

Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

POLICY:

There is a plan to accommodate and ensure the safety of children who have food allergies and other dietary restrictions or special needs.

- *This policy relates to Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1302.44 & 1302.47*

PROCEDURE:

1. Through an interview with the parent/guardian, staff will document all diagnosed and suspected food allergies and/or dietary restrictions/needs on Health History of COPA. (see Child Health History, Parent Consent for Emergency Medical/Dental Treatment *policies*)
2. If the dietary restriction is due to a diagnosed allergy, disability or medical condition, specific documentation and information regarding the allergy/condition must be obtained from the child's physician/health care provider. Any food substitutions recommended must be noted in the documentation. A completed School Food Service Modification Form (all delegates) or the CACFP required form (Model City) will be used for documentation. If additional instructions are required, the child's physician/health care provider will complete an individual **allergy** plan. If the child has a disability, a Licensed Physician must sign the medical statement. A Licensed Physician is anyone medically deemed certified to write prescriptions or perform surgery. If the child does not have a disability, then a Medical Authority can sign, such as a Registered Nurse or a Registered Dietitian.

The Allergy Questionnaire must be completed if the parent/guardian reports a food allergy. If the medication question is answered yes, a food allergy plan must be completed by a Licensed Physician.

A food allergy plan needs to include instructions regarding the food to which the child is allergic and the steps to be taken to avoid that food.

A detailed plan is to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, including the names, doses, and methods of prompt administration of any medications. The plan will include specific symptoms that would indicate the need to administer one or more medications.

The plan, mobile phone, and proper medications will be routinely carried on field trips or transport out of the education setting. The program will notify parents/guardians immediately of any suspected allergic reactions, as well as the ingestion of or contact with the problem food even if a reaction did not occur. The program will contact emergency medical services system immediately whenever epinephrine has been administered.

3. Each child's food allergies will be posted prominently in the classroom and wherever food is served with permission of the parent/guardian. If the parent does not sign permission to post, staff will post the allergy with a cover sheet to ensure the safety of the child when substitutes are in the classroom.
4. It is mandatory to have documentation in place to be able to accommodate each child's dietary needs. Information must be obtained before substitutions can be made.
5. A report of the children who have specific food allergies or other dietary restrictions will be generated by the delegate office prior to the first day of school and distributed to classroom staff and food service personnel. The Nutrition Manager will access the report from COPA.
6. The program will work with teachers and parents to ensure that dietary restrictions that are personal (religious/cultural) will be accommodated, if possible. A statement from the child's parent/guardian describing the restriction is required.
7. Delegate staff will consult with the Nutrition Services Manager regarding concerns and to ensure that needed follow-up occurs.
8. Sippy cups are only allowed if recommended by a Licensed Physician or Medical Authority or specified by the child's IEP.
9. Physician reports, nutrition assessment information, individual plans and follow-up will be maintained in the child's individual health record.
10. The Nutrition and Health Services Manager monitors allergy/dietary restriction plans.