



Menstrual & Maternal Health Equity Factsheet

Period poverty is a lack of access to menstrual hygiene products, education about menstruation, and access to safe and sanitary places to manage a period.¹

Menstrual equity refers to the affordability, access, and safety of menstrual products and the idea that all people should have access to manage their menstruation with dignity regardless of their income, gender, race, or disability.

Lack of access to **menstrual hygiene products** can lead to **health risks** such as increased risk of cervical cancer², reproductive and urinary infections, as well as negative mental health outcomes.¹

In addition to negative health outcomes, lack of access to menstrual hygiene products, education, and safe places to bleed can **limit a person's ability to participate fully in society with their peers, denying fundamental rights and privileges such as attending school and seeking employment.**

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by lack of access to menstrual products; however, **trans and non-binary people** experience menstruation as well and face additional barriers to access that their cisgender peers do not experience related to gender stigma, dysphoria, and access to safe places in public to manage their bleeding.³

Socioeconomic status is a direct indicator of access to menstrual hygiene products, with **folks living in poverty** experiencing the most disparate access. According to 2022 US Census data, **20.3% of Alabama women 18-44 live below the poverty level**, with **Hispanic women** ages 18-44 making up 30.8% and **Black women** 18-44 making

¹ [Menstrual health: a neglected public health problem](#)

² [Prevalence and Sociodemographic Covariates of Cervical Cancer and Its Association With Menstrual](#)

³ [Period Poverty Affects Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People, Too | Teen Vogue](#)

up 30.2% of that figure.⁴ This means, these groups of people should be centered in any strategy or advocacy to eliminate the sales tax on period products.

In Alabama, 58% of young voters think the economy and cost of living should be prioritized by policymakers.

Prior to September 1, 2025, Alabama levied a **4% state sales tax** on personal property⁵, which included tampons, pads, liners, and menstrual cups. In 2025, we helped pass a bill that **removed the state sales tax from menstrual products, baby bottles, baby formula, baby wipes, breast milk pumping products, breast pumps, diapers, maternity clothing, and menstrual hygiene products.** This new law sunsets on August 31, 2028, so we are organizing to prove its benefit and extend the law into perpetuity.

The law also carves a path for municipal governments to follow the lead of the State Government by removing the local sales tax from these items as well. If you would like to organize a movement to remove the local sales tax from these items in your city, contact Courtney Roark at croark@urge.org.

⁴ [Explore Poverty - Women in Alabama | AHR](#)

⁵ [Alabama Sales Tax Rate - 2025](#)