



Parent/Caregiver Checklist

Although your student will not be living on a campus, they will most likely eat a meal or two on campus, attend labs, and socialize. Students need to contact the disabilities office to confirm their food allergy and to establish accommodations for the classroom setting, discuss dining options on campus, and address how to handle on-campus emergencies.

Accommodations

- Contact the Disabilities Office or Academic Support Office immediately. Many schools 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. 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 about how the school handles food allergies.
 - Do not forget to include asthma and any other related condition requiring accommodations in discussions.
 - o Confirm the name and contact information of the person your student should speak with to secure accommodations.
 - If you are unsure of whom to contact, your student's admissions officer is a good place to start.
 - o Ask whether accommodations will be managed by one person who will coordinate with the Dining Services department or if you need to speak directly to the department head from Dining Services.
 - **A small community college or trade/vocational school** may not have a Dining Services department because on-campus food is handled by vendors. If that is the case, ask whether the Disabilities Office staff will coordinate with those vendors or if you need to contact each vendor directly to discuss allergy accommodations.
- 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 the allergist to confirm your child's food allergy diagnosis? Or is there a form to be completed?

 - o Does the 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?

 - o Do you need to submit vaccination records?

 - **NOTE:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, will your school require a Covid-19 vaccination? If so, what records are needed for proof of vaccination?

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Classrooms and Labs

- Determine how to inform professors, teaching assistants, and other students about your child's food allergy.
 - o After speaking with students who have experienced an allergic reaction on campus, one common factor in their successful outcome was others' assistance. This means school staff and friends need to understand students' allergies and know the location of epinephrine auto-injectors.
 - Ask if the Disabilities Office informs each professor or teaching assistant about students' accommodations.
 - o Discuss with your student how they want to inform professors and faculty about their food allergies. Via email or an in-person conversation? Or do they prefer the school to share this information?
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- If your student is taking lab courses, suggest they speak to their professors and staff about their food allergies. Some proteins used in science labs may contain allergens.
 - o After speaking to professors, we learned they genuinely want to know about students' allergies!

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Dining Services

Dining options at community colleges or trade/vocational schools can range from onsite cafeterias and restaurants to vending machines offering pre-packaged meals – it all depends on the school. Full-service facilities at community colleges or trade/vocational schools may be operated by the school or by an outside vendor. If your child is commuting to a four-year college or university, they will have access to the same dining resources at students who live on campus, which are likely more varied than at a community college.

NOTE: An increasing number of four-year colleges, community colleges, and trade/vocational schools have established food pantries to help food-insecure students and faculty. These facilities are often run by volunteers and may not be covered by accommodations made with the school's Dining Services office.

- Is there an established protocol for managing food allergies on campus? If so, review the school's policies and procedures and confirm with the department head that these practices will be in place when your student starts classes.
 - o Ask for details:
 - How will your student request and receive safe meals?
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- Which eateries on campus will be safe for your student?
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- Confirm the student's responsibility for securing safe meals.
 - Confirm the school's responsibility for serving safe meals.
 - What is the name of the company managing the school's food service? Is it Aramark, Sodexo, or Bon Appetit, or do they handle their own food service? The food service companies mentioned offer specific protocols for food allergen management nationwide.

- If your child is attending a community college or trade/vocational school, are different companies managing individual food service locations? If so, which companies?

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

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- 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?

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- Will these practices meet your student's need? If not, plan on packing safe foods to consume on campus.
 - Do not get discouraged if the school's written food allergy policy is not updated. Offer to provide links to accredited training or offer educational materials. Each day, more schools are receiving quality training to keep students with food allergies safe on campus.

- o Review the [How To Talk to Dining Hall Staff section](#) of this toolkit with your child.

- o Explore with your student whether they prefer to bring food from home.

- ☐ If your child is attending night classes at a community college or trade/vocational school, onsite eateries will likely be closed, which means students may bring in food to eat during class or the whole class may order food together.
 - o Talk to your student about how they can tell people who sit near them about their food allergies.
 - o Review local restaurants they can suggest ordering from if the class orders meals or goes out to dinner.
 - o Schools with lab courses may not allow food in the lab areas.
 - o If food in the classroom is a concern, make sure your student is following the steps on this checklist to know their civil rights and contact the correct department for their program.

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Emergency Services and Medical Management

Managing food allergies includes two important steps: reducing risk by taking steps each day to prevent an allergic reaction and being ready to take swift action if a reaction occurs.

- ☐ Learn how medical emergencies are handled on campus.
 - o Do students call 911 or campus security?

- o How long does it take to get help?

- o Does the campus stock emergency epinephrine? If so, who is authorized to administer it?

- o Who will assist students who experience an allergic reaction on campus?

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- ☐ Is emergency medical care close by? Are there local hospitals with functioning Emergency Departments?

- Medical Identification jewelry** speaks for your student in the event they are not able to communicate. Emergency responders are trained to look for medical IDs. Various ID products offer contact data that helps EMS learn about your student's health, gain access to their medical information, and offers emergency contact notification.
 - o Although wearing a medical bracelet or necklace may not be your student's first choice, it will be one that everyone might be grateful for in the event of a medical emergency.
 - o There are many varieties and styles available. [Medic Alert](#) has partnered with FAACT to offer a 20% discount for **new** subscriptions. **Use code FAACT20.** **NOTE:** Medic Alert offers subscription service options, which includes emergency contact notification.

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Civil Rights and Legal Considerations

- Visit the [Legal Considerations section](#) of this 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.
- Legal Documents
 - o 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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Socializing

IMPORTANT NOTE: As your student makes new friends, the opportunity to eat a meal together, hang out, or go to parties may arise. After speaking with students **who do not have food allergies**, we learned that they **WANT to know about food allergies**, where rescue meds are stored, and what to do in case of an emergency! Please do not assume that your student is a burden; it is the opposite of what you might think.

- Encourage your student to discover local restaurants that are safe for them to enjoy with new friends.
- Encourage your student to let friends know about their food allergy, where they carry emergency epinephrine auto-injectors, and where they keep their [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan](#) (emergency plans should always be with their epinephrine auto-injectors).
- Encourage your student to show how to administer an epinephrine auto-injector using a trainer with friends so that they can act swiftly in the event of an emergency.
- Help them with how to explain [cross-contact](#), how they stay safe, [signs](#) they are having an allergic reaction, and [what they need during an allergic reaction](#).
- Do you and your child have a "sign" if epinephrine is needed? (They might be too far away for someone to hear them clearly, and anaphylaxis can make it difficult to speak.) Learn [Learn FAACT's Fist to Thigh "Sign"](#) for them to share with their peers while in the dorm and out socially.

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Technology

Many young people enjoy using apps to help them manage their lives. Families rely on apps to help them stay connected and manage health conditions, including food allergies. Explore apps to help your student keep track of epinephrine expiration dates, manage their health, or find potentially safe eateries.

NOTE: FAACT does not endorse these apps, but we are sharing them to provide you with examples of what some FAACT families are using right now.

- [AllerTrain™/FAACT](#): Map of colleges/universities food service departments that have been trained.
- [MenuTrinfo® Kitchens with Confidence™ Program](#): which certifies food service locations that have been assessed through rigorous audits on methods, standards, policies, and understanding to serve persons with special dietary needs, specifically food allergies. A map of certified locations available on the AllerTrain™ website is a useful tool for students going to college with food allergies.
- [The Alan App](#): Food Allergy Management
- [Allergy Force](#): Food Allergy Management
- [Alerje](#): Food Allergy Management
- [Allergy Eats](#): Food Allergy Friendly Restaurant Guide
- [Headspace](#): Meditation and Sleep App (family subscription)
- [AirNow](#): Air Quality App
- [Life 360](#): Family Safety App
- [American Automobile Association \(AAA\)](#): Mobile Roadside Assistance Service and Travel Discounts

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Passing the Torch

- Create your own list of questions.**
 - o Encourage your student to create a list of questions. Privately compare it to your list to make sure essential questions are not missed.
 - o 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.”**
 - o 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:
 - o [Preparing for College Part 1 with Jill Mindlin, JD](#) - FAACT's Roundtable Podcast
 - o [Preparing for College Part 2 with Jill Mindlin, JD](#) - FAACT's Roundtable Podcast
 - o 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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