



Parent/Caregiver Checklist

It is starting! Whether you're sending your first child off to college or your third, passing the baton when they have food allergies can be challenging. Use this checklist to help you navigate the process of confirming accommodations, medical needs, and care. Choose the areas that pertain to your family.

Accommodations

- Contact the Disabilities Office or Academic Support Office immediately. Many colleges will prefer to speak to your student directly regarding accommodations, especially if they are over the age of 18.
 - o **NOTE:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many administrative offices are operating with limited staff and hours. In addition, some schools close for a break during July. Do not wait until the last minute to contact your child's school!
 - o Sit down with your student and create a checklist of questions to learn about how the college handles food allergies.
 - Do not forget to include asthma and any other related conditions requiring accommodations in discussions.
 - Speak with your board-certified allergist to discuss rooming options, especially if you are considering a medical single room.
 - o Confirm the name and contact information of the person who will help secure accommodations for your student.
 - If you are unsure of whom to contact, your student's admissions officer is an excellent place to start.
 - o Ask whether accommodations will be managed by one person who will coordinate with the Housing and Dining Services departments, or if you need to speak directly to each department head from Dining Services and Housing.
- Ask what information is needed to establish accommodations for your child's food allergy and other needs.
 - o Confirm due dates for all forms that verify the need for accommodations.

- o Is a letter needed from your board-certified allergist to confirm your child's food allergy diagnosis? Or is there a form to be completed?

- o Does your board-certified allergist need to submit a separate form or document outlining the accommodation requests?

- o Does your student need to submit results from a current physical or medical appointment?

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Dining Services

❑ Is there an established protocol for managing food allergies on campus? If so, take a closer look at these policies and procedures and confirm with the department head that these practices will be in place when your student arrives on campus.

o Ask for details:

• How will your student request and receive safe meals?

• Which eateries on campus will be safe for your student?

• Confirm with the college what the student's responsibility is for securing safe meals.

• Confirm with the college what the school's responsibility is for serving safe meals.

• What is the name of the company managing the food service? Is it Aramark, Sodexo, Bon Appetit, or do they handle their own food service? The food service companies mentioned above offer a specific protocol for food allergen management nationwide.

• Have the college food service staff received advanced food allergen management training from accredited sources such as AllerTrain™? **NOTE: FAACT partnered with MenuTrinfo®** to offer AllerTrain's expert food allergy training and food service protocols.

• Does the food service have a policy in place for ordering allergen-safe ingredients? Are they able to read labels or confirm ingredient cross-contact risk from the manufacturer?

• Will these practices meet your student's needs?

• Do not get discouraged if the written campus food allergy policy is not updated. Offer to provide links to accredited training or offer educational materials. Each day, more colleges are receiving quality training to keep students with food allergies safe on campus.

❑ Ask your student for honest answers. Will they take the time to ask about each meal, or do they prefer to grab and go?

o Each college handles food service differently. While one school may offer fresh, made-to-order meals, others will offer top 8 allergen-free stations. Which will work best for your student's needs and communication abilities?

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Housing

- ❑ Campuses offer a wide range of housing, but often freshmen are required to live in specific freshmen, honors, or athletic dorms. What are the freshmen dorm requirements?

- o Does your student want a roommate or a medical single?

- Now is the time to speak to your student: Are they a strong self-advocate who can set firm boundaries on allergens in the room? Or do they prefer a quiet space where they can self-manage?

- If your student chooses a medical single, confirm the procedure for securing a single dorm room.

- What paperwork and information are needed from your child's doctor to request a medical single? When is this paperwork due?

- **NOTE:** Students should not have to pay an additional fee for a medical single if it is required to accommodate their disability (i.e., food allergies).

- o Ask about the protocol for matching roommates and how your student can indicate their needs during the matching process.

- Can a student request that their roommate be restricted from bringing food items or products containing allergens into the dorm room?

- o Confirm what sizes and types of appliances are allowed in dorm rooms. Some colleges restrict the size or usage of mini-refrigerators and microwaves. Some colleges allow electric kettles, while others limit any type of appliance.

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- ❑ Visit the [Legal Considerations section](#) of this toolkit to learn more about your student's legal rights and accommodations.

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Classrooms and Labs

- ❑ **Determine how to inform professors, teaching assistants, and other students about your child's food allergies.**
 - o After speaking with students who experienced an allergic reaction on campus, one common factor in their successful outcome was others' assistance. This means campus staff and friends need to understand students' allergies and know the location of your emergency epinephrine auto-injectors.
- ❑ **Ask if the Disabilities office informs each professor or teaching assistant about students' accommodations.**
 - o Speak with your student about their comfort level in briefly discussing their food allergy with professors. Help them decide if they want to send an email, have an in-person conversation, or allow

the college to communicate with the professor.

o You can also have your student review the [How To Talk to Your Professors section](#) of this toolkit.

If your student is taking a lab course, remind them to speak to their professor about their allergies. Some proteins used in science labs may contain allergens.

o After speaking to college professors, we learned they genuinely want to know about students' allergies!

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Medical Needs

Up-to-Date Medical Details

Have your student make an appointment ASAP with their board-certified allergist/doctor to ask questions. Schedule a food challenge or other necessary tests to ensure your student is heading to college with the most current health information possible.

Request prescriptions for all medications needed for the upcoming school year. If prescriptions will need to be filled during the school year, talk about whether to transfer those prescriptions to a pharmacy near campus.

Will your student accept college health insurance or remain on your insurance plan? Compare out-of-network plans and prescription plans to see which is most beneficial for your family. Make sure your child has an up-to-date insurance card. (Tip: Keep a front and back photo of the insurance card on their phone).

Vaccinations

Prepare all vaccination records. Many colleges will not allow students to live on campus without specific vaccinations completed before arriving on campus.

Inquire about what vaccinations are needed.

NOTE: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some colleges may require a Covid-19 vaccination. If so, what records will the college need for proof of vaccination?

Ongoing Treatments

If your student participates in OIT, SLIT, or other treatments that need to continue during college, speak to your doctor ASAP to establish how treatment will continue and be managed.

Ask if these therapies can be managed through the campus' student health services department or if your student needs to find a local board-certified allergist.

If you are establishing care with a local board-certified allergist, have your primary board-certified allergist send records for review so that there is no gap in care and your local allergist is fully informed of your food allergy history.

Join the food allergy support group closest to campus. These parents can become a wealth of knowledge regarding restaurant suggestions, health care, and more! You can find local support groups on [FAACT's website](#).

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Emergencies and Medical Care

How does the college respond to medical emergencies?

- Ask about how the college would react to an anaphylactic emergency.
- Who are the first responders? Campus Security? Local EMS?

Who would your student call for help?

Who could assist your student if an allergic reaction occurred in the dorms, in the dining hall, in a classroom, or on campus?

Does the campus stock unassigned epinephrine auto-injectors?

Local Emergency Services:

- Is there a hospital within a reasonable driving distance or is the college located in a remote area?

Will your student have access to Emergency Services when off campus?

If the college is in a remote area, do local EMS carry epinephrine? If not, speak to your child's doctor regarding how many emergency epinephrine auto-injectors your student should carry.

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Civil Rights and Legal Considerations

- Visit the Legal Considerations section in this College Toolkit to learn more about your legal rights and accommodations.
The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, have determined that food allergies are a disability that must be accommodated by university and college food services and housing offices.
Legal Documents
Some families choose to establish a Power of Attorney and/or a Health Care Proxy. Please visit the Legal Considerations section of this toolkit for details.

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Passing the Torch

- ❑ **Create your own list of questions.**
 - Encourage your student to create a list of questions. Privately compare it to your list to make sure essential questions are not missed.
 - Now is your child's time to fly and take their first young adult steps. But we understand that, scientifically, their brains are still developing. Offer tips or suggestions if you believe they might be missing an important question as you gently guide them to take the lead.
- ❑ **Change your language to "what questions will you ask" instead of "what questions are we going to ask."**
 - Keep up the faith that you have taught them well! If you are reading this checklist, you have been doing your homework. You have taken an active role in supporting your child in incredible ways.
- ❑ **You are not alone!** If you missed this podcast from the Explore checklist, do not worry. Check it out now, and hear from a fellow food allergy parent discuss her experience as a parent of a student with food allergies:
 - [Preparing for College Part 1 with Jill Mindlin, JD](#) - FAACT's Roundtable Podcast
 - [Preparing for College Part 2 with Jill Mindlin, JD](#) - FAACT's Roundtable Podcast
 - Join [FAACT's Parents of High School and College Students with Food Allergies](#) Facebook group to seek support from fellow parents who may be in the same position as you or who are a few years ahead.

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