



# School Boards: Keep Your Students with Food Allergies Safe at School

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs*, available at [www.foodallergy.org/CDC](http://www.foodallergy.org/CDC). The national guidelines offer strategies for reducing and responding to allergic reactions, with emphasis that any actions taken are to be consistent with applicable federal and state laws and local policies.

**25%** Food allergies are on the rise. According to data included in CDC's guidelines, nearly 1 in 5 students (16–18 percent of children) with food allergies has had a reaction at school. And 25 percent of severe reactions experienced at school are among children having no previous diagnosis of food allergy.

Every school is encouraged to have a Food Allergy Management and Prevention Plan (FAMPP), and every student with a food allergy should have an individual written emergency or individual care plan. Actions school boards can take to support FAMPP priorities, adapted from the CDC guidelines:

- 1. Set the direction for your school district's coordinated approach to managing food allergies.**
  - Develop a comprehensive set of district policies to manage food allergies in coordination with other stakeholders. Regularly review and evaluate policies and revise them as needed.
  - Align food allergy policies and practices with your district's all-hazards approach to emergency planning and policies on the care of students with chronic health conditions, and with federal and state laws.
  - Communicate food allergy policies to appropriate staff, families, and the community. Inform parents and students of processes to use if they disagree with policies and plans implemented by your district.
- 2. Prepare for food allergy emergencies.**
  - Support and allocate resources to appropriate staff to respond to food allergy emergencies in all schools.
  - Review data and information from incident reports of food allergy reactions and modify policies as needed.
- 3. Support professional development on food allergies for staff.**
  - Support and allocate resources and time for professional development and training on food allergies.
  - Identify needs to make sure district and school staff are adequately trained, competent, and confident to perform assigned responsibilities to help students with life-threatening food allergies and respond to an emergency.
- 4. Educate students and family members about food allergies.**
  - Encourage inclusion of food allergy information in your district's health education or other curriculum for students.
  - Support and allocate resources for awareness education for students and parents.
- 5. Create and maintain a healthy and safe school environment.**
  - Endorse strategies to increase food allergy awareness throughout the school environment.
  - Make sure that food allergy policies and practices address competitive foods, such as those available in vending machines, in school stores, during class parties, at athletic events, and during after-school programs.
  - Support collaboration with district and community experts to have healthy and safe physical environments and to integrate the management of food allergies with the management of other chronic health conditions.
  - Develop and enforce policies prohibiting discrimination and bullying of students, including those with food allergies.



## Additional Resources:

CDC Guidelines: [www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies/)

Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE):  
[www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

FARE's Food Allergy Emergency Care Plan:  
[www.foodallergy.org/faap?](http://www.foodallergy.org/faap?)

State Guidelines:  
[www.foodallergy.org/laws-and-regulations/guidelines-for-schools](http://www.foodallergy.org/laws-and-regulations/guidelines-for-schools)

National School Boards Association. *Safe at school and ready to learn: A comprehensive policy guide for protecting students with life-threatening food allergies.* [www.nsba.org/foodallergy](http://www.nsba.org/foodallergy)

FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, including Section 112, Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management:  
[www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/default.htm)

Protecting students with disabilities, from the Office of Civil Rights: [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html)

