



The **CH-UH Food Allergy Guidelines** provide all staff with required practices for reducing the risk of exposure to allergens for students with food allergies. These practices are drawn from the Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs developed by the Centers for Disease Control. Please consult with your school nurse to review the location and use of epinephrine auto-injectors (i.e. epi pens) for use during food allergy emergencies.

The number of students with food allergies in the District continues to rise and we must be diligent in our efforts to reduce the risk of exposure. **Food allergies can be a life threatening circumstance** and must carry the same level of importance as other hazardous materials. Our goal must be an allergy safe environment for all of our students.

#### **Classroom**

- Avoid the use of identified allergens in class projects, parties, holidays and celebrations, arts, crafts, science experiments, cooking, snacks, or rewards.
- Avoid ordering food from restaurants because food allergens may be present, but unrecognized.
- Include information about children with special needs, including those with known food allergies, in instructions to substitute teachers.

#### **Field Trips**

- When planning a field trip, find out if the location is safe for children with food allergies.
- Make sure that events and field trips are consistent with food allergy policies.
- Do not exclude children with food allergies from field trips, events, or extra- curricular activities.
- Invite, but do not require, parents of children with food allergies to accompany their child in addition to the regular chaperone.

#### **Meals and Snacks**

- Use nonfood incentives for prizes, gifts, and awards.
- Help students with food allergies read labels of foods provided by others so they can avoid ingesting hidden food allergens.
- Consider methods (such as assigned cubicles) to prevent cross-contact of food allergens from lunches and snacks stored in the classroom.
- Support parents of children with food allergies who wish to provide safe snack items for their child in the event of unexpected circumstances.
- Encourage children to wash hands before and after handling or consuming food.
- Include information about children with special needs, including those with known food allergies, in instructions to substitute teachers.



### **Cafeteria/Food Service**

- Make reasonable meal accommodations after receiving approval from a doctor or allergist through dietary orders or as stated in the child's Individualized Health Plan (IHP)
- Implement standard procedures for identifying children with food allergies. These procedures must follow the requirements in FERPA.
- Designate an allergen-safe food preparation area.
- Provide advanced copies of menus for parents to use in planning.
- Be prepared to share food labels, recipes, or ingredient lists used to prepare meals and snacks with others.
- Consider designated allergy-friendly seating during meals (open to any child eating foods free of identified allergens).
- Implement standard procedures for ensuring students eat within designated areas (cafeteria, nurse, classroom).

### **Celebrations/Special Events**

- Encourage the use of allergen-safe foods or nonfood items for birthday parties or other celebrations in the classroom. Support parents of students with food allergies who wish to send allergen-safe snacks for their children.
- Ensure the spaces used for celebrations/special events are cleaned of potential allergens in timely manner following the celebrations/special events.

### **Scenarios**

- On a class field trip to a local historic site, the class is given a food traditionally served in the time period being studied. In the planning for the trip, staff confirmed that food would be served but did not receive a copy of the menu. Unfortunately, one child cannot eat the meal provided due to food allergies and she is unable to have lunch with her peers. Ensuring receipt of the menu ahead of time would have permitted the child's parent to partner with the staff to prepare the child for the upcoming exclusion and/or also prepare a safe substitute.

### **Resources**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs*. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2013.

Food Allergy Research & Education (<http://www.foodallergy.org/>)