



La Porte

Independent School District

Special Programs

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Food Allergy Management Plan

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Introduction

A *food allergy* is an abnormal response to a food, triggered by the body's immune system. Symptoms of a food induced allergic reaction may range from mild to severe and may become life-threatening. Reactions vary with each person and each exposure to a *food allergen* and the severity of an allergic reaction is not predictable. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported an 18 percent increase in food allergies among school-aged children from 1997 to 2007. Current estimates state that between 1 in 13 and 1 in 25 children are now affected with 40 percent reporting a history of severe reaction. There is no cure for food allergies. Strict avoidance of food allergens and early recognition and management of allergic reactions are important measures to prevent serious health consequences.

With the increasing prevalence of food allergies in the past two decades, care of students with life-threatening allergies has become a major issue for school personnel. School personnel should be ready to effectively manage students with known food allergies and should also be prepared to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction in both diagnosed and undiagnosed students in order to respond to the student's emergency needs. Caring for children with diagnosed food allergies at-risk for anaphylaxis in the school setting requires a collaborative partnership with the students, parents, healthcare providers and school staff. (*Adapted from Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis to Implement Senate Bill 27, 2012*)

Definitions

- Food Intolerance:** An unpleasant reaction to a food that, unlike a food allergy, does not involve an immune system response or the release of histamine. Food intolerance is not life-threatening.
- Allergic Reaction:** An immune-mediated reaction to a protein.
- Severe Food Allergy:** An allergy that might cause an anaphylactic reaction.

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Anaphylactic Reaction: A serious allergic reaction that is typically rapid in onset, involves more than one type of symptom, and may cause death.

Food Allergy Management Plan: A plan developed and implemented by the District that includes general procedures to limit the risk posed to students with food allergies and specific procedures to address the care of students with diagnosed food allergy who are at risk for anaphylaxis.

Allergy Action Plan: A personalized plan written by a health-care provider that specifies the delivery of accommodations and services needed by a student with a food allergy and actions to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction.

District Food Allergy Coordinator

The Superintendent has designated the following staff person as the District Food Allergy Coordinator for Students:

Cynthia Anderson
Executive Director of Special Programs

Responsibilities of the Food Allergy Coordinator include:

- Coordinate the development and the implementation of the Food Allergy Management Plan
- Disseminate the applicable policies and procedures associated with the Food Allergy Management Plan
- Develop and annually review the Food Allergy Management Plan
- Pursue ongoing training in the management of food allergies in the school setting
- Ensure ongoing training is received by other employees responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Food Allergy Management Plan
- Provide general food allergy awareness training to employees
- Develop general strategies for reducing exposure to common food allergens at District facilities and activities
- Coordinate the composition, responsibilities and procedures for the campus Food Allergy Management Teams
- Ensure that employees and other individuals supervising a student with a diagnosed food allergy receive training regarding the implementation of the student's Allergy Action Plan
- Collect and maintain incident reports after a student's anaphylactic reaction at school or at a school-related activity

Campus Food Allergy Management Teams

The team will include the following members:

- Principal or administrative designee
- School Nurse
- Clinic Assistant, if applicable

- Counselor
- Classroom Teacher
- Cafeteria Manager
- Additional staff at the discretion of the principal

Responsibilities of the campus Food Allergy Management Teams include:

- Assist in the implementation and monitoring of the District Food Allergy Management Plan
- Ensure that specific food allergy information is requested from parents
- Complete ongoing training in the management of food allergies in the school setting
- Implement general strategies for reducing exposure to common food allergens at campus facilities and events
- Implement individual Allergy Action Plans for students diagnosed with severe food allergies
- Implement specific strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to a diagnosed allergen for a student with a severe food allergy
- Ensure employees supervising a student with a food allergy receive notification and training on the implementation of the Allergy Action Plan and on specific strategies to reduce the risk of the student's exposure to the diagnosed allergen.
- Implement procedures related to a student's self-administration of allergy medication, including epinephrine auto-injectors prescribed to the student
- Submit incident reports to the District Food Allergy Coordinator after a student's anaphylactic reaction at school or a school-related activity
- Review Allergy Action Plans annually and after an anaphylactic reaction by a student at school or at a school-related activity
- Ensure employees receive training on the prevention of the allergy-related bullying and / or harassment

Training

The district will provide general online food allergy awareness training that focuses on strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to common food allergens and signs and symptoms of food allergies annually to the following individuals:

- Campus administrators
- Nurses and clinic assistants
- Counselors
- Classroom teachers
- Classroom paraprofessionals
- Cafeteria supervisors and workers
- Bus drivers and monitors
- Substitutes

Environmental Controls

The district's general procedures to reduce the risk of exposure to common food allergens will include:

- Limiting food in classrooms and other learning environments

- Implementing appropriate cleaning protocols with special attention to high risk areas
- Posting visual reminders promoting food allergy awareness
- Educating students and staff members on the importance of hand washing, especially before and after meals
- Assigning staff members who are trained in the administration of epinephrine auto-injectors as monitors in the school cafeteria

Allergy Action Plans

The parent or guardian is responsible for notifying school personnel of the presence of a severe food allergy. Upon enrollment, a parent or guardian must indicate if their child has a severe food allergy (see *Request for Food Allergy Information Form*). Annually, parents are required to complete Emergency Medical Information Forms and indicate whether or not their child has a severe food allergy. Upon receipt of notification that a student has a severe food allergy, the nurse will request the following documentation:

- The *Allergy Emergency Action Plan*, completed by the child's healthcare provider
- *Request for the Administration of Medication at School*
- If the parent is requesting meal substitutions or modifications, the *Meal Modification Request* form from the Department of Nutrition is completed by the child's physician and parent
- The *Authorization for Self-Administration of Anaphylaxis Medication* (epinephrine auto-injector) form, if applicable

Upon receipt of the above forms, the school nurse will take the following actions:

- The original Allergy Emergency Action Plan will be placed within the student's health envelope.
- If the student is a student with a disability who is thought to be in need of special education and related services, the student will be referred for a formal evaluation.
- The Team will determine if the student's food allergy(ies) substantially limit one or more life activities. If so, the team will refer the student to the Section 504 Committee to determine eligibility and develop an individual accommodation plan, as appropriate.
- In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, notification of the presence of a severe food allergy will be provided to classroom teachers, cafeteria manager, and bus driver, if applicable.
- The nurse will provide training on safe storage and use of medication to be used in response to signs and symptoms of the student's food allergy to classroom teachers, cafeteria managers, and bus drivers in the event of the student's anaphylactic reaction at school or at a school-related activity.
- If the student is in elementary school, the nurse/campus administrator will place a sign indicating the presence of a food allergy within the classroom to heighten general awareness.
- If the student is in elementary school, the nurse will alert the campus principal to send home a letter to all of the other students in the student's homeroom of the presence of a food allergy in the classroom.

- If the student is in elementary school, the teacher will notify any substitutes of specific student allergies.

After an Anaphylactic Reaction

The district will implement the following procedures after a student's anaphylactic reaction at school or at a school-related activity:

- The lead nurse/campus administrator will submit an incident report to the Food Allergy Coordinator.
- The campus Food Allergy Management Team will review the Allergy Action Plan and determine if any changes need to be made, with input from the student's health care provider, parent, and if appropriate the 504 Committee or ARD Committee.
- If an epinephrine auto-injector was used, the nurse will ensure that the parent or guardian replaces it with a new one.

Forms

- *Request for Food Allergy Information*
- *Allergy Emergency Action Plan*
- *Authorization for Self-Administration of Anaphylaxis Medication*
- *Department of Nutrition parent letter*
- *Department of Nutrition Meal Modification Request Form (physician's statement)*
- *Sample Letter to Parents Regarding Presence of a Severe Food Allergy*
- *Anaphylaxis Incident Report Form*
- *Individualized Food Allergy Health Plan*