

California expands access to free menstrual products in schools

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(HealthDay)—Free menstrual pads and tampons must be provided in

restrooms at all California public schools and colleges starting in the 2022-2023 academic year.

The [bill](#), signed on Oct. 8 by Gov. Gavin Newsom, adds to a 2017 law requiring low-income schools in disadvantaged areas to provide students with free menstrual products, the *Associated Press* reported. The new law expands that to include all public and state schools: grades 6 to 12, [community colleges](#), and the California State University and University of California systems.

Several other states are also considering or require free menstrual products in [public schools](#), according to the advocacy group Women's Voices for the Earth. It noted that more than half of U.S. states still tax menstrual products as a "luxury" item, the *AP* reported. California previously repealed such a tax. Worldwide, many countries have done the same, including Britain, Australia, Canada, and India.

"California joins a growing number of states who lead the way in demonstrating that menstrual equity is a matter of human rights," the advocacy group PERIOD said in a statement. "No student should ever lose learning time due to their periods, period."

California Democratic Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia described the legislation, which she sponsored, as significant. "Our biology doesn't always send an advanced warning when we're about to start menstruating, which often means we need to stop whatever we're doing and deal with a period," she said, according to the *AP*. "Just as [toilet paper](#) and paper towels are provided in virtually every public bathroom, so should menstrual products."

More information: [Associated Press Article](#)

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