

DIETARY, CULTURAL OR RELIGIOUS FOOD RESTRICTIONS POLICY

Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) Student Dining Services believes it is our responsibility to serve students with respect and dignity. Student Dining Services is aware there are cultures and religions that observe customs related to diet. We also are aware that some students may have sensitivities to certain food products. To help us meet their needs, we ask that you proceed as described below.

Medical Food Restrictions

Prior to the first day of school, a parent should work with their Medical Authority (MD, PA, NP) to complete CPS Special Dietary Needs Form. A signature from the child's parent and Medical Authority is required by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. The completed Special Dietary Needs Form should be submitted to Student Dining Services.

USDA regulations require reasonable dietary accommodations in school meals for children whose disabilities restrict their diet. A child with a disability must be provided with reasonable dietary accommodation when that need is supported by their Medical Authority.

Medical Authority must identify the following on the form:

- The child's disability and why the disability restricts the child's diet;
- The major life activity affected by the disability; AND
- The food(s) to be omitted from the child's diet, and the food(s) that must be substituted.

Student Dining Services will work with the parents, the affected child, and the lunchroom staff providing them with menus, recipes, and ingredients for all food prepared and served in our lunchrooms. Depending on the severity of the restriction, Student Dining Services will make reasonable alternative food items available for a child, whenever possible. It is also recommended that parents contact school nurses with any special medical needs regarding their child's condition.

Managing Anaphylactic Food Allergies

A child who suffers from Anaphylactic Food Allergies may receive dietary accommodations. For the child to receive an accommodation, their Medical Authority must complete the Special Dietary Needs Form. In such cases, the prescribed substitutions may be made if the substitution is reasonable.

Managing Non-Severe Food Allergies and/or Food Intolerance

Student Dining Services is not required to make food substitutions for children with non-severe food allergies or food intolerances, who do not have a disability as defined under either Section 504 or the Rehabilitation Act or Part B of IDEA.

Student Dining Services may choose to make reasonable food substitutions, at their discretion, for children who do not have a disability, but who are medically certified as having a special medical or dietary need. Determinations are made on a case-by-case basis.

In accordance with USDA regulation, students with lactose intolerance or a nonlife threatening milk allergy, no other beverage can be substituted for milk except a beverage that meets the nutritional requirements of milk. A parent and/or legal guardian may complete CPS Special Dietary Needs Form to request a replacement for milk due to disability without the need for a Medical Authority to sign.

Religious and/or Cultural Food Restrictions

If there is no known allergy, food intolerance or disability, but the parent requests that a specific food be

eliminated for religious reasons the parent may complete the Special Dietary Needs Form- Section B. It is also recommended that parents contact the school principal with their request.

The school lunch meal pattern allows for flexibility and menu management if personal preferences are given in advance. Furthermore, the daily menu is constructed to offer a vegetarian and vegan option daily, along with a variety of proteins, such as beef, chicken and turkey.

Each lunchroom will keep an up-to-date list of all children whose parents have informed Student Dining Services of dietary, cultural, or religious food restrictions. We will make every effort to comply with the restrictions once we are made aware of them. We are not with any child 100 percent of the time; we cannot guarantee that a child will not eat a restricted item.

Parent Responsibilities

It is our expectation that parents will exercise their responsibilities to educate their child with respect to food restrictions. Parents should teach their children to ask lunchroom staff to identify any food items that the children cannot identify.

Parents are encouraged to complete the Special Dietary Needs Form prior to their child's first day of attendance at school.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.