

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

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Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk's Office
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

STATUS REPORT ON PILOT FOR FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

On February 5, 2020, the Council adopted a motion directing the General Services Department (GSD) to report back on the "feasibility and costs of providing feminine hygiene products at no cost at all restrooms in City-owned facilities" (CF 19-0882). The following is a status report on a pilot project which will be implemented to help assess how to expand such a program Citywide.

BACKGROUND

GSD's Custodial Services Division provides cleaning services to City facilities through a combination of in-house City employees and various contractors; essential supplies such as hand soap, hand towels and toilet paper are provided and stocked daily in restrooms, break rooms and locker rooms; as such, menstrual products fall within the scope of the Custodial Services Division.

Working with Councilmembers Blumenfeld and Raman and their staffs, GSD identified and surveyed several government agencies (County of San Diego, City of Ann Arbor Michigan and Los Angeles Valley College) which recently started implementing similar programs providing no-cost menstrual products; however, due to the brevity of their programs, no statistical data was available to aid in constructing an estimate based on real data. A decision, therefore, was made to partner with the Library Department to implement a pilot program to obtain the information needed to address these questions.

MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS PILOT

The Menstrual Products Pilot (MPP) will be comprised of 30 unisex and women's restrooms at the following five libraries:

1. Central Library, 630 W. 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071
2. Canoga Park Branch Library, 20939 Sherman Way, Canoga Park, CA 91303
3. West Valley Branch Library, 19036 Vanowen Street, Reseda, CA 91335
4. Los Feliz Branch Library, 1874 Hillhurst Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90027
5. Will & Ariel Durant Branch Library, 7140 W. Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90046

These facilities were selected as they represent a diversity of racial and economic populations, including persons experiencing homelessness.

The Central Library is serviced by in-house GSD employees and is open to the public seven days a week and has a total of 21 women's and unisex restrooms that will be outfitted with dual, free menstrual product dispensers. These dispensers have a delayed-release feature which creates a pause of a few seconds between dispensing products, thus deterring patrons from taking more products than they need.

The four library branches are serviced by a GSD contractor and are open six days a week and have a combined total of nine women's and unisex restrooms. They will be outfitted with dual, free menstrual product dispensers. These dispensers do not have the delayed-release feature, thus less expensive than those installed at the Central Library.

This pilot program will take place over six months (April-September) and allow GSD to capture usage data during the months of April through June, when teenagers spend less time in the public libraries; and July through September, when teenagers are on summer break and spending more time in the public libraries. Capturing this data will establish usage trends across "low" and "high" traffic months, and will subsequently allow GSD to develop funding information needed for a larger rollout providing essential health items for women, at City facilities serviced by GSD. As such, this pilot will look at the following:

- Monthly usage of the menstrual products (is one product used more than the other?)
- Product usage trends (summer vs. non-summer months)
- Ideal type of dispenser (delayed-release vs. non-delayed))
- Possible issues (e.g., vandalism of dispensing units and replacement cost)

FISCAL IMPACT

The Library Department will finance the \$53,205 cost of the MMP, which will be spread over two fiscal years. The cost calculation includes one-time costs (dispensers, installation fees) and monthly supply costs. Although the cost of the products (per case) is fixed, the number of cases of products to be ordered on a monthly basis is estimated.

This estimate assumes a usage rate of 60 menstrual products per day, per restroom (30 sanitary napkins and 30 tampons). A 50 percent contingency is also included in case this estimate turns out to be too low and because no actual usage data could be found as discussed above. After including one-time costs and estimated costs for the program's six-month duration, the total cost for the pilot program is estimated as follows:

Acct 3170 - Total Cost at Central Library: \$39,552

Acct 3040 - Total Cost at 4 branches: \$13,653

Total Cost: \$53,205*

*One-time costs: \$10,555 for the dispensers and installation.


This is a preliminary estimate which will be refined over time as more data becomes available. The vendors need a lead time of eight weeks to deliver and install the dispensers. GSD will begin ordering these dispensers in February, for a start in April.

NEXT STEPS

Once the pilot is completed, GSD will analyze the data, determine if an expanded program is feasible and, if so, develop and submit a funding request for this program as anticipated under the motion.

RECOMMENDATION: Receive and File

If you have any further questions, please contact Cesar Avalos, Director of Custodial Services, at (213) 978-0404.



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