

# MCS D Severe Food Allergies Procedural Manual



Revised 2017

## **Montrose County School District Guidelines for Protecting Students with Severe Food Allergies and Food Intolerances**

Severe allergies can be life threatening. Severe food intolerances (i.e. celiac disease) can be damaging and can produce chronic long-term health effects. The risk of accidental exposure to food allergens can be reduced in the school setting if schools partner with students, parents and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for severely allergic and food-intolerant students.

The foods most likely to cause allergic reactions are: peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish.

Allergic reactions can produce mild reactions such as watery eyes or an itchy nose, moderate reactions such as hives, or the life threatening reaction called anaphylaxis wherein multiple body systems are affected and could result in death.

Montrose County School District (MCSD) cannot guarantee that a student will never experience an allergy- related event while at school. Because the school district is committed to student safety, the district has created these guidelines and procedures to reduce the risk children with life threatening allergies/food intolerances will experience an allergy-related event.

Likewise, MCSD cannot monitor products sold at some athletic events or special student sales, products brought for some potlucks or celebrations, or served on off-campus trips. Students must be vigilant in managing their allergy needs.

### **Family's Responsibilities**

1. Notify the school (Principal and Health Tech) of the child's allergies/intolerance as soon as possible prior to the first day of attendance, preferably in the spring preceding the school year. Allow sufficient time to secure physician signatures on all necessary forms, including the medication administration form.
  - a. Work with the school team - which may include the principal, counselor, classroom teacher, district nurse, health tech and others – to determine the appropriate health care action plan (Severe Allergy Action Care Plan) <https://www.cde.state.co.us/healthandwellness/standardanaphylaxisplan2016> that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in after-care programs, during school-sponsored activities and on the school bus.
2. Provide a letter from a health care provider that states your child's diagnosis, any history of allergic reactions, especially whether your child has experienced anaphylaxis and any medically advisable accommodations.
3. Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and properly labeled, current medications as directed by a physician using the appropriate health care plan (Severe Allergy Care Plan) as a guide to the school. Include a photo of the child on the written

form. Provide replacement medications after use or upon expiration. Pick up medication at the end of every school year.

4. If your child is a bus rider, notify First Student Transportation [http://www.mcscd.org/parents\\_\\_guardians/first\\_student](http://www.mcscd.org/parents__guardians/first_student) of your child's food allergy/intolerance as soon as possible prior to the first day of attendance.
5. Provide a list of foods/ingredients to avoid.
6. Provide emergency contact information.
7. Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy/intolerance including:
  - a. Safe and unsafe foods
  - b. Strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
  - c. Symptoms of allergic reactions
  - d. How and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem
  - e. How to read food labels (age appropriate)
  - f. Review weekly lunch menu together and contact Food Service Director for ingredient listings
  - g. No trading of foods with anyone at school
  - h. No accepting foods from anyone unless designated by family
8. Should a food-allergy reaction occur outside of school, notify school staff following the incident.
9. Provide safe meals for lunchtime should the family determine the cafeteria menu is not safe.
10. Provide safe snacks if the family determines the likelihood of accidental exposure is too great when other parents provide birthday treats, party treats, etc.
11. Strongly consider participating in the classroom as a volunteer to organize parties where food may be present, as well as participating in school field trips.
12. If you observe a student not following these guidelines at school or on a field trip, notify school staff and request a school staff member intervene.

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Attend (age appropriate) the *Allergy Action Plan* and/or 504 Plan meetings so that self-advocacy and food allergy/intolerance knowledge will continue to increase with age.
2. Agree to not trade food with anyone.
3. Agree to not eat anything with unknown ingredients or anything with a known allergen.
4. Agree to be proactive in the care and management of their food allergy/intolerance and reactions based on their developmental level. This may include educating their classmates about their allergy/intolerance or mentoring other severely allergic students about their allergy/intolerance.
5. Notify an adult immediately if they eat something believed to contain a food allergen.
6. Notify an adult immediately if they believe they are experiencing an allergic reaction.
7. Agree to carry their epinephrine at all times if they are approved to self-carry.

### **MCSD Responsibilities**

1. Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal laws including ADA, IDEA, Section 504 and FERPA, as well as any state laws and regulations and district policies that apply.
2. Create/review/update district policies and procedures regarding how to properly manage students with severe food allergies for affected schools in the district to follow.
3. Provide training to school principals, teachers, including substitutes, food service workers, counselors, bus drivers, and all related school staff as appropriate, regarding life threatening food allergies. Training should include how to avoid, recognize, and respond to a life-threatening allergic reaction, including administration of epinephrine.
4. Review policies/procedures/training on a periodic basis to ensure student's needs are being met.

### **School Responsibilities**

1. Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal laws including ADA, IDEA, Section 504, FERPA and any state law and regulations and district policies that apply.
2. Review the health information submitted by parents and physicians to determine whether an *Allergy Action Plan*, Section 504 Plan or both will apply. Create appropriate plan(s) to be reviewed at least on an annual basis. Distribute *Allergy Action Plan* and/or 504 Plan annually (prior to start of school year) to appropriate teachers/extra-curricular staff of children with severe food allergies. Ensure that pertinent information be shared with faculty and staff that have contact with the student in accordance with federal and state law, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
3. Inform and educate teachers as far in advance as possible that they will be teaching a severely allergic student.
4. Take reasonable efforts to educate related staff to identify signs of an allergic reaction and recognize who will be individually trained/delegated to administer epinephrine by School District Registered Nurse.
5. Identify a core team consisting of (but not limited to) school principal, health tech, school counselor, district registered nurse, and instructional staff to promote and increase awareness and prevention throughout the school community.
  - a. School wide food bans are discouraged. Food safety and awareness is encouraged.
  - b. Allergen-free classrooms and allergen-free tables in the cafeteria decrease potential exposure to an allergen, and are vital for the severely food allergic student to remain safe, especially in elementary school. In addition to language in the school handbook, a letter home to classroom parents may be necessary to ensure an allergen-free classroom is maintained. The student's name will remain confidential (unless parents choose to sign a waiver). In middle school and high school, it may be easier to designate the student's classrooms as food-free.
  - c. Take reasonable steps to maintain a playground free of food allergens.

- d. Encourage hand washing after lunch especially in the elementary school age group.
  - e. Wash allergen free cafeteria tables and spaces where food may be consumed using *separate* supplies – bucket, water, sponges, cloths – than supplies used for other tables.
  - f. Hand sanitizer will *not* remove food allergens.
  - g. Identify staff in the cafeteria responsible for ensuring food allergy safety by monitoring the allergen free tables and watching for severe allergic reactions.
  - h. For all teachers of students with severe food allergies, review lesson plans that involve food to determine appropriate alternatives.
  - i. Review supplies to ensure they are non-allergenic. Play-dough, finger paint, art projects, science chemicals, and cleaning solutions can all contain food allergens.
  - j. Keep medicine in an unlocked cabinet during the school day (locked after hours) with child's *Allergy Action Plan* and recent picture to identify all severely food allergic children. Medicine may also be stored in the classroom in a locked cabinet or carried by a staff member for the young child who is severely allergic and not yet able to self-carry.
  - k. Review policies/prevention plan after a reaction has occurred.
  - l. Have teachers create a substitute teacher folder with an additional copy of the Allergy Action Plan and/or 504 plan and child's picture identifying all severely allergic/food intolerant children in their classroom. *Inform subs prior to student contact.*
  - m. With parent consent, provide list (with recent student photos) of children with severe food allergies to custodial and food services staff to ensure safe meals are served to children who choose to eat a school meal, as well as proper cafeteria cleaning.
  - n. When appropriate, and with permission of student and parent, conduct a lesson for the child's classroom(s) about severe allergies.
  - o. Consider integrating awareness about severe allergies into the curriculum, where appropriate, e.g. as part of character education, health or science, etc.
  - p. For field trips involving a severely allergic child, determine appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy off campus. Determine who is responsible for carrying allergy medications. Ensure access to a phone in case of an emergency.
  - q. Observe and be aware of how other students are reacting to the allergic student to prevent teasing/harassment. Enforce district bullying policy and be vigilant of stigmatization.
6. Ensure that severely allergic students are included in all school activities to the extent that reasonable accommodations can be made to provide for their safety. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their food allergy, nor asked to stay home for a day when a school activity involving food is occurring.

### **District Nurse Responsibilities**

1. Write Allergy Action Plan for severely allergic child.

2. Designate school personnel who are properly trained to administer allergy medications in accordance with State Nursing laws governing the administration of emergency medications.
3. Coordinate with school to be sure medications are properly stored and proper paperwork is completed for medication to be carried or remain in front office.
4. Review and update Allergy Action Plan annually and as needed, to ensure that information related to severely food allergic child has been disseminated promptly to the appropriate staff.

#### **District Transportation Responsibilities**

1. With parent consent, inform bus driver of food allergic child. Supply driver a folder on bus with picture, name and food allergy information for that student.
2. Ensure that bus driver of food allergic child has annual training on recognizing symptoms of an allergic reaction and call emergency services when necessary.
3. Ensure all buses have communication devices in case of an emergency.
4. Discourage children from eating on the bus and discourage drivers from distributing food to children on bus.

#### **Food Services Staff Responsibilities**

1. Attend annual training to recognize symptoms of food allergy reactions and learn role as a responder.
2. Know and follow protocol for maintaining an allergen-free table in the cafeteria.
3. In affected buildings, remove tree nuts and peanut menu-options (communicating with District Nutrition Services staff). Individual students may be permitted to continue to bring in peanut butter in their lunches, but may not sit at cafeteria tables designated nut-free.
4. Be prepared to communicate with parents and students about specific menu ingredients.
5. Know and follow protocol for safe food preparation, handling and service of food to avoid cross-contamination.
6. Discourage students from trading food at lunch.

#### **Custodial Staff's Responsibilities**

1. Participate in the School District's coordinated approach to managing food allergies.
2. Attend annual training and learn how to recognize symptoms of food allergy reactions and learn role as a responder.
3. Help with the daily management of food allergies for individual students.
  - a. Be aware of those students with food allergies and how to appropriately respond to an allergic reaction should it occur at school.
  - b. Help establish a safe environment to prevent exposure to food allergens.
4. Know and understand your school's communication protocols for an emergency.

- a. Ensure communication devices are working properly.
5. Participate in professional development on food allergies; recognize and understand the following:
  - a. Signs and symptoms of food-related allergic reactions
  - b. How to appropriately respond to emergencies at school
  - c. Procedures and guidelines that prohibit discrimination and bullying against all students; including those who have food allergies
  - d. Protocols and standards for washing hands and measures to prevent and remove food allergens from surfaces, floors, and objects.
    - i. Be aware of your school's peanut/nut free lunch tables.
    - ii. Check soap ingredients to ensure it does not contain allergens such as: milk/milk derivatives or nut oils such as almond oil or shea butter.
    - iii. Clean peanut/nut free lunch table(s) thoroughly before and after each class eats lunch using a *separate* cloth or disposable cleaning wipes. *Reusable sponges, cloths, and towels can harbor food allergens and increase the risk for exposure.*
    - iv. Even a tiny amount of allergen can cause a severe allergic reaction/anaphylaxis.
    - v. Hand sanitizer will *not* remove food allergens.
    - vi. Clean floors, surfaces, and food-handling areas with soap and water or one tablespoon of concentrated bleach per gallon of water at normal room temperature or PH7 all-purpose cleaning solution, and friction (using a separate cloth or disposable bleach-wipe are the standards for removing allergens).
6. Report all cases of bullying or harassment of students, including those with food allergies to school administration.

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