

Food Allergy and Food Sensitivity Dining Policy

Updated 8/23

Policy Statement:

Dining Services offers a variety of foods that promote healthy lifestyles and strive to provide a balanced diet to meet the dietary needs of all students. Students with food allergies and sensitivities as well as other medical conditions may need individualized assistance with meal planning.

This policy supports social communities by informing students with special dietary requirements that foods provided by the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) Dining Services are prepared and presented to meet the students' dietary needs and allows them to participate in the residential experience.

Policy Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Educate the UNI community to the existence of food allergies and food sensitivities and the importance of safe practices in dining operations;
2. Notify students and other customers of the options and processes available to accommodate food allergies, food sensitivities, and other medical conditions;
3. Inform individuals with food allergies, food sensitivities, and other medical conditions regarding personal responsibility and their role in maintaining safe dietary practices at UNI.

At UNI, Dining Services and Student Accessibility Services (SAS) work together to provide guidance, resources, and support so that each member of our campus community may meaningfully participate in the UNI dining experience.

Students and Customers Dining in Residential Facilities:

If you have a food allergy, food sensitivity, or other medical condition (including but not limited to celiac disease) that requires a specialized diet, contact the Administrative Dietitian from UNI Dining Services. If your needs cannot be met after consulting with the dietitian, a special accommodation may be possible through SAS. Meal plan exemptions are approved only if UNI Dining is unable to customize a dining plan that meets the documented medical need.

Resources Available:

Individual nutritional counseling is available for students with special dietary and medical needs. Through this counseling, the individual is informed of options available to them to make safe and appropriate choices while dining at UNI.

UNI Dining identifies the Big 9 allergens in menu items served in the residential and retail areas on the [UNI Dining Website](#) and mobile app. The Big 9 allergens are as follows:

Eggs, Fish, Milk, Peanuts, Shellfish, Soy, Tree Nuts, Wheat, Sesame

Other items identified on the dining website in the filtering options include soybean oil. In addition, ingredient lists of food items are available online for each recipe listed.

In each of the residential dining centers, The Refinery is specifically designated as an allergen venue for our students and other customers with food allergies or food sensitivities. Within this area, there is signage that uses dietary symbols to help individuals identify foods that are appropriate to their needs.

Students who have spoken to the Administrative Dietitian may also be given the use of a mobile app and online ordering program that provides additional choices.

Dining Services trains its staff on specifics and the gravity of food allergies. This training includes instruction on food allergies and sensitivities, including food products that contain allergens, cross-contact, proper food storage and preparation, and how to answer inquiries regarding food allergies.

Responsibilities of UNI Dining and Student Accessibility Services:

1. Follow this policy at all times.
2. Provide students with medically documented food allergies and sensitivities the tools they need to be active in the management of their food allergy/sensitivity within UNI Dining Services.
3. As requested, UNI Dining Services will provide individual counseling to students with a Registered Dietitian and/or Associate Director of Dining Services or Residential Dining Manager.
4. UNI Dining Services will facilitate training for staff and student employees on food allergies and food sensitivities.
5. UNI Dining Services will take precautions to prevent cross-contamination.
6. UNI Dining Services will post signage in designated allergen venues at the point-of-service alerting students to foods containing major food allergens.
7. UNI Dining Services will offer items in the designated allergen venue on a daily basis.
8. UNI Dining Services will permit students covered by this policy to pre-order their meals online and through a mobile app during specified hours.
9. UNI Dining Services will offer special foods to avoid food allergies and/or food sensitivities for catered events, as requested.
10. Accommodations are student directed; therefore it is the student's responsibility to notify UNI Dining Services initially and where appropriate Student Accessibility Services of any questions, concerns, or violations of this policy.
11. The Office of Compliance and Equity Management is also available if an individual feels they have not received proper accommodations or if they have been discriminated or retaliated against as it relates to their disability or perceived disability, or for their request for an accommodation.

Responsibilities of Students/Customers with Food Allergies, Food Sensitivities, or Medical Conditions Requiring Dietary Modifications

Such Students/Customers will:

1. Familiarize themselves with this policy and procedure.
2. Notify UNI Dining Services of their allergy, sensitivity or condition.
3. Carry with them and use an epinephrine auto-injector, if prescribed, in an event of an allergic reaction. Students are responsible for ensuring their epinephrine auto-injector has not expired.
4. Notify roommates and Resident Assistants about their documented food allergy and food sensitivity, as appropriate.
5. Adhere to the procedures outlined in this policy regarding notification to UNI, including meeting with the Dining Services Dietitian or other designated dining staff members, and where appropriate meeting with Student Accessibility Services.
6. Be proficient in the self-management of their food allergy including: avoidance of foods to which they are allergic; recognition of symptoms of allergic reactions; how and when to tell someone they might be having an allergy-related problem; knowledge of proper use of medications to administer during an allergic reaction; asking managers or the administrative dietitian when questioning information and food products provided by UNI Dining Services.
7. Familiarize themselves with the online menus and signs posted regarding allergens.
8. When in doubt regarding ingredients in a particular food, direct their question to the manager on duty or the administrative dietitian. If one of these individuals is not available, ask another UNI Dining Services employee on duty.
9. If they notice something that is problematic for their allergy, notify the administrative dietitian or a manager on duty so they can address the concern.
10. Seek assistance and advocacy from Student Accessibility Services staff, as needed.
11. Seek assistance from the Office of Compliance and Equity Management if they feel they have not received necessary accommodations and/or have been discriminated against on the basis of their disability or perceived disability or have been retaliated against for pursuing accommodations.

Disclaimer for Students & Customers with Food Allergies:

Dining Services at the University of Northern Iowa is committed to identifying potential allergens. Menu items containing the Big 9 allergens or at high risk of cross-contamination are identified on our online menus. However, there is always a risk of contamination. Please be advised that our menu items may inadvertently contain or come into contact with gluten and/or the Big 9 allergens. In addition, food manufacturers may change their formulation or manner of processing without our knowledge. UNI Dining Services does not assume liability for adverse reactions to foods consumed, or items one may come into contact with while eating at any of the university's dining facilities. Students/customers concerned with food allergies need to be aware of this risk. For more information or assistance, please contact our registered dietitian at 319-273-2223 or email at nutrition@uni.edu.