Introduction

Our Commitment

University Housing and Dining (UHD) at The University of Texas at Austin is dedicated to providing support to students with food allergies and other medically necessary diets through education, staff training, and reasonable accommodations in an effort to create a safe and inclusive collegiate dining experience. We take care in providing the necessary information to students to allow them to safely navigate the UT Austin campus food landscape.

Our number one priority is our students’ safety. Therefore, we recognize that some students may need assistance in making healthy and safe food choices on campus. University Housing and Dining and Services for Students with Disabilities work together to ensure students with disabilities have an accessible living and dining experience while at The University of Texas at Austin. Some students with food allergies, celiac disease, and other medically diagnosed conditions may be eligible for dining accommodations.

Please use this guide as a reference for how to best manage your diet while on campus.

Getting Started

Prior to applying for dining accommodations, students should review the available resources provided by University Housing and Dining, as dietary self-management may be possible through utilization of existing dining options and resources.

Students are encouraged to speak directly to the UHD Registered Dietitian prior to beginning the dining accommodations request process to discuss the best course of action for safely managing their diet while on campus.

Students can visit http://housing.utexas.edu/dining/nutrition-services for more information, but it is recommended to contact the Registered Dietitian directly at:

Lindsay Wilson, MS, RD, LD
Registered Dietitian
University Housing and Dining
Email: lgaydos@austin.utexas.edu
Phone: 512-232-5636
Cross-Contact

The University Housing and Dining team makes every effort to identify ingredients that may cause allergic reactions for individuals with food allergies. Items marked gluten-free friendly are made with no gluten containing ingredients. We make every effort to train food production staff on the severity of food allergies and best practices to avoid cross-contact. But due to mass production within our kitchens and potential food product changes from our food vendors, we cannot guarantee that every allergen in the food served will be identified and labeled. The possibility that manufacturers of the commercial foods we use could change the formulation at any time, without notice, also exists. Customers with food allergies must be aware of this risk.

It is important to note that University Housing and Dining cannot guarantee a 100% allergen-free dining experience at any of our dining locations. We do our best to reduce the risk of cross-contact as much as possible, especially with our made-to-order meal accommodations and at the Fresh and Simple Tastes Line at J2 Dining.

University Housing and Dining and The University of Texas at Austin cannot assume any liability for adverse reactions to food consumed or items one may come into contact with while eating at any University Housing and Dining facility or catered event. Students and guests with life-threatening food allergies who may need to use an epinephrine auto-injector should carry their own. The University of Texas at Austin does not stock epinephrine for use and University Housing and Dining staff are NOT trained to administer epinephrine auto-injectors and CANNOT administer them. Always call 911 if you suspect a food allergic reaction.
Self-Management

Student Responsibilities

It is our goal to provide students with the necessary information they need to make confident and safe food choices. It is critical for students to help manage their diet by following these best practices:

- Once on campus, the student must be the main contact for the Housing and Dining Dietitians. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), information can only be shared with a parent or guardian if the student signs a release form.
- Be aware of the potential for cross-contact in the dining venues on campus.
- Read menus and ingredient information prior to entering the dining locations so that you can make safe and informed dining decisions.
- Always refer to our website menus for entire ingredient listings and allergen information for menu items: http://hf-food.austin.utexas.edu
- When placing an order, always inform staff of your dietary restriction(s).
- When in doubt, avoid any ingredient or menu item if you are unsure if it is safe, or ask the FAST member, manager, or chef on duty for more information, especially if the food is not labeled.
- Always advocate for yourself when in dining locations. You may ask staff to wash their hands, change their gloves, and prepare food separately to avoid cross-contact of allergens.
- Be aware of shared surfaces, equipment, utensils, and preparation surfaces where cross-contact may occur; especially at self-serve and made-to-order stations like salad bars and delis.
- You may request produce, deli meat, and other items from an unopened source behind the serving line – simply ask an employee for assistance.
- Avoid any food that is deep-fried, as frying oil is used for multiple food items and the risk for cross-contact is high.
- Use discretion when consuming bakery items, as they have the potential to come into contact with allergens, such as wheat, dairy, eggs, and nuts in our on-site bakery.
- Regardless of where students live on campus, they can dine at the top eight allergen and gluten-free Fresh and Simple Tastes (FAST) Line at J2 Dining – no accommodations necessary!
- Be able to recognize symptoms of your allergic reaction and how to properly use your medications.
- Always carry your epinephrine auto-injector, as UHD staff are not permitted to stock or administer medication of any kind.
  - If you exhibit symptoms of an allergic reaction, immediately call 911.
- It is advisable, but not necessary, to notify your RA and roommate, if applicable, of your dietary restrictions and if you are prescribed epinephrine. This will assist in food accommodations during programs and in case emergency services needs to be notified of a food allergy reaction.
- If you ever have a question or concern, please contact the Registered Dietitians right away.
  - If we do not hear from you, we assume you are successfully managing your diet.
  - Phone: 512-232-5636
  - Email: dietitian@austin.utexas.edu
The following resources are available to help you manage your food allergy(ies):

**Registered Dietitians**
For more information, to schedule an individual consultation, or to seek assistance in managing your diet, contact the University Housing and Dining Registered Dietitians at either dietitian@austin.utexas.edu or 512.232.5636.

**Management Team & Chefs**
By scheduling a meeting with the Dietitian, students can be introduced to the dining team to meet the individuals responsible for their food prep and service. All members of the UHD management team are ServSafe Allergens certified through the National Restaurant Association.

**Menus**
Menus are available online for each UHD dining location at: http://hf-food.austin.utexas.edu. In addition, touch screen monitors are in every UHD dining location that provide access to the online menu if you have questions while in the dining halls.

**Ingredient Listings**
Ingredients based on manufacturer provided information can be found on the online menu by selecting the “Nutrition” tab near each meal column. Items will turn into hyperlinks that can be individually selected to obtain detailed information on ingredients, allergens, and nutrition facts.

**Food Identification Icons**
UHD identifies the eight major food allergens (milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, soy and wheat) in all of our dining locations. Students can reference these icons on the online menus, in the dining halls on the digital menu boards above each serving line, and on prepackaged grab-and-go foods in the retail venues for a quick guide to appropriate choices.
Food Allergy Support Team (FAST)

When college life speeds up it can be tough to dine safely with a food allergy, but luckily, students don’t have to do it alone. The Food Allergy Support Team (FAST), at University Housing and Dining, is here to help, offering educational materials, staff training, and potential dining and living accommodations to make managing a food allergy a little easier.

FAST members receive in-depth training on food allergies and are ServSafe Allergens certified through the National Restaurant Association. If you have a question about ingredients, need advice on finding safe choices, or need help customizing a meal order, FAST members are there to help! You can find a team member by looking for the FAST logo on employee uniforms or hats.

Students can stay a step ahead of food allergies with support from FAST!

Fresh and Simple Tastes (FAST) Line

Jester 2nd Floor Dining’s (J2) FAST Line is anything but fast food! Fresh and Simple Tastes (FAST) is a top eight allergen and gluten-free serving line that provides a communal dining experience without the concern for cross-contact that usually comes with a buffet-style dining environment.

Each dish is freshly prepared right on the line by a Food Allergy Support Team member using lean proteins, gluten-free whole grains, and heart-healthy fats. The FAST Line will keep you healthy and satisfied – one nutritious, allergen-friendly meal at a time!

The FAST Line has a three week rotating menu with different options at lunch and dinner to offer students a safe and quality dining experience. With dishes like a Grilled Chicken Dragon Bowl, Italian Brisket, Italian Sausage with Polenta and a Lentil Mushroom Ragu, Fajita Steak Salad, Rosemary Lemon Chicken, and a Chimichurri Pork Chop, students should be able to find something that fits their individual tastes!

Anyone is welcome to dine at the FAST line, accommodations are not necessary! Review the online menu in advance to see if the meal option meets your dietary needs, as special requests cannot be granted on this serving line.
Made-to-Order Meal Accommodations

Even with numerous resources available, some students with food allergies may need additional support in managing their dining experience on campus. Prior to applying for dining accommodations, students should review the available resources provided by University Housing and Dining, as dietary self-management may be possible. Contact the Registered Dietitian for full details and to discuss the best course of action.

University Housing and Dining offers a made-to-order meal option for students with life-threatening or multiple food allergies. Two dining locations, Littlefield Patio Café and Cypress Bend Café, provide a special customized menu for food allergic students that has been designed by the UHD Registered Dietitian. It is imperative that accommodations are requested in advance so the menu may be customized to meet your individual dietary needs.

Throughout the year, students place meal requests from their customized menu through a daily email request. This allows our chefs the capability to prepare each meal separately in a designated space with designated equipment using pantry items approved by the Registered Dietitian to help reduce the risk of cross-contact.

Students requesting dining accommodations are encouraged to reside on the south side of campus, as the Jester Area Community and Waller Creek Community are best equipped to accommodate special dietary needs. The top eight allergen and gluten-free dining station Fresh and Simple Tastes (FAST) located inside Jester 2nd Floor (J2) Dining is open seven days a week for lunch and dinner. Students can also obtain custom made-to-order meals seven days a week at Cypress Bend Café inside San Jacinto Residence Hall.
Request for Dining Accommodations Process

1. Requests are initiated by indicating the need for dining accommodations on the Housing Application.
2. Students must then complete the Request for Dining Accommodations Form and have a medical health professional who is familiar with the disability complete supporting documentation (Housing-Dining Verification Form).
   1. Requests will not be reviewed until all required forms are submitted to the SSD office.
3. The SSD office will notify the student if they are eligible for disability-related dining accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
4. If SSD verifies the eligibility for disability-related dining accommodations, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the UHD Registered Dietitian prior to signing a Housing Contract to determine the specifics of the accommodation and allow ample time for implementation.
5. The UHD Registered Dietitian will work one-on-one with the student to determine the specific dining accommodation.
   1. For students unable to self-manage, this typically includes a modified meal plan, with made-to-order meals at select University Housing and Dining venues (details on the previous page).

For more information and to access required forms, email dietitian@austin.utexas.edu.

Guidelines for Dining Accommodation Requests

• Requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and decisions are based upon documented need.
• Documentation of a disability does not guarantee that your request will be approved.
• Students should not request dining accommodations until they have been admitted to UT.
• Students must have an active housing contract and/or be on an active UHD meal plan in order for dining accommodations to be provided.
• Requests will not be reviewed until the student and appropriate professional have both submitted all requested information to the SSD office.
• For students requesting dining accommodations for the fall semester, the accommodation request form and supporting documentation must be received by June 1st to ensure accommodations are ready prior to move-in.
• Requests made after this deadline will be subject to the availability of the requested accommodation and may result in accommodations not being available until after move-in.
• Students need to re-apply each year for on-campus housing and should submit a new Request for Dining Accommodations Form with each new housing contract, so that staff are aware of the continued need for accommodations.
• Students may be asked to provide updated information (via the Housing-Dining Verification Form) if their condition is potentially changeable and/or previous documentation does not address the student’s current condition and/or requested accommodation.