

A FAIRER AND JUST SCOTLAND



Policy 4:

Workplaces should have inclusive paid menstrual leave policies in place and decision-makers should support employers to offer this.

What's this all about?

Young people told us how important a menstrual leave policy would be in helping them manage the mental and physical symptoms of their periods, and other conditions such as endometriosis and Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) in their daily lives. They also felt policies which support people who menstruate would enable them to speak more openly about how periods and other conditions affect them. Young people suggested that implementing paid menstrual leave would help to improve their mental and physical health and their productivity.

"I suffer from bad period pain, which can sometimes make even walking almost impossible. Nobody should be forced to work when they are experiencing that."

– Young woman aged 18-21, Stirling

"I feel like this could improve women's work performances, as well as reducing their stress."

– Young woman aged 12-13, Edinburgh

What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- Young people call on all employers to implement a menstrual leave policy that is fair, accessible and supportive for everyone, to increase happiness, wellbeing and productivity.

"For women who have conditions such as PCOS, and Endometriosis, these policies could improve their lives and overall mental health, instead of having to worry about being in unbearable pain or having accidents at work, without losing earnings."

– Young woman aged 14-17, Argyll & Bute

- **Alongside a paid menstrual leave policy, the Scottish Government should support employers to provide free and accessible period products, so people who need them do not have to ask for them in their workplaces.**

“Period care is meant to be free in workplaces/schools around Scotland but a lot of the time the products are horrific quality or not available at all.”

– Young woman aged 22-26, Dundee

- **To create a culture where talking about the effects of periods and other associated conditions is normalised, education establishments must not penalise young people who menstruate for taking time off school, college, or university because of period-related issues or other conditions.**

“This would help to decrease stigma about periods and for those who suffer from bad cramps or other symptoms be very helpful in making people understand and accept their circumstance.”

– Young woman aged 14-17, Edinburgh

Evidence and Support

- In the [Young Women’s Movement research into experiences of healthcare](#), young women shared experiences of seeking medical care for menstrual or hormonal issues being dismissed by medical professionals. This resulted in delayed diagnoses or debilitating physical and mental health impacts for some.

What has SYP done?

Previous [SYP Consultations](#) include [SYP’s response to the Scottish Government’s Becoming a Fair Work Nation Consultation \(2021\)](#). The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes policies paid menstrual leave; access to period products in schools; improving endometriosis support; access to toilets in schools; expansion on the availability of gender-neutral toilets; feminist approaches to town planning.