

## **I. Purpose and Applicability**

1. Springfield College recognizes the need for reasonable modifications for disabilities on the basis of food allergies, celiac disease, or other disabilities requiring a special diet (collectively, “food allergies”). The College recognizes the serious nature of food-based allergies and the impact allergies can have on student life. The purpose of this policy is to provide the College community with an outline of the specific procedures that are to be followed when a student makes known to the College that they have a food allergy and/or in the instances that an allergic reaction that may is reported to the College. This is particularly important in instances where students report a reaction that may have been a result of food consumed through the College’s dining services. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the immediate evaluation of food allergy reactions so that any cause may be addressed to prevent further harm. If a suspected food allergy reaction is reported as a result of food consumed by campus dining services, the Office of Non-discrimination Initiatives will be immediately notified, the incident will be documented, and an investigation into the matter will follow.
2. To ensure that students with food allergies and food-based disabilities have equal opportunity participate in and benefit from Springfield College dining programs by ensuring that all modifications are provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the student’s needs including proving students with allergies and food-based disabilities with access to a variety of meal and food options in the dining and retail facilities on campus.
3. If an allergic reaction occurs due to an error in food handling in the kitchen, policies and/or procedure will be reviewed to prevent an allergic reaction from being repeated.
4. To prevent any future allergic reactions on campus, involved staff will be retrained, emphasizing the importance of food safety and prevention of cross-contact.

## **II. Background of Food Allergies**

1. Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) states: “A food allergy is a medical condition in which exposure to a food triggers a harmful immune response. The immune response, called an allergic reaction, occurs because the immune system attacks proteins in the food that are normally harmless. The proteins that trigger the reaction are called allergens. The symptoms of an allergic reaction to food can range from mild (itchy mouth, a few hives) to severe (throat tightening, difficulty breathing). Anaphylaxis is a serious

allergic reaction that is sudden in onset and can cause death. Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction affecting more than one body system such as the airways, heart, circulation, gut and skin.

Symptoms can start within seconds or minutes of exposure to the food or substance that a person is allergic to and usually will progress rapidly. On rare occasions there may be a delay in the onset of a few hours.”

2. Specific symptoms are listed below:
  - i. Tingling sensation in the mouth
  - ii. Swelling of body parts (lips, hands, face, tongue)
  - iii. Difficulty breathing/asthma symptoms
  - iv. Hives or rash
  - v. Vomiting and/or diarrhea
  - vi. Abdominal cramps
  - vii. Drop in blood pressure

In severe cases, symptoms may include:

- viii. Anaphylaxis (closing of the throat to prevent airflow)
- ix. Loss of consciousness
- x. Death

### **III. Training**

1. Springfield College residential and retail dining staff will receive and maintain training on cross-contact, food preparation, and storage as related to food allergies.
2. Springfield College administrators and staff involved in allergy accommodations will maintain a training encompassing ADA/504 anti-discrimination practices. The Dining Services’ Registered Dietitian in collaboration with the culinary team and Operations Director will provide ongoing training on food allergies including cross-contact, preparation, storage, and response procedures.

### **IV. Student Rights and Responsibilities**

1. Students can request food allergy related accommodations by completing the request form found on our website. Students are asked to provide appropriate documentation from a medical provider outlining the impact of their allergy and recommended accommodations for the student.
  - i. If a student contacts dining services first, they will be directed to complete the accommodation request form prior to having a consultation with the dining services Registered Dietician (RD).
2. Upon receipt of the request and documentation, the Designated Employee will communicate with the student to discuss the request and to provide a referral to the RD for the student to learn more about options that are available for them within the current offerings.
3. Following the consultation with the student and RD, the RD will inform the Designated Employee if dining services is able to accommodate the student’s food allergies with their current offerings, or if they recommend any of the following modifications:
  - i. Release the student from the College’s dining plan;

- If the student lives on-campus, a further housing accommodation may be necessary to place the student in a room with proximity to a functioning kitchen for preparing their own meals. This is discussed with the student to determine if it is needed.
  - ii. Modify and/or prorate the dining plan to allow for additional options to be available (such as more dining dollars or more meal swipes);
4. Other accommodations best suited to the student's individual needs.
  5. The Designated Employee will communicate with the student which option is best for them and alert the appropriate College officials to process any changes to the dining plan.
  6. Including but not limited to the business office (for cancelling and/or refunding the meal plan or other financial adjustments) and the ID Card office (for updating access to the meal plan on the student's ID card).
  7. The Designated Employee will send a letter to the student via their College email address stating the accommodation being provided. The student is expected to renew the request for accommodations on an annual basis so that the Designated Employee can regularly assess the appropriateness of the accommodation.
  8. All students identifying food-related allergies are invited to a monthly Allergen Committee Meeting hosted by the RD. Attendees are encouraged to provide feedback on allergen solutions, meals, food offerings they would like to see more/less of and voice any questions or concerns.
  9. If any individual feels as though they have been discriminated against on the basis of a disability or perception of a disability, they will be referred to the College's 504 Grievance Procedure to file a complaint. The College strives to provide prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging action prohibited by pertinent federal, state, and local disability anti-discrimination laws. This Procedure applies to discrimination on the basis of disability including: disagreement with the decisions made about accommodations; physical inaccessibility of a College program or activity; disability harassment; or any other form of discrimination against an otherwise qualified individual on the basis of a disability or perception of a disability.
  10. Students are encouraged to do the following once they have notified the College of a food allergy and completed the Food Allergen Intake Form:
    - i. Scheduling a meeting with the Dining Services' Registered Dietitian to learn more about the options and variety available to the student based on their individual dietary needs.
    - ii. Attend monthly Allergy Committee meetings to provide feedback to the Executive Chef, General Manager and/or Operations Director.
    - iii. Communicate preferences and provide feedback to the Dining Services staff in Allergen Committee meeting settings or to the Director of Non-discrimination Initiatives.
    - iv. Being proficient in the self-management of their food allergy/ies and communicating with the Director of Non-discrimination Initiatives if they need support and/or education.
    - v. Avoiding foods to which they are allergic
    - vi. Recognizing the symptoms of an allergic reaction and communicating them to the Health Center or emergency medical staff appropriately.
    - vii. Knowing when and how to tell someone if they think they may be

- viii. experiencing an allergic reaction.
- viii. Knowing how to properly use prescribed medications to treat an allergic reaction.
- ix. Carrying emergency contact information with them.
- x. Notifying Dining Services of suspected food allergy if the same occurred after eating in a campus dining facility
- xi. Reviewing policies, procedures, and meal plans with either the Director of Non-discrimination Initiatives or Dining Services Administrators should a reaction occur.
- xii. Following up with a physician, should a reaction occur, and communicating any new information or medically relevant information to the College.

## **V. Investigation of Suspected Food Allergy Reaction**

1. Reports of suspected food allergy reactions may be referred to the Office of Non-discrimination Initiatives (ONDI) by students, employees, or third-parties. Reports can be filed online ([springfield.edu/access](http://springfield.edu/access)), over the phone, or in-person. If a student reports a suspected food allergy reaction to a member of the dining services staff, the staff person will document the report and provide it to the ONDI.
2. ONDI will contact the student and meet with them to discuss the incident. ONDI may also invite dining services to attend such meeting to learn more about what happened from the student.
3. ONDI will review the student's Food Allergen Release form and any documentation maintained by the College as to the student's food allergy, if applicable. If needed, ONDI will work with the student to obtain updated documentation to ensure the most up-to-date allergy information is on file.
4. Dining Services will review staff, menus, signage, preparation and service relative to the food consumed by the student if determined to be from one of the College's dining or retail locations.
5. Should a food allergy reaction occur in a Springfield College dining facility, a formal investigation will take place. This investigation will review how the suspected food was prepared, if proper labeling was present at the time of the incident and any cross-contact will be investigated against applicable policies and practices.
6. If a food allergy investigation is conducted, and it is determined that there was an error in preparation, service or signage, ONDI will be notified and appropriate action will be taken, which could include retraining or new signage.
7. ONDI will contact the student with information at the conclusion of the investigation and any outcomes that were determined will be communicated.
8. If applicable, College policies and procedures will be adjusted to ensure a comparable reaction does not occur in the future.