



Guidelines to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Major Food Allergens in Classrooms and Common Areas in Schools

Carroll County Public Schools has adopted and implemented guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic major food allergens in classrooms and common areas. The CCPS guidelines are modelled after the Maryland State School Health Services Guidelines (August 2023). These guidelines will be posted within the Health Services section of the Carroll County Public Schools website. The major food allergens addressed are milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, soybeans, and sesame. The CCPS Informational Calendar Student/Parent Handbook is utilized to notify parents/guardians annually regarding the use of stock emergency use epinephrine as required by Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7–426.2 and their students' rights under Section 504.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians

The Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7–426 designates parents/guardians with certain responsibilities. School nurses should seek to fully involve the student's parent/guardian and work collaboratively to plan and provide for the student's management plan.

The parent/guardian shall:

- Provide the school with emergency contact information that is accurate and updated as needed;
- Provide the school with complete and accurate medical information related to the student's allergies and anaphylaxis history annually and as needed;
- Collaborate with the school nurse to develop the plan of care for the student at risk for anaphylaxis;
- Supply and maintain at least one non-expired dose of emergency use epinephrine as ordered by the HCP (healthcare provider);
- Work with the school nurse and HCP to obtain additional doses of emergency use epinephrine as needed;
- Monitor the proper storage (e.g., away from light and elevated temperatures) and routinely check the expiration date of the doses of emergency use epinephrine for students who self-carry; and
- Provide the recommended and preferred medical identification bracelet/necklace indicating allergic condition.
- Discuss with their child about the following:
 - Not sharing food
 - Hand washing with soap and water
 - No eating on the bus unless needed to manage health conditions such as diabetes

Administrators

School administrators must be aware and implement systemic expectations for reducing student exposure to major food allergens. In addition, administrators may contribute to the management of students at risk for anaphylaxis in ways that include, but not limited to:

- Designation of tables in the cafeteria to be used by students at risk for anaphylaxis that are free of foods containing the major food allergens;
- Follow established systemic expectations regarding school areas that are food-free;
- Disclose major food allergens whenever food is provided in the school setting regardless of who is providing the food e.g., vending machines, class/school celebrations, athletic events and after school programs;
- Direct staff and volunteers to follow proper handwashing and safe handling of food practices;
- Create a climate of respect to ensure students are free from bullying and harassment;
- Work with the school nurse to support the implementation of student specific health care plans and the necessary training, education, and awareness activities to create and maintain a healthy school environment;
- Collaborate with health services staff to support professional development on food allergies for all staff (e.g., allergen exposure risk reduction, recognizing signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, reading food labels to identify food allergens, administration of emergency use epinephrine); and
- Promote adherence to the parent/guardian and student responsibilities.

Health Care Staff

The school nurse is responsible for the coordination of care.

- The school nurse will assess and evaluate a student's health status and response to their health care plan(s) on an ongoing basis. The student's health care plan(s) should be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in the student's health care needs, nursing interventions, and goals.
- Provide aggregate data to the school administrator on the number and type of allergies and anaphylaxis risks in the student population and any necessary accommodations based on the school nurse's assessment, healthcare provider orders, and the unique needs of each individual student.
- Maintain and appropriately store the school's stock doses of emergency use epinephrine according to Health Services procedures.
- Complete and submit to MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education) the required Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)- School Health Services Form, Report of Anaphylactic Reaction/Epinephrine Administration electronic form anytime emergency use epinephrine is administered.
- Identify and train specific school staff on the local school health services procedure for the use and administration of emergency use epinephrine according to the local standing order or protocol.

- Based on the needs of the individual student, school nurses should train, and document training of all school staff involved in the implementation of a student's HCP orders and/or EAP.
- Plan for the implementation of a student's EAP (Emergency Action Plans) including during participation in school events, after-school activities, and field trips.
- Collaborate with the school 504 coordinator when parents/guardians initiate the 504 process for a health-related condition.
- Provide updated and ongoing food allergen information regarding students diagnosed with allergies to the Food Service Manager at the school.
- Provide Food Service staff with contact information to parents seeking individualized accommodations so their child can participate in the school meals program (e.g., celiac disease, Phenylketonuria (PKU), multiple food allergies) which would require a special diet and/or products.
- Create a climate of respect to ensure students are free from bullying and harassment.

Health Services and School Administration

- Ensure each school has a dose of emergency use epinephrine to be used in an anaphylactic occurrence at school.
- Monitor and implement strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents in classrooms and common areas.
- Participate in disability awareness activities, assist with support groups/counseling, and assist with educational planning (e.g., Section 504 or IEP plans).
- Designate a peanut and tree nut-free table in the cafeteria. Designate tables in the cafeteria for students with anaphylactic allergies free of foods containing the major food allergens of the student users.
- Follow procedures for self-administering of medication by individual students as per Health Services *Medication Procedure for Students in School*.
- Revoke the authority of a child to self-administer or self-carry medication if the child endangers himself or herself or another child through misuse of the medication.

Educators

Teachers (including substitute teachers), paraeducators, assistants, coaches, club advisors:

- Respond to a student with anaphylaxis as instructed and/or trained by the school nurse and maintain awareness of classroom needs (e.g., routine and emergency care, exposure avoidance strategies).
- Modify class materials as needed. Avoid using common food allergens in projects/activities and during parties, celebrations, or special events. Teachers must ensure students at risk for anaphylaxis are provided appropriate accommodations.
- Create a climate of respect to ensure students are free from bullying and harassment.
- Provide sufficient notice (10 school days) to the school nurse to ensure that students at risk for anaphylaxis can participate in school-sponsored activities, school events, and field trips.

- Ensure that students requesting a meal provided by food services staff receive a pre-packed lunch labelled with their name.
- Ensure classroom surfaces are cleaned after using food for instruction.
- Keep current contact information for vendors and suppliers to quickly obtain food allergen information.
- Communicate problems or concerns to the school nurse and school administrator as instructed and/or trained.

Food Service Department & Employees

Food Service Administrators and Food Services Staff:

- Read and understand the student's emergency action plan provided by the school nurse.
- Share information regarding food allergies provided by parent/guardian with school nurse.
- Food Service Central Office Staff are available for consultation in 504 Plan development related to food allergens when needed.
- Communicate allergen list and menu choices with school nurse as appropriate to identify food(s) to be omitted or substituted.
- Provide meal or food substitution or modification per requirement of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Programs as applicable.
- Provide advanced copies of menus for parent/guardian to use in planning.
- Disclose information on allergens listings via Food Service Digital menus.
- Review and follow cleaning and sanitation procedures in kitchen licensed by the Carroll County Health Department (e.g., handwashing, methods for the safe handling of food to prevent food allergens from unintentionally contacting). Display handwashing signage at designated handwashing stations.
- Keep current contact information for vendors and suppliers to quickly obtain food allergen information.
- Work with the school administrator to provide a table in the cafeteria free of major food allergens.
- Provide students who request a school prepared meal for field trips with an appropriate meal labeled with their name.

Operations Staff

- Clean and sanitize eating areas (e.g., cafeteria, cafeteria tables, other food service areas).
- Eliminate allergens to the extent possible or designate specific areas and desks to keep them free of allergens, as appropriate.
- Encourage and enforce no trading of food or sharing utensils.

Systemic Expectations

Designated school areas that are food-free

All students have the right to equal access to all school activities and school sponsored events. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and its subsequent amendments, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) protects qualified students. Any student with a chronic condition such as diabetes cannot be denied access to any school activity based on their needs related to the medical condition.

- Due to emergency preparedness requirements for students with medical needs e.g., students with diabetes, the school building cannot truly be food-free. Students with special medical needs can carry food items to treat their medical condition.
- Food will not be served in school gymnasiums and auditoriums.

Guidelines for who may use or accompany students using tables free of major food allergens

- Students identified to accompany a student with a food allergy must refrain from bringing food-containing allergens specific to the student.
- Students with similar food allergies may use the designated major food allergen free table.
- Students with lunches containing the major food allergens may not use the designated major food allergens free table.

Guidelines for the safe handling of food

- CCPS Food Services require all Food Service employees to complete a National Food Safety and Sanitation Course for continued employment.
- CCPS has and maintains a Local Health Department approved Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) Plan that is routinely updated. This plan is on site at all food preparation locations. The plan includes a training component for staff.
- Health Department and Internal Food Safety Inspections are conducted multiple times throughout the school year.

Guidelines for handling of food on school-provided transportation

- Eating is prohibited on CCPS provided transportation.
- Students with documented medical needs may carry and consume food items to treat their medical condition on the school bus.

Food distribution by outside public or private individuals, groups, and entities holding functions on school grounds

- Carroll County Career and Technology Center (CCCTC), if selling products to students as allowed in the Comprehensive School Health and Wellness Policy (EFE), must meet all nutritional requirements and disclose in advance the foods served and major food allergens contained in the food.

- CCCTC classroom teachers serving food to students must disclose within five (5) school days of the event to parents/guardians in advance the food served including major food allergens contained in the food.
- Public and private individuals selling or serving food to students (this includes food served at the Outdoor School) must disclose in advance the foods served including major food allergens contained in the food.

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