

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



Sunday, 13 April 2025

FREE PADS AND TAMPONS – WHEN AND WHERE YOU NEED THEM

Victorians have officially accessed more than 20,000 free packs of pads and tampons across metropolitan Melbourne thanks to the Allan Labor Government's nation-leading free pads and tampons program.

Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins announced today that the installation of the first vending machines across 30 sites is now complete – with the program helping Victorian women save thousands of dollars in the initial rollout.

The new vending machines installed under this program are smart machines equipped with technology that monitors inventory, with official supplier Affinity Outdoor installing them at 30 sites across Melbourne – with a plan to expand to more than 700 sites across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Affinity Outdoor have an all-female management team and a workforce of more than 90 per cent women, with equality, access and inclusion central to the implementation of this \$23 million election promise.

As well as Affinity Outdoor, disability support organisation Cape Solutions have joined the partnership – packaging the products into packs of two and six that can go into the vending machines being rolled out across Victoria.

For this project, Cape Solutions invested in dedicated equipment and a new clean room environment, featuring a PPE area and newly constructed walls. This space is entirely isolated from the rest of the building, ensuring optimal safety and cleanliness during this process.

Access to pads and tampons is a basic need, but 64 per cent of respondents in Share the Dignity's Big Bloody Survey reported struggling to afford period products.

The Labor Government's free pads and tampons in public places program builds on our work delivering free menstrual products in government schools, as well as pelvic pain education.

Quote attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

"Access to period products is a right, and nobody should be without the essentials. We're helping Victorian women struggling with the cost of living by providing free access to pads and tampons across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Affinity Outdoor Founder and Managing Director Michelle Davis

"At Affinity Outdoor, our female-led team challenges norms every day, and I'm especially proud that our senior management team is entirely female. This leadership structure not only reflects our commitment to gender diversity but also demonstrates the incredible talent and expertise women bring to every aspect of our business."

Quote attributable to Cape Solutions Partnerships Manager Aimee Burton

"Cape Solutions is proud to be involved in this Victorian initiative, which mirrors our core values that no individual should face any form of disadvantage."