



School District Administrators: Keep Your Students with Food Allergies Safe at School

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs*, available at www.foodallergy.org/CDC. The national guidelines offer strategies for reducing and responding to allergic reactions, with emphasis that any actions taken are to be consistent with applicable federal and state laws and local policies.

25%

Food allergies are on the rise. According to data included in CDC's guidelines, nearly 1 in 5 students (16–18 percent of children) with food allergies has had a reaction at school. And 25 percent of severe reactions experienced at school are among children having no previous diagnosis of food allergy.

Every school is encouraged to have a Food Allergy Management and Prevention Plan (FAMPP), and every student with a food allergy should have an individual written emergency or individual care plan. Actions administrators (superintendents) can take to support FAMPP priorities, adapted from the CDC guidelines:

- 1. Lead your school district's coordinated approach to managing food allergies.**
 - Provide leadership and designate school district resources to implement the district's comprehensive approach to managing food allergies, and regularly review and evaluate policies and practices and revise them as needed.
 - Make sure that each school has a team to manage food allergies.
 - Be familiar with relevant federal and state laws and make sure policies and practices follow these laws.
 - Communicate food allergy policies and practices to appropriate staff, families, and the community. Inform parents and students of processes to use if they disagree with policies and plans implemented by your district.
- 2. Prepare for food allergy emergencies.**
 - Include responding to allergic reactions as part of your district's all-hazards approach to emergency planning.
 - Make sure that each school has trained and appropriately certified or licensed staff to develop and implement emergency care plans (ECPs) for students with food allergies. Additional plans can include Individualized Health Plans (IHPs), Section 504 plans, or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), if appropriate.
 - Encourage periodic emergency response drills to practice how to handle a food allergy emergency.
- 3. Support professional development on food allergies for staff.**
 - Make sure that district and school staff are adequately trained, competent, and confident to perform assigned responsibilities to help students with food allergies and respond to an emergency.
- 4. Educate students and family members about food allergies.**
 - Make sure food allergy information is included in your district's health education or other curriculum.
 - Communicate your district's policies and practices to parents to protect the health of students.
- 5. Create and maintain a healthy and safe school environment.**
 - Increase food allergy awareness throughout the school environment.
 - Make sure that food allergy policies and practices address competitive foods, such as those available in vending machines, in school stores, during class parties, at athletic events, and during after-school programs.
 - Collaborate with school board members and others to create a safe environment for students with food allergies and provide oversight of schools with children who have food allergies.
 - Consistently enforce policies prohibiting discrimination and bullying of students, including those with food allergies.



Additional Resources:

CDC Guidelines: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies/

Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE):
www.foodallergy.org

FARE's Food Allergy Emergency Care Plan:
www.foodallergy.org/faap?

State Guidelines:
www.foodallergy.org/laws-and-regulations/guidelines-for-schools

National School Boards Association. *Safe at school and ready to learn: A comprehensive policy guide for protecting students with life-threatening food allergies.* www.nsba.org/foodallergy

FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, including Section 112, Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management:
www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/default.htm

Protecting students with disabilities, from the Office of Civil Rights: www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html

