



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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COUNTY LAUNCHES FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS PROGRAM

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to launch a pilot program to provide free menstrual products to members of the community.

Available in restrooms in select county facilities, the program is intended to assist low-income residents who struggle to afford menstrual products. The program fulfills the County's equity objectives by assuring everyone has access to important health products, including the nearly one in five residents who live at or below the poverty line.

"Free and equal access to health products promotes health equity, and no one should be forced to choose between purchasing hygiene products or food and shelter," Supervisor Zach Friend said. "I'm pleased the County is joining a growing movement in addressing these inequities."

"Elevating and addressing menstrual access is not only a matter of removing barriers but a way to honor the experiences of all citizens," said Jennifer Weiss-Wolf, advocate, author, fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law. "I am pleased to see Santa Cruz County join the movement for period equity in America."

Free menstrual products will be offered in the following locations:

- 1080 Emeline Ave., Santa Cruz, First & Second floors
- 1020 Emeline Ave., Santa Cruz, First & Second floors
- 701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, First & Fifth floors
- 1430 Freedom Blvd., Watsonville, Suites B, C & D

In 2021, the State Legislature passed the Menstrual Equity for All Act requiring free menstrual products be provided at public schools, State Universities and Community College districts. Several local jurisdictions, including the City of Capitola and the County of Santa Clara, offer free menstrual products in government facilities as well.

Installation of menstrual product dispensers will take place on Friday, April 8 at 11:30 a.m. at 1080 Emeline Avenue. Interested reporters should reach out to arrange footage or interviews.