



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Adrienne Sturup, APH Director *Adrienne Sturup*

THROUGH: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, LMSW, Assistant City Manager

DATE: October 7, 2022

SUBJECT: Response to Access to Menstrual Products (Resolution No. 20220519-089)

This memorandum serves as a response to Resolution No. [20220519-089](#). On May 19, 2022, Council approved a resolution directing the City Manager to provide free menstrual products in various City-owned facilities:

- City-owned showers and bathrooms accessible to people experiencing homelessness
- Austin Public Health (APH) facilities that serve the public, including neighborhood centers and sexual health clinics
- Austin Public Library facilities
- City-owned community recreation centers and summer camps

Below, each Department has outlined what steps they have taken to address this issue and what steps they plan to take next.

Austin Public Health (APH)

APH currently offers menstrual products at Neighborhood Centers, Sexual Health clinics, WIC clinics, Maternal Infant Outreach Program, Family Connects, and Austin Healthy Adolescent and Community Youth Development programs. APH has enough products for the remainder of FY22. For APH to continue implementing this initiative in FY23, an additional \$20,000 in funding is needed.

Austin Public Library (APL)

Austin Public Library is currently offering menstrual products at four locations as a pilot. APL received products for the pilot from Austin Public Health and staff donations. APL's budget can absorb the remainder of the costs for FY22. Expansion of the program at all 23 locations will require one-time expenses, including installation of dispensers (asbestos tests, etc.) that take considerable time. As a temporary measure, APL can purchase baskets to put in the restrooms to hold the products. The

estimated FY23 first-year costs are \$53,276.08 for wall-mounted holders and a year's supply of menstrual products. A subsequent yearly estimate to stock menstrual products at all APL locations is \$29,374.08.

Building Services

Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA), Economic Development Department (EDD), and Building Services Department (BSD) jointly administer the downtown public restroom initiative. In 2020, the City purchased and installed three stand-alone, accessible bathrooms at 403 ½ Trinity Street, 507 ½ Brazos Street, and 716 ½ E 6th Street for public use at no charge. DAA handles daily operations under contract with EDD and faces ongoing challenges with vandalism and theft. BSD manages repairs and monitors units to ensure they are open, usable, and stocked daily per contract requirements.

Partners conducted peer city research on best practices for dispensing menstrual products in public, unmonitored, stand-alone bathrooms. To date, no other cities offer comparable services. Their programs provide feminine hygiene products thru fully staffed facilities, such as libraries, recreational centers, and city buildings. The manufacturer of Portland Loos (model installed in Austin) does not provide product dispensers for feminine hygiene products and has not considered modifications to do so in their units. Staff confirmed existing contract authority and funding could accommodate the implementation of these additional services. However, additional funding will likely be needed in the future to meet operational needs.

Partners continue to evaluate the most effective and efficient method to distribute these products while addressing ongoing operational issues, such as vandalism and hoarding. Partners are still searching for durable battery-powered multi-product dispensers to install that do not undermine the unit. Global supply chain delays are impacting the availability of dispensers and feminine hygiene products. One method agreed upon is that DAA update staff training and procedures and its data collection and reporting systems to incorporate this new requirement. BSD will adjust its monitoring systems as well. The target start date is October 1, 2022. DAA will then submit a revised quarterly invoice to include detailed per unit cost data (labor, supplies). BSD, EDD, and DAA will monitor this information to inform and support operational changes and future budget requests, as needed.

Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARC)

Austin Parks and Recreation Department is currently offering menstrual products at 18 locations as a pilot. PARC FY 22 General Fund dollars cover the cost of the pilot. PARC does not utilize dispensers. Instead, signs posted in the restrooms will direct customers to request any items they need from the front desk. This process alleviates potential maintenance issues experienced in the past due to unattended items in the restrooms. For customer discretion, the bathroom signage will explain to the customer to go to the front desk and ask for the yellow folder. "Yellow folder" will be PARC's code words to provide the customer with a packet of several items they can take to the restroom and choose what they may need. A subsequent yearly estimate to stock menstrual products at all 18 Community Recreation Division locations is \$17,550.00.

Funding FY23:

The annual cost of providing menstrual products to all APH, APL, and PARD public restrooms is approximately \$66,924. Staff is in the process of identifying one-time funds for FY23.

Department	Cost
Austin Public Health	\$20,000
Austin Public Library	\$29,374
Austin Parks and Recreation	\$17,550
Total Cost	\$66,924

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Donna Sundstrom at (512) 972-5 or via email at Donna.Sundstrom@austintexas.gov.

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Roosevelt Weeks, Austin Public Library Director
Kimberly McNeeley, Austin Parks and Recreation Director
Darrell Alexander, Building Services Officer