

SAGE Dining Services, Inc. - Food Allergy Policy and Shared Responsibilities

SAGE places the highest priority on the safety of our community members. Our comprehensive food allergy management program is supported by the experience and knowledge of a team of Registered Dietitians who study the latest research on food allergy developments, accommodations, and ADA compliance. We work in partnership with school staff, parents, and students to ensure a safe dining experience for food-allergic individuals.

Peanut- and Tree Nut-Free

Allergies have grown significantly in recent years, including the most severe—peanut and tree nut allergies. In response to the growing prevalence of severe peanut and tree nut allergies in children, SAGE **does NOT** prepare or serve peanuts or tree nuts within K-12 or higher education communities unless specifically requested by the client. Further, we **do NOT** serve products that contain a warning label for peanuts or tree nuts, unless we're satisfied that good manufacturing practices to prevent peanut or tree nut cross-contact are in place.

This policy reduces the possibility of fatal allergic reactions in our school communities.

Menu Development

Food Service Directors annually obtain a list of allergies in their school communities and customize menus to ensure safe options for everyone. Dietitians review menus to check for balance and variety. After menus are approved, menu items are published online with top allergen and ingredient information.

Food Sourcing

The Procurement and Nutrition Departments work together to obtain the safest products possible, purchasing ingredients from companies that use good manufacturing practices and provide consistent, safe products. We also ask food manufacturers to alert us to ingredient changes so we can modify accordingly.

Upon receipt, Managers check all product deliveries, and keep records of all product labels.

Training and Preparation

All Team Members follow Serve It Safely—standard operating procedures for food storage, preparation, service, and cleanup to avoid cross-contact of relevant allergens in kitchens and food preparation areas. Safe food preparation involves following recipes, cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces, controlling allergen hazards at the grill, stove, and fryer, and dedicating equipment and areas to allergen-free food preparation.

Prior to service, the Team reviews dishes and ingredients so that they can inform students what's in them.

During Service

During service, all menu items in the dining hall that contain the 12 top allergens recognized in the U.S. and Canada are labeled so that students and faculty can identify top allergen-free items easily, and vessels and utensils are chosen carefully to reduce the risk of cross-contact at food bars. Team Members follow protocols for washing hands, wearing gloves, and cleaning equipment and surfaces. Food Service Directors are available to answer questions.

Where appropriate, Food Service Directors dedicate specific allergen-free areas for service.

As a precaution, all Managers are trained to recognize anaphylaxis and use an EpiPen®.

Special Meals and Designated Areas

By providing a variety of options every day, and easily accessible technology to identify safe food options, SAGE makes it easy for those with food allergies and other dietary restrictions to find safe meals themselves. SAGE does not select food or create special meals.

SAGE feels that inclusivity is important-- no community member should be singled out or sit at a designated location simply because he or she has a food allergy.

Communication Tools and Open Kitchen Policy

The allergen-filtering tools and ingredient lists on SAGE's online menus help ensure that food-allergic individuals can find safe meals each day. Users can filter each menu for the 12 most common allergens—wheat, gluten, egg, fish, milk, soy, sesame, shellfish, mustard, peanut, tree nut, and sulfites or review ingredient lists, and select safe meals accordingly. Menus, ingredients, and the filter are also available on the Touch of SAGE Mobile™ App, where users can create allergy profiles.

Food Service Directors are also available by appointment if food-allergic individuals or family members request a meeting to tour the kitchen, review ingredient labels, or discuss preparation methods and food allergy training.

Broder Community Education

SAGE communicates this policy annually with school communities. We also regularly produce marketing materials and blog posts to help educate community members about topics related to food allergies – such as recognizing a food-allergy reaction and how a child might describe it, being an allergy-aware parent, and traveling with food allergies.

Shared Responsibilities

SAGE approaches food allergy management as a partnership with its client and school community.

Providing a safe and inclusive environment for students with food allergies is a collaborative effort with shared responsibilities:

Student and Family Responsibilities

- Use the tools available from SAGE (allergen filter and ingredient lists on the online menu and Touch of SAGE™ Mobile App) to make food selections. SAGE doesn't select food for students.
- Ask questions where indicated. SAGE's online menus have icons that indicate that some items could contain an allergen due to ingredient variations or preparation methods (such as shared oil) and prompt users to ask Food Service Directors about those items before consuming.
- Inform school nurse and Food Service Director of food allergies. Schedule a meeting for special needs and considerations.
- Don't share food or eat food with unknown ingredients.
- If unable to determine the safety of an item, choose something else that is known to be safe.
- If it's suspected that an allergen was ingested, inform Food Service Director or school nurse immediately.

School Responsibilities

- Provide a list of relevant allergies in the community to the Food Service Director.
- If necessary, appoint a staff member or volunteer (SAGE can train on the above resources) to provide mealtime guidance (for example, assisting students in ensuring clean eating surfaces and making sure younger students aren't sharing food).
- Communicate epinephrine location and administration policy with the school community.
- Set policies on foods brought into classrooms and other campus locations.