



River Forest Park District

401 Thatcher Avenue • River Forest, IL 60305 • 708-366-6660 • rfparks.com

River Forest Park District Allergy Policy

The goal is reasonable, feasible, and practical avoidance strategies, combined with procedures for the treatment of allergic reactions and emergencies in accordance with physician-prescribed action plans or, in the absence of such plans, in accordance with predetermined guidelines. Such protocol includes providing for the training of staff in basic first aid, resuscitative techniques, use of epinephrine auto-injectors, and summoning of emergency medical services. Despite the best efforts and most stringent measures, you cannot guarantee or create an allergy-free environment. Rather, with prudent measures, procedures, and guidelines, you can create a safer environment and be better prepared to handle emergencies.

ACTION

- Review all registration forms to ensure that the form requests notice of any special need and/or need for reasonable accommodation.
- Make sure all registration forms are read in advance so that members are not caught by surprise on the first day of participation.
- When an allergy and/or request for reasonable accommodation is made, meet with the parents to explore and identify avoidance strategies, procedures, and emergency measures.
- If the parent does not provide advance or appropriate notice of an allergy accommodation or if the member is not prepared to make an accommodation on short notice, err on the side of caution and temporarily suspend participation until you identify and address any special need.
- Contact PDRMA's legal counsel for direction if developing a plan with a parent becomes difficult.

Avoidance Strategies Include:

- The River Forest Park District programs and camps are NUT-FREE Zones
- Children with allergies should only eat foods that are prepared at home or pre-approved by the parent(s).
- Educate parents at orientation sessions and through written materials that a child in the class/program/camp has a dangerous allergic condition and ask for their cooperation.
- Children with allergies should not be permitted to exchange foods or utensils with other children.
- Children in the same program/activity should be asked to wash their hands at the beginning of the program/activity and before and after eating.
- Surfaces, toys and equipment should regularly be washed clean and disinfected.
- Consider establishing allergy-free eating tables and how you will manage such tables.
- Care should be taken to avoid allergens when selecting foods for crafts, cooking and other activities.

Avoidance strategies must be flexible and adapted to the age, maturity, intelligence, experience and behavioral propensities of the child. Similarly, avoidance strategies must take into consideration the

seriousness of the allergy and/or likelihood of exposure. For some individuals, even small amounts of the allergenic food can cause a life-threatening reaction. Additionally, despite labeling and professional food preparation, food products may nonetheless contain trace elements that can trigger a life-threatening reaction.

A formal written plan provided by the child's physician or parents will offer the member a clear understanding of what they are expected to do in order to help any child avoid an allergic reaction and how to react quickly in case of a medical emergency. This may include training staff in using auto-injectors or Epi-pens (*this is considered a reasonable accommodation under the ADA*). When the plan includes the administration of Epinephrine, the member should take the following precautions:

- Epinephrine should be kept in close proximity to children at risk of anaphylaxis. Reference PDRMA's Medical Dispensing Guidelines document for additional information.
- Epi-pens should be clearly marked with the child's name and routine checks should be undertaken to ensure that they are not stale-dated.
- In all cases where epinephrine is administered, emergency medical services should be summoned.
- Children at risk of anaphylaxis should be carefully monitored. Even older children who know how to self-administer epinephrine may need assistance if the ability to self-administer is hampered by an adverse reaction.