

August 11, 2022

Period Promise Pilot Project

United Way's Period Promise aims to end period poverty by providing free menstrual products. In support of this initiative, The City will launch a year-long Period Promise pilot project at the Collicutt Centre, G.H. Dawe Community Centre and City Hall.

1. What is the Period Promise?

With the goal of ending period poverty, Period Promise was started by the United Way of Lower Mainland in British Columbia to provide barrier free access to free menstrual products. The program has since spread to other United Way locations, including United Way of Central Alberta.

Through research, they found that nearly 1 in 4 Canadians who menstruate say they have struggled to afford menstrual products for themselves or their children. The program is built on the premise that when people have access to the products that they need, it improves their health and well-being, and makes it easier for them to maintain and build vital connections. When they know that free product is available for them when they need it, it makes it easier for them to go to school or work or contribute to their community.

The Period Promise campaign is committed to making it easier for everybody to access the product they need when they need it. Every donation of tampons, pads, cups, or underwear raises awareness, reduces stigma, and tackles the vulnerability and isolation caused by period poverty.

2. Why is The City launching a pilot project for Period Promise?

The City of Red Deer has signed the [Period Promise Policy Agreement](#) with the United Way. This signals our commitment to providing stigma-free access to free menstrual products to employees, guests, clients and the general public.

As part of this commitment, we are launching a pilot project to provide free menstrual products in three City facilities - Collicutt Centre, G.H. Dawe Community Centre and City Hall. The pilot project will enable us to better understand the needs and benefits of the program.

The Period Promise aligns strongly with corporate and organizational priorities. We expect the following outcomes from the pilot project:

- Citizens will report having increased access to free menstrual products at select City facilities.
- Citizens identify lessened stigma around menstruation.
- Citizens report feeling comfortable and safe accessing period products.
- Citizens report not being limited to participating in activities because they didn't have period products or were too embarrassed to ask for help.

3. How does the pilot project work?

New product dispensers are being installed in all washrooms and change rooms in the pilot locations; this includes women's, men's and gender-neutral facilities. Providing products in all washrooms and change rooms allows greater access to products and helps to reduce the stigma around periods. Products can also be taken for friends or family.

The dispensers are motion activated and will dispense free products. Posters on the dispenser include a QR code/link to a short survey that visitors are invited to complete to help us evaluate the pilot project.

4. Why are dispensers located in all washrooms and change rooms?

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In 2021, Red Deer Public Schools, in partnership with United Way Central Alberta and the Soroptimist International Central Alberta partnered to launch a Period Promise pilot in four area schools. Almost 20% of respondents to their survey said they were taking products for family members.

5. How much will the pilot project cost?

The budget for the pilot program is \$30,000: one time equipment purchase/installation - \$14,500; one year of product - \$15,000; marketing/promotion - \$500.

Operating a pilot for one year will help us better understand the cost of implementing a full program at all City facilities.

6. How long will the pilot project run?

We plan to run the pilot for one year, bringing us to June 2023.

7. How will you evaluate the pilot project?

Visitors at the three pilot locations are invited to participate in a short survey about the program. We will use this data, along with operational data (amount of product, maintenance costs, etc.) to complete the evaluation.