

# Severe Allergy Policy

Approval:	Senior Leadership Team
Responsibility:	Provost and Vice Principal Academic Vice-Principal Finance and Administration
Date:	Approved: May 11, 2021

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Emergency Response: If you are experiencing or witness someone experiencing a severe allergic reaction and require immediate medical assistance: Call 911 and Campus Security & Emergency Services at 613-533-6111.

## A. Definitions:

1. **Allergy<sup>1</sup>**: An allergy is a chronic medical condition involving an abnormal immune system reaction to an ordinarily harmless substance called an allergen.
  - a. **Severe Allergy and Risk of Anaphylaxis**: Allergies to food, insect stings, medication and other substances can trigger a potentially life-threatening anaphylactic reaction. In Canada, the most common causes are food allergens (e.g. peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish (crustaceans, molluscs), egg, milk, mustard, sesame, soy, wheat) and insect stings (e.g. wasps, honeybees, hornets, yellow jackets).<sup>2</sup>
2. **Anaphylaxis**: The most serious type of allergic reaction. Symptoms of anaphylaxis can vary for different people from one reaction to the next. Symptoms generally include two or more of the following body systems: Skin, Respiratory, Gastrointestinal and/or Cardiovascular. However, low blood pressure alone in the absence of other symptoms can also represent anaphylaxis.
  - **Skin**: hives, swelling (face, lips, tongue), itching, warmth, redness;
  - **Respiratory** (breathing): coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain or tightness, throat tightness, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny, itchy nose and watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing;
  - **Gastrointestinal** (stomach): nausea, pain or cramps, vomiting, diarrhea;
  - **Cardiovascular** (heart): paler than normal skin colour/blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizziness or lightheadedness, shock;

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on what defines a food allergy visit [Food Allergy Canada](#)

<sup>2</sup> For individuals with other severe allergies or at risk for an anaphylactic reaction please contact the appropriate department as outlined in section e.6 *Individuals with Severe Allergy Responsibilities*

- **Other:** anxiety, sense of doom (the feeling that something bad is about to happen), headache, uterine cramps, metallic taste<sup>3</sup>.

Of the above anaphylaxis symptoms, trouble breathing and a drop in blood pressure are identified as the most dangerous and can lead to death if not immediately treated/if treatment is delayed.

3. **Epinephrine:** The drug used to treat anaphylaxis. It is commonly delivered using an auto-injector.
  - a. **Stock Epinephrine:** Term used to describe the availability of undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors

## B. Purpose/Reason for Policy:

- To increase awareness across the campus community of i) the existence of severe allergies, ii) the importance of helping to keep students, employees, and visitors with severe allergies safe, iii) what individuals can do if someone is experiencing an allergic reaction, iv) how to reduce incidents and severity of an allergic reaction on campus;
- To outline the personal responsibilities of students and employees with severe allergies relating to the management of their allergy;
- To outline the roles and responsibilities of University units and departments to support students, employees and visitors with severe allergies, including awareness and information on campus emergency responders;
- To ensure continuous improvement and commitment to services for students, employees, and visitors on campus with severe allergies to reduce the likelihood of a life-threatening allergic reaction while on campus; and
- To eliminate barriers in recruiting and retaining food allergic students and employees.

## C. Scope of this Policy:

This policy will apply to all members of the Queen's community in their interactions with individuals with severe allergies on campus.

## D. Policy Statement:

Safety, health, and wellness is of primary concern to the university. Queen's is committed to:

- Providing individuals on campus with severe allergies the information and support they need to assist them with the management of their allergy;
- Increasing the campus community's awareness of the existence of severe allergies and how to support students, employees and visitors with severe allergies to reduce the likelihood of a reaction and to have a full University experience;

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<sup>3</sup> Source: [Managing Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis: A Guide for Post Secondary Institutions](#)

- Promoting the appropriate response in the event of a reaction; and,
- Working to reduce the likelihood of a life-threatening allergic reaction on campus through enhanced coordination, communication, and services.

## E. Responsibilities:

Campus partners, including but not limited to, Undergraduate Admission & Recruitment, Housing & Ancillary Services (including Residence Admissions, Residence Life, Hospitality Services, and Event Services), Student Wellness Services, Student Experience Office, Risk and Safety Services (including Campus Security & Emergency Services and Environmental Health & Safety), the Alma Mater Society (AMS), Faculty Societies, the Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS), Food Service Vendors and Outlets, the Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs, and University Communications will work together to fulfil the University's commitment to supporting members of our community with severe allergies.

### 1. *Queen's University will:*

- Follow this policy at all times;
- Work to increase awareness across the campus community of the existence of severe allergies and the importance of helping to keep students, employees and visitors with severe allergies safe;
- Provide appropriate training to the necessary employees to address anaphylactic emergencies and severe allergy management support on campus; and,
- Maintain programs, services and communications to students, employees, and visitors about managing severe allergies on campus.

### 2. *Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Office of the Vice-Principal Finance and Administration will:*

- Commit to regular review of this policy and its implementation.

### 3. *Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs and its affiliated departments and units will:*

- Develop and maintain clear, consistent procedures outlining how Housing & Ancillary Services will inform, support and respond to students and guests with severe allergies;
- Ensure all Housing & Ancillary Services employees, as appropriate for their role, receive role-specific and annual training (at minimum) on how to support and respond to students, employees, and visitors with severe allergies;
- Provide opportunities for students to notify Housing & Ancillary Services and Student Wellness Services, about the specific nature of their severe allergy and to consult with trained staff regarding any accommodation(s) or support required;
- Provide a variety of opportunities and platforms for students to learn about the campus supports and resources that are available to assist them in the management of their allergy (e.g. one central webpage with information and links, specific instructions in Residence Admissions process, opportunities for one-on-one consultations at Summer Orientation, content in pre-arrival webinars, etc.);
- Work with Orientation Week/large campus student event organizers to promote activities that are inclusive for students with severe allergies;

- Communicate regularly with students about the importance of self-identification, self-management and available campus resources before they arrive, and as they transition through university, and provide same information to families and supports;
  - Raise campus awareness of severe allergies through the provision of information, on the role that students, employees, and visitors can play in allergy reaction prevention, response and stigma reduction;
  - Adhere to public health regulations;
  - Provide clear communication to individuals on how to access ingredient and allergy information;
  - Comply with all university signage requirements and encourage food vendor visitors to self-identify to staff as appropriate.
4. *Risk and Safety Services and its affiliated departments and units will:*
- Maintain appropriate procedures and protocols related to the administration of epinephrine under the direction of Environmental Health and Safety;
  - Provide Campus Safety and Emergency Service (“CSES”) designated personnel and Queen’s First Aid (“QFA”) volunteers with up-to-date stock epinephrine and ensure they are trained to administer it appropriately;
  - Ensure CSES staff and QFA are trained to recognize the symptoms associated with a suspected allergic reaction and to follow the appropriate response protocol;
  - Direct CSES to respond immediately and dispatch emergency responders as appropriate when notified of a suspected allergic reaction; and,
  - Develop and maintain appropriate processes, guidelines and response protocols for university-sanctioned events that promote inclusive, safe events and minimize risk for students and individuals with severe allergies.
5. *On Campus Food Vendors and Outlets (outside of Queen’s Hospitality Services)*
- Provide annual training and awareness (in collaboration with campus partners) for all employees as appropriate to their roles on how to reduce the risk of cross-contamination, how to prepare meals safely for individuals with allergies, and how to identify and respond to severe allergies and reactions;
  - Adhere to public health regulations;
  - Provide clear communication to individuals on how to access ingredient and allergy information;
  - Comply with all university signage requirements and encourage food vendor visitors to self-identify to staff as appropriate.
6. *Individuals with severe allergies are expected to:*
- Identify themselves through the appropriate department:  
**Students:** [residence admissions process \(students\)](#)  
**Employees:** [Return to Work and Accommodation Services \(employees\)](#)  
**Visitors:** Speak with event or food vendor staff regarding any questions or needs;
  - Contact [Queen's Hospitality Services](#) before arriving on campus, or as soon as possible, to discuss plans to complete [allergy intake form](#) and discuss ways to accommodate a specific condition and allergen(s);

- Once on campus, follow the plan and advice provided, and follow-up with Queen's Hospitality Services if there are any concerns at any time during the year.
- Self-identify to food outlets on campus (as not all food operators are managed by Hospitality Services);
- Practice ongoing and constant vigilance in the management of their severe allergy throughout their time at university.
- Carry an epinephrine auto-injector at all times;
- Wear medical identification (e.g. Medic Alert) at all times;
- Ask questions to food outlet staff and supervisors, before selecting/purchasing food, about ingredients and the potential of cross-contamination in Queen's Hospitality Services locations, vendor locations and at events held by the university; and
- Tell others with whom they are in regular contact (e.g. dons, roommates, floor mates, housemates, teammates, friends, colleagues etc.) about their allergy, how to recognize symptoms of a reaction, what to do, and where they keep their epinephrine auto-injector;

## F. Emergency Response On Campus

- **If you are experiencing or witness someone experiencing a severe allergic reaction and require immediate medical assistance:**
  - **Call 911 and Campus Security and Emergency Services at 613-533-6111**
- Students are encouraged to contact Student Wellness Services for more mild allergic reactions and for follow up;
- Individuals are also encouraged to download the [Secure App](#) for emergency contact information.

## G. Additional Resources

[Information and Resources for Students with Severe Allergies](#)

[Return to Work and Accommodation Services \(employees\)](#)

[Dietary Needs at Queen's](#)

[Student Wellness Services](#)

[Student Accessibility Services](#)

[Food Allergy Canada](#)

[Residence Accommodations Form](#)

[Queen's First Aid](#)

[Campus Security & Emergency Services](#)

[Resources for Staff \(e.g. Training\)](#)

[Allergy Aware](#)

[Event Services](#)

[Donald Gordon Centre](#)

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Provost and Vice-Principal Academic Vice-Principal Finance and Administration
<b>Contact Officer</b>	K. Murphy, Risk and Safety Services  L. Winger, Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs
<b>Date for Next Review</b>	May 2024
<b>Related Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines</b>	<a href="#">Accommodation of Disabilities in the Workplace Policy</a>  <a href="#">Individualized Disability Accommodation Procedures</a>  Developed by units with outlined responsibilities
<b>Policies Superseded by This Policy</b>	Severe Allergy Policy, 2016