



## United Way Central Alberta Period Promise Policy Agreement

### Preamble

United Way's Period Promise is a campaign designed to build on the successes of United Way's involvement with the Tampon Tuesday period product collection drive – an effort to bring attention to the need for making menstrual products more accessible to and affordable for those living in poverty or with other barriers. Period Promise will continue to raise awareness for the issue of period poverty and menstrual equity. But it is going to do more to solve the problem by promoting the need for free and accessible products in the community. The campaign aims to engage organizations who are passionate about women's issues, transgender rights issues, and all those affected by poverty or stigma around menstruation to become more active in delivering community solutions.

United Way's Period Promise campaign will continue to include asks for product and financial donations which are to be shared with vulnerable people in Central Alberta. However, it will also be asking organizations of all types to adopt a policy to provide free products for staff, clientele, customers or others related to the work they each do.

This document is an agreement between United Way Central Alberta and the undersigned to join the Period Promise campaign by signing on to the policy below and committing to its implementation.

### Policy Statement

The undersigned party agrees to provide, free of charge, diverse\* menstrual products to their

- *Employees*
- *Clients*
- *Community members*

in a manner that is accessible for all - in order to achieve menstrual equity, de-stigmatize menstruation and reduce period poverty.

\*An outline of potential distribution of diverse products is located in the "suggestions on policy implementation."

### Purpose

Social responsibility is important to us at \_\_\_\_\_ and as such, we aim to positively impact our community through policies that build equity. By signing on to the Period Promise Campaign, we recognize we are contributing to the reduction of period poverty, de-stigmatizing menstruation, and working towards helping more people get access to the products they count on. We appreciate that providing free, accessible and diverse menstrual products will be an investment in the overall health and well-being of our community and will help de-stigmatize the need for others in our communities.





## Definition

Period poverty is defined as the lack of access to menstrual products due to financial limitations.

Menstrual equity means that all people who menstruate have access to menstrual products and recognizes that the “ability to access these items affects a person’s freedom to work, study, be healthy and participate in daily life with basic dignity. And if access is compromised – whether by poverty or stigma or lack of education and resources – it is in all of our interests to ensure those needs are met.”<sup>1</sup>

**The estimated cost of providing free, accessible menstrual products is approximately \$1.25/month per menstruating employee.** The calculation of this cost is attached. This estimation is based on numerous assumptions which may not apply to your work space. Please note that, at this time, it is not possible to anticipate the cost for clients and community members without specific organizational information.

## Detailed Conditions

### Bi-Annual Recommitment

In order to be a designated Period Promise employer, a commitment to continue to provide free, accessible and diverse menstrual products must be made on a bi-annual basis.

This will be done in partnership with the Central Alberta United Way. A representative from the United Way will contact your organization every two-years to get your confirmation of continued involvement and, if available, collect data and stories related to the implementation of your Period Promise policy.

### Benefits of Signing On To Period Promise

As a result of signing on to the Period Promise policy, your organization will:

- ✓ Be named on our public list of signatories recognizing your leadership in helping us reduce the prevalence of period poverty and menstrual stigma in our community.
- ✓ Be given the use of United Way Central Alberta logos to include in any media that you may create to highlight your involvement in the campaign.
- ✓ Have access to a toolkit that will help explain to staff the reason for the policy shift and encourage them to become involved in the cause in the wider community. Be invited to be involved in policy consultation and discussion opportunities with other signatory partners and advocacy strategy meetings where signatories, activists, and local leaders can share ideas and discuss the next steps for policy implementation.
- ✓ Be invited to public events highlighting the policy and Period Promise campaign.





## Suggestions on policy implementation

There are many ways to provide free, accessible access to diverse menstrual products.

At a minimum, all female and gender-neutral washrooms should be supplied with free, accessible and diverse menstrual products. That said, we strongly encourage you to consider adding a small supply to the men's washrooms as well, to make sure that regardless of gender identity, anybody who menstruates can have access to products. For information on how transfolx experience menstruation differently than women and the importance of providing product for them in whichever washroom they use, please contact the United Way.

It should be assumed that any washroom with menstrual products in it will also have used product in it. Washrooms that are supplied with free and accessible menstrual products should have a hygienic and private means of disposing of used product. In many public washrooms this is done by placing a small garbage bin in a bathroom stall next to the toilet.

A diversity of products should be available for use, so that anybody who menstruates can have some choice in selecting which product works best for their needs. Examples of diverse products include but are not limited to: tampons, pads and panty liners.

Some other suggestions on policy implementation include:

- Instead of in washrooms, have a designated, neutral location where anyone who needs menstrual products can obtain them. For example, accessible menstrual products in the office lounge.
- Provide access to diverse products that come in various sizes or absorption ratings for the varying levels of menstrual flow and body shapes.





## Period Promise Policy Agreement

BETWEEN:

United Way Central Alberta  
100, 4828 53rd Street,  
Red Deer, AB T4N 2E8

AND:

Organization

Address:

City/Town

PROVINCE

POSTAL CODE

THIS AGREEMENT IS A DECLARATION THAT:

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ declares to fulfill their Period Promise as outlined in this Period Promise Policy Agreement.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ agrees to the detailed conditions of the Period Promise Campaign.

The parties have signed this agreement this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_ . Follow-up reporting and a recommitment to the Period Promise Policy Agreement will be explored in the year \_\_\_\_\_ .

Signature:

Title:

UW Signature

Title

Please submit completed form to [info@caunitedway.ca](mailto:info@caunitedway.ca)





## Appendix to Agreement

### Calculator to Assist Estimating Cost of Providing Product

This calculator aims to show that providing free, accessible and diverse menstrual products is relatively affordable. It also serves as a template to estimate the cost of providing access to free and accessible products to employees at your organization.

This calculator does come with some notable limitations.

It does not calculate the cost of providing products to clients and community members, as the level of variance is too high. Additionally, it assumes that employers are providing 100% of the products that people who menstruate need while at work. It is likely that employees will not require a 100% provision rate and that the total cost of \$1.25/month/applicable employee may be lower.

For assistance in using this calculator, please contact United Way Central Alberta.

### Cost Analysis

In order to calculate the cost of supplying free menstrual products to menstruators at work, the following information needs to be understood:

1. Number of products used per year
2. Percentage of time menstruators spend at work
3. Number of products used at work
4. Cost of products annually

#### 1. Calculating number of products used per year

This costs analysis will use tampons, however there are other products which could be used in this analysis. Kotex instructs on changing your tampon every 4 to 8 hours<sup>1</sup>, so we'll use 6 hours as an average.

Assuming there are 13 periods in a year<sup>2</sup>, with each lasting 5 days then:

4 tampons x 5 days = 20

20 tampons x 13 cycles = 260 tampons per year

#### 2. Calculating hours at work

(Hours spent working per day)(# of days worked per year)/(total hours per year) = x% of time at work

Ex. (8 hrs working per day)(250\* days worked per year)/8760 hours per year = 0.23 or 23% of time spent at work.

\*The number 250 was determined based on a 5-day work week with 10 vacation days.

1 How will I know when to change my tampon or pad? Retrieved from Kotex:

<https://www.ubykotex.com.au/questions-and-answers/how-will-i-know-when-to-change-my-tampon-or-pad>. n.d.

2 Periods and fertility in the menstrual cycle. Retrieved from NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/periods/fertility-in-the-menstrual-cycle/>. 2016.





### 3. Calculating number of products needed while at work

$x\% \text{ time at work} / 100 = x \text{ number of products} / 260$

Ex.  $23/100 = x/260 = 59.8$  products needed at work

### 4. Calculating cost of products

$(X \text{ number of products needed at work})(\text{cost per product}) = \text{annual product cost}$

Ex.  $(59.8)(0.25) = \$14.95$  year/menstruating employee OR 1.25 per month

### Summary

If a menstruator uses an average of 260 products/year and spends 23% of their time at work, they will require a total of 59.8 products while working. The total cost of 59.8 products at \$0.25/product in one year is \$14.95 or \$1.25 per month.

### Disclosure

This is a cost estimate and the actual cost of supplying free menstrual products will vary. It is impossible to determine an exact number of employees/clients/community members who have menstrual requirements without asking directly. More than 50% of your workforce may be women. You may also have fewer than 50%. We would recommend that you estimate based on your employment records and then 5% to reflect employees with an unknown gender identity or unknown menstrual needs.

