

Requesting an Accommodation for Special Dietary Needs Procedure and Process

adheres to specific United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines in providing special dietary accommodations for students. A "reasonable modification" is a change or alteration in practices or procedures to accommodate a disability that ensures that students with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the program. In accordance with the criteria set forth in [7 CFR Part 15b](#), those students who are unable to eat the school meal due to a disability, medical need, and/or impairment are accommodated, at no additional charge. Meal modifications must be related to the disability or limitations caused by the disability. The USDA regulations for school nutrition programs does not require meal modifications for children whose special dietary needs do not constitute a disability, including those related to religious or moral convictions, general health concerns, and personal food preferences.

Per [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), parents/ guardians have a right to an evaluation of their student if the district has reason to believe that the student has a mental and/or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, which can involve eating/digestion. Students have the right to this evaluation before any plan for accommodation. Parents/guardians should ensure that they contact the school if they feel as though an evaluation would be appropriate.

Parents/guardians should complete the necessary information on the medical statement form in order to request an accommodation for their student. The school may contact the student and parents/guardians for additional information as needed. For example, if the substitutions needed for accommodations fall outside of the USDA meal pattern, the form must be signed by an authorized medical authority with prescriptive privileges in the state of Indiana.

Procedural Safeguards

If the household feels that reasonable accommodation are not being met, they have the right to contact the school's 504 Coordinator and:

- File a grievance if they believe a violation has occurred regarding the request for a reasonable modification;
- Receive a prompt and equitable resolution of the grievance;
- Request and participate in an impartial hearing to resolve their grievances;
- Be represented by counsel at the hearing;
- Examine the record; and
- Receive notice of the final decision and a procedure for review, i.e., right to appeal the hearing's decision.

Accommodations Coordinator

- The safety of your child comes first. If you have a child with a disability/medical need or impairment, please submit your request for accommodation by completing this form and submitting it to:
- For more information about accommodations for meals and the meal service for students with disabilities, please contact

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.