

## **SPECIAL DIETARY ACCOMMODATION POLICY**

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St. John's Lutheran School aims to provide all students with nutritious meals through participation in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. This includes ensuring students with disabilities as defined under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, have an equal opportunity to participate in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs and have appropriate access to facilities and areas where meals are provided.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations 7 CFR Part 15b requires the school to make reasonable modifications to accommodate all students by providing special dietary accommodations to students with a disability which restricts their diet. The school nutrition coordinator shall be primarily responsible for managing special dietary accommodations within the food service program.

### **School Nutrition Coordinator**

Becky Besler, 4001 S 68th St, Milwaukee, 53220, becky.besler@stjohnsmilw.org, 414-541-5881

### **School Administrator**

Charles Galecki, 4001 S 68th St, Milwaukee, 53220, charles.galecki@stjohnsmilw.org, 414-541-5881

### **Hearing Official**

James Goldschmidt, 4001 S 68th St, Milwaukee, 53220, school@stjohnsmilw.org, 414-541-5881

### **Medical Statement**

A parent/guardian requesting special dietary accommodations for a student with a disability that restricts the diet must provide the Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs signed by a state authorized medical authority. A state authorized medical authority is a licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. This could include a physician, dentist, optometrist, podiatrist, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.

A special dietary accommodation for a student who has a disability that restricts the student's diet should be submitted to the school office to Becky Besler, School Nutrition Coordinator, 4001 S 68th St, Milwaukee, 53220, becky.besler@stjohnsmilw.org, 414-541-5881.

The request must contain the following information:

- An explanation of how the student's physical or mental impairment restricts the diet
- The food(s) to be avoided
- The food(s) to be substituted

The school staff will collaborate with parents/guardians and the student's healthcare team to appropriately share information regarding a student's food related disability with the goal of providing safe meals.

A special dietary request will be approved and implemented upon submission of a completed authorized Medical Statement. Upon receipt of an approved request, the school will offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the student's disability. Following USDA Child Nutrition Program regulations, the school district may consider factors such as cost and efficiency and is not required to prepare a specific meal, provide a specific brand of food, or provide a meal beyond the meals provided to other students.

If a Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs is unclear or lacks sufficient detail, the school nutrition coordinator may seek appropriate clarification from the parent/guardian or the healthcare practitioner so that a safe meal can be provided.

Parents/guardians will be notified of clarifications needed or approval of a special dietary request. A special dietary request or part of a request may be discontinued by a parent/guardian by submitting the request in writing to the school.

If a student's IEP or 504 plan contains the same information that is required on a Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs, then it is not necessary to obtain and submit a separate Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs.

When a request for a special dietary accommodation is not supported by an authorized Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs or included in a student's IEP or 504 plan, the school cannot provide modified meals that are not in compliance with USDA Child Nutrition Program requirements.

If there is no signed Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs on file, the school district shall have no legal obligation to accommodate a student's or parent/guardian's request for accommodations based on personal preference or religious requests. However, the district will assist your student in choosing a reimbursable meal through offer versus serve (OVS).

An authorized Medical Statement does not need to be updated annually. However, the school nutrition coordinator may annually seek clarification or updates on special dietary requests.

### **Allergy Related Disability Strategies**

St. John's ensures that relevant information received from parents/guardians is shared with all supervising persons of a student identified with a life-threatening allergy.

To minimize allergen risks and keep all students safe, St. John's employs the following strategies:

- Encouraging students not to exchange food or utensils with other students.
- Washing surfaces, toys and equipment clean of allergen containing foods to the extent practicable.
- Provide staff updates, as necessary.
- Encouraging parents/guardians to instruct their children in how to avoid contact with substances to which they are allergic.

### **Grievance Procedure Under the Americans with Disabilities Act**

To file a grievance, talk to the school administrator, Alex Alonte. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: JAMES GOLDSCHMIDT, 4001 S.68TH STREET, MILWAUKEE, WI 53220, 414-541-5881, [OFFICE@STJOHNSMILW.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@STJOHNSMILW.ORG)

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information

requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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