



## **POLICY - DIETARY ACCOMMODATIONS**

Dietary accommodations are reasonable modifications or necessary forms of assistance for a student who has self-identified with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) as having a documented disability whose health, mobility or special dietary needs may substantially impact their ability to equally access proper nutrition through campus dining services or programs.

Based on class standing, students residing in traditional residence halls are required to be on a resident meal plan; however, we realize that in certain situations, students may need to request reasonable dietary accommodations to mitigate the impact of their disability and to meet their specific needs. The SAC will work alongside the Director of Dining Services to assess the needs of students requesting dietary accommodations on a case-by-case basis. In many cases, existing options will meet student needs, and formal accommodation will not be required.

It is important to remember that not all accommodation requests will be granted, and the University will not have to fundamentally alter its programs to accommodate a student. In some cases, the institution may provide alternative reasonable accommodation rather than the specific accommodation requested.

Though existing dining options meet most student needs, Ashland University students may request accommodation when documented allergies and/or diagnoses limit their ability to participate in the meal plan. Students requesting accommodations for documented allergies and/or diagnoses may request dining accommodations through the SAC. The University expects specific modifications will be the result of an interactive process among the student, the Director of Dining Services, and the SAC.

All applications for dietary accommodations will follow the procedure below and require supporting documentation to be submitted for review. The types of documentation required may vary depending on the reported disability and/or medical condition and requested accommodations. The institution may request additional documentation even when some supporting documentation has been provided. In some circumstances, documentation of past accommodations will be considered (i.e. information regarding medically prescribed or therapeutic diet).

A student can request additions and/or modifications to their already-granted accommodations at any time, with the understanding that the student may be asked by the University to provide additional documentation to support the requested additions or modifications.

### **Student Process and Documentation - Procedural Overview**

For students with medical conditions requiring very specific and extensive dietary accommodations where available options through Ashland University Dining Services are not enough to meet your dietary needs, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Students who need an accommodation will make a formal request by completing the [Dietary Accommodation Request Form](#) in Etrieve. This application allows the student an opportunity to self-report and describe his/her experiences related to the disability. Once completed, the student will then receive an email from the SAC describing “Next Steps”. This email may also include links to necessary healthcare forms and/or follow-up questions and instructions.
2. If needed, the information will be forwarded to Ashland University Dining Services, and the student will schedule a meeting with the Director to discuss his/her dietary needs and available options.
3. In consultation with the Ashland University Dining Director, the Director of SAC will determine if/what meal plan accommodations are appropriate to meet the student’s needs. One of three decisions will be made:
  - a. Meal plan accommodation request is denied: Student’s dietary needs can be accommodated (plenty of food options available);
  - b. Student’s dietary needs can be accommodated with modification (reduced meal plan, specially prepared meals, pre-ordered meals, etc.);
  - c. Student’s dietary needs cannot be accommodated and the student is therefore exempt from the meal plan requirement.
4. If approved for a dietary accommodation, within 10 working days the Director of SAC will provide a formal Dietary Accommodation Letter to the student and to other necessary campus departments detailing the specific dietary accommodation plan.

\*If necessary, the student may submit documentation from a licensed professional. This should be the most recent and thorough medical/psychological diagnostic documentation available. The information from the provider, along with the students’ self-report, will be used to determine reasonable accommodations on an individual basis. While medical information is considered, it is not the sole factor in the decision-making process. A

medical provider's accommodation recommendation does not automatically guarantee approval or bind SAC/AU to approve the accommodation as being reasonable. If recommendations are primarily aimed at student success or are deemed beyond what is necessary for equal access, the student may be referred to other resources or offered alternative options to address their needs.

Dietary accommodations are effective for one academic year. Re-application is necessary to continue accommodations. Please note that a student may be asked to consult with Dining Services at the end of each year to evaluate whether new services put in place might be able to meet the student's dietary needs.

It is the responsibility of the student to contact Ashland University Dining Services and the Director of SAC if they feel their dietary accommodation needs are not being met.