Provincial Government.

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Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this new initiative.

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