



## OVERVIEW

Councilmember Jawando is sponsoring **Bill 42-23**, the **Menstrual Products Access & Equity Act** to ensure persons who menstruate can access period products in public restrooms.

**Menstrual products are basic hygienic necessities like toilet paper and soap.**

Across the world, period poverty, or the lack of access to over-the-counter products to manage menstrual bleeding, isolates people who menstruate. In the United States, access to products is limited in public spaces.

**Ensuring free access to sanitary products in all bathrooms accessible to the public will improve gender and health equity and help reduce the stigma associated with menstruation.**

## PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Bill 42-23 advances health and menstrual equity by requiring free menstrual products in certain public accommodations with a permanent public bathroom in Montgomery County.

The Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services is the designated regulatory and enforcement agency, as a health-related policy.

## FACTS

Menstrual health and hygiene is a public health issue.

**16.9 million people** who menstruate in the US are living in poverty.<sup>1</sup>

**26%** of the world's population menstruates every month<sup>2</sup>

Nearly **seven in ten (68%) people** agree that period poverty is a public health issue, yet only 4% of Americans are aware of a local resource where free or reduced-cost period supplies are available.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Michel J, Mettler A, Schönenberger S, Gunz D. [Period poverty: why it should be everybody's business](#) | Published in *Journal of Global Health Reports*

<sup>2</sup> [Frontiers in Global Women's Health](#)

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Period Poverty Facts <https://allianceforperiodsupplies.org/period-poverty/>

## SIMILAR LEGISLATION

Many jurisdictions at all levels of government are working to increase access to menstrual products. In **Maryland**, **HB0205** was passed in 2021 to require menstrual products to be made available in dispensers in all women's restrooms by 2025.

Since 2021, Ann Arbor City, Michigan and Washington, DC passed bills requiring free menstrual products in restrooms in certain public facilities. Many other jurisdictions have passed or are considering legislation to require products in public buildings, schools, and correctional facilities. The Alliance for Period Supplies lists 150 menstrual equity legislative efforts across the US<sup>4</sup>.

## SUPPORT FOR EXPANDED ACCESS

Among many others, the following entities support broader public access to menstrual products:

- American Academy of Family Physicians and Maryland Academy of Family Physicians
- PERIOD. National Office and Montgomery County Chapter
- The Alliance for Period Supplies
- Planned Parenthood

## LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

### Christina Neidlinger

Legislative Aide, Health & Human Services  
[christina.neidlinger@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:christina.neidlinger@montgomerycountymd.gov)

### Michelle Whittaker

Chief of Staff  
[michelle.whittaker@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:michelle.whittaker@montgomerycountymd.gov)

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<sup>4</sup> <https://allianceforperiodsupplies.org/period-legislation/>