

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Reg. No. 400-06
Subject: HEALTH: FOOD ALLERGIES/FOOD SENSITIVITIES	Issued: 10/1/08
Preparing Office: Office of the Superintendent	Amended: 2/19/15

I. Policy 409

II. Definitions

A “food allergy” is an **immune system** reaction that occurs soon after eating a certain food. Signs and symptoms may include digestive problems, hives or swollen airways. In some people, a food allergy can cause severe symptoms or a life-threatening reaction known as anaphylaxis.

“Anaphylaxis” is a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention and can be fatal if not treated immediately. Common allergens that may cause anaphylaxis are insect stings or bites, foods, latex, medications and/or other allergens. Anaphylaxis may also be exercise induced.

A “food sensitivity” or “food intolerance” occurs when a person has difficulty digesting and/or metabolizing a particular food. This can lead to abdominal and/or other physiological symptoms, including but not limited to abdominal pain, diarrhea, and headaches.

III. Procedures

Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) and the Frederick County Health Department (FCHD) recognize that it is not possible to totally eliminate the risk of exposure to foods that trigger allergic reactions; however, the school system is very serious about its responsibility to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to protect the safety of all students. Therefore, in an effort to initiate certain safety precautions to avoid allergic reactions and to prepare staff on how to handle allergic reactions, the school system adopts the following guidelines:

A. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

1. If a student has a food allergy or a sensitivity that requires restrictions, food substitutions or meal modifications, the parent/guardian must provide documentation from a health care provider to the student’s school health room. *The Food Allergy and Sensitivity Form* should be used for this purpose. This form must clearly and specifically state the nature of the student’s food allergy or sensitivity and how this restricts the student’s diet or exposure to allergens. This form **must** be renewed at the beginning of each school year and kept up to date. This form is located on the FCPS Web site under Specialized Health Forms:
<http://www.fcps.org/student-services/forms>
2. If the student’s food allergy is severe enough to be potentially life-threatening and requires administration of an EAI (epinephrine auto-injector, e.g. Epipen®), the parent/guardian is responsible for providing a completed *Authorization for Management of Anaphylaxis* form signed by a licensed health care provider and parent/guardian, as referenced in FCPS Regulation 200-39. A correct and complete form is required prior to medication administration. The order must be student and dose specific. This form **must** be renewed at the beginning of each school year, and

the parent/guardian must provide new medication prior to the expiration date on the pharmacy label. This form is located on the FCPS Web site under Specialized Health Forms: <http://www.fcps.org/student-services/forms> (cross reference FCPS Regulation 400-66)

3. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing a properly labeled EAI with the correct dosage as defined in §7-426, Education Article, *Annotated Code of Maryland*.
4. When a Health Care Plan is deemed necessary, the parent/guardian will work with the FCHD RN to develop a Health Care Plan to minimize the risk of exposure and provide detailed procedures to follow in the event of an allergic reaction.

B. School Health Responsibilities

1. Upon receipt of required documentation, the FCHD RN will work with the parent/guardian and other appropriate school staff to develop individualized a Health Care Plan to minimize the risk of exposure and provide detailed procedures to follow in the event of an allergic reaction. Health Room staff are responsible for forwarding the completed *Food Allergy and Sensitivity Form* to Food and Nutrition Services.
2. The FCHD RN will share information from the individualized Health Care Plan with the principal, the child's teacher, and other school staff as appropriate.
3. School Health Services will provide a Food Allergy/Food Sensitivity Medical Alert list to the Food and Nutrition Specialist at the beginning of the school year and as needed throughout the school year.

Information regarding the life-threatening food allergy will be entered into the computerized student information system database (eSchool) under medical alerts so it can be accessed by school administrators or others who have a legitimate need to know.

4. If a student is suspected of or found to be having an anaphylactic reaction, FCHD school health staff or FCPS staff who have been designated and specially trained will follow the individualized Health Care Plan to provide treatment. 911 will be called and the parent/guardian will be contacted. If the parent/guardian is unable, an FCPS staff member will accompany the student to the emergency room. A copy of the student's Confidential Health Information Card and Emergency Information Card should accompany the student to the emergency room, as stated in FCPS Regulation 200-39.

C. Food and Nutrition Services Responsibilities

1. The Food and Nutrition Services specialist will maintain a database of students with food allergies or sensitivities or who require meal modifications.
2. Information about the food allergy/food sensitivity will be placed in the Food and Nutrition Services Department POS system by the Food and Nutrition Services specialist so that Food and Nutrition Services staff will be alerted to potential problem foods and required accommodations.

3. The Food and Nutrition Services staff will be responsible for ensuring that the required meal accommodations are provided to the students who have a completed form on file.
4. These forms will be kept in the Food and Nutrition Services Central Office.

D. School Responsibilities

The principal/designee:

1. The principal/designee will collaborate with parents/guardians, staff and School Health Services to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to protect the safety of all students with food allergies/food sensitivities that have been identified.
2. The principal/designee will access the medical alert list from the computerized student information database (eSchool) and will disseminate this information to appropriate school staff.
3. In consultation with a nurse, the principal of a public school that has a child attending the school who has been identified to the school as having an anaphylactic allergy shall:
 - a. Monitor the strategies developed in accordance with the Maryland State school health service guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents in classrooms and common areas;
 - b. Designate a peanut- and tree nut-free table in the cafeteria; and
 - c. Establish procedures for self-administration of medication by the child if the child is determined to be capable of and responsible for self-administration by the principal, nurse, parent/guardian of the child, and physician of the child.

Approved:

original signed by

Theresa R. Alban
Superintendent