



Student Checklist

Although you will not be living on a campus, you might eat a meal or two, attend labs, and socialize on campus. So, you will still need to contact your school's Disabilities Office to confirm your food allergy and establish accommodations for the classroom setting and in the event of an on-campus emergency.

Accommodations

- ❑ Contact the Disabilities Office or Academic Support Office immediately. Many schools will prefer to speak to you directly regarding accommodations, especially if you are over the age of 18, rather than a parent or caregiver.
 - **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 school!
 - Sit down with your parent/caregiver to create a checklist of questions about how the school handles food allergies in the classroom, science labs, and dining services.
 - Do not forget to include asthma and any other related condition requiring accommodations in discussions.
 - Confirm the name and contact information of the person you need to speak with to secure accommodations.
 - If you are going to contact this person by phone, can your parent or caregiver be in the room or join the call? Do you want them to join you?
 - If you are unsure of whom to contact, your admission officer is an excellent place to start.
 - 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 food allergy and other needs.
 - Confirm due dates for all forms that verify the need for accommodations.
 - Is a letter needed from the allergist to confirm your food allergy diagnosis? Or is there a form to be completed?

○ Does the allergist need to submit a separate form or document outlining the accommodation requests?

○ Does you need to submit results from a current physical or medical appointment?

○ 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 food allergies.
 - 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 your food allergies and know where you carry your epinephrine auto-injectors.
- Ask if the Disabilities Office informs each professor or teaching assistant about students' accommodations.
 - o Decide if you want to share this information yourself with your professor via email or an in-person conversation or if you would prefer that the school share this information.
- If you are taking lab courses, speak to your professors and staff about your 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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Emergency Services and Medical Management

Managing food allergies includes two critical steps: reducing your 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 your campus.
 - o Do students call 911 or campus security?

 - o How long does it take to get help?

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

 - o Who will assist you if you experience an allergic reaction on campus?

- Is emergency medical care close by? Are there local hospitals with functioning Emergency Departments?
- Medical Identification jewelry** speaks for you in the event you 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 health, gain access to your medical information, and contact your loved ones.
 - o Although wearing a medical bracelet or necklace may not have crossed your mind, you will be grateful for the support 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.**

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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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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 may be operated by the school or by an outside vendor. If you are commuting to a four-year college or university, you 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 you request and receive safe meals?

 - Which eateries on campus will be safe for you to enjoy?

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

 - 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.

- 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 needs? If not, plan on packing safe foods to consume on campus.

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

- Talk with your parents/caregivers about whether you prefer to bring food from home.
- If you are 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 Brainstorm with your parent/caregiver about how you can tell the students who sit near you about your food allergies.
 - o Review local restaurants you 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.
- If food in the classroom is a concern, make sure you follow the steps on this checklist to know your civil rights and contact the correct department for your program.

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Socializing

IMPORTANT NOTE: As you make 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 you are a burden; it is the opposite of what you might think.

- Research local restaurants that are safe for you to enjoy with new friends.
- Be ready to let new friends know about your food allergy, where you carry epinephrine auto-injectors, and where you keep your [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan](#) (emergency plans should always be with your epinephrine auto-injectors).
- Get comfortable and ready to explain [cross-contact](#), how you stay safe, [signs](#) you are having an allergic reaction, and what you need during an allergic reaction.
- Do you have a “sign” if you need epinephrine? (You might be too far away for someone to hear you clearly, and anaphylaxis can make it difficult to speak.) [Learn FAACT’s Fist to Thigh “Sign”](#) and share it with your friends!

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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 you keep track of epinephrine expiration dates, manage your 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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Managing Stress

- Even though you are feeling excited about school, these can also be stressful times. Seek out coping skills and support - we all need a boost every now and then.
 - o This checklist can feel overwhelming, but the good news is that the list helps you do all the hard work before you start classes!
 - o Consider speaking with a therapist about skills for managing stress and anxiety. These are normal feelings, and there are great tools available that will help you your entire life!
- To quell stress and anxiety related to your food allergies, make sure the people you regularly spend time with know about your food allergies in detail. They will be able to help look out for you!
- Continue keeping a planner/agenda like you did in high school. This will help you stay organized and on task.
- School requires a lot of work. Do not lose yourself in that shuffle. Do at least one thing that you love every day, whether it's reading a book, going for a run, watching silly videos, or something else entirely!
- Check out this podcast featuring two current college students: [College Life with Food Allergies](#).
- If you feel stressed, check out this short FAACT article and free downloadable handout: [“How to Talk To Your Parents About Your Mental Health”](#)
- Another short and powerful article is [“Anxiety and Depression; When It’s Time to Seek Help: Behavioral Health Issues and Food Allergies.”](#)
- Visit the [Behavioral Health Resources section](#) of this toolkit for more tips on managing stress and maintaining mental health.

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