CODMAN ACADEMY CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Meal Modification Requests

A Step-by-Step Guide for Families

What This Is

Codman Academy provides breakfast, lunch, and snack to all students every school day. If your child has a food allergy, a medical condition, or a disability that affects what they can safely eat, we can change their school meals and snack to keep them safe.

This guide walks you through how to ask for a meal change, what paperwork you need, and what happens next. The process is free, and we are here to help you through it.

Who Can Request a Meal Modification?

Any parent or guardian of a Codman student can request a meal modification. You should consider asking for a meal modification if your child has:

- A food allergy (for example: peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, soy, wheat, fish, shellfish, sesame).
- A medical condition that affects what they eat (for example: celiac disease, diabetes, lactose intolerance, swallowing difficulties).
- A disability that affects how they eat or what they can eat.

Codman Academy serves students ages 4 to 18 (Grades K1 through 12). Meal modifications are available to any enrolled student whose medical provider determines that a change is needed for their health and safety.

> **Important: Medical Approval Is Required**
>
> Federal and Massachusetts rules require that a licensed medical authority (a doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) sign off on any meal modification before we can make the change. Their signature confirms that the change is medically necessary.

The Process: 5 Simple Steps

STEP 1

Get the Meal Modification Request Form

You'll need to fill out the official Massachusetts Meal Modification Request Form. It is published by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Office for Food and Nutrition Programs.

You can get the form in three ways:

- Download it from the DESE website at www.doe.mass.edu/cnp
- Pick up a paper copy at the Codman Academy main office
- Email the school nurse (Jean-Donald Ismeus) or Food Service Director (Garth Petracca) and ask them to send you a copy

A copy of the form is also attached to the back of this guide for your convenience.

STEP 2

Talk to Your Child's Doctor

Make an appointment with your child's doctor, or contact your child's existing medical provider. The doctor (or a nurse practitioner or physician assistant) needs to:

- Identify the food(s) your child should avoid
- Recommend safe substitutions
- Briefly explain how the food affects your child
- Sign and date the form

If your doctor prefers to write a signed letter on their own letterhead instead of using the DESE form, that is also accepted — as long as the letter includes the same information (foods to avoid, recommended substitutions, and a brief explanation).

STEP 3

Fill Out and Sign Your Part

Complete the parent or guardian sections of the form, including your child's name, school, and your signature. Make sure both you and the medical provider have signed and dated the form before submitting it.

If you need help filling out the form, the school nurse (Jean-Donald Ismeus) or main office staff are happy to help.

STEP 4

Submit the Form to Codman

Return the completed and signed form to Codman Academy. You can submit it in any of these ways:

- Drop it off at the main office
- Email a scanned copy or clear photo to Jean-Donald Ismeus (school nurse) or Garth Petracca (Food Service Director)
- Mail it to: Codman Academy Charter Public School, 637 Washington Street, Dorchester, MA 02124

Please submit the form at least 5 school days before you would like the meal change to start, so we have time to plan safe meals.

STEP 5

Confirmation and Meal Service Begins

Once we receive your completed form, our Food Service Director and school nurse will review it. They will contact you within 5 school days to:

- Confirm we received the form
- Discuss the meal plan and answer any questions
- Let you know when the modified meals will begin

From that point on, your child will receive meals that match the medical instructions, at no extra cost.

Keeping the Information Current

Please let the school know right away if anything changes — for example, if your child outgrows an allergy, if a new food restriction is added, or if your child no longer needs the modification. A new form may be needed.

Meal modifications generally remain in place as long as your child attends Codman, unless the medical authority indicates the change is temporary or your child no longer needs it.

What This Costs You

Nothing. Meal modifications are provided at no charge. Federal and state laws require that a school accommodating a student's disability or medical dietary need does so without additional cost to the family.

Your Child's Privacy

The medical information you share with Codman is kept private. It is shared only with the staff who need to know in order to safely prepare and serve your child's meals — including the Food Service Director, kitchen staff, and the school nurse.

Need Help? We're Here for You

If you have questions at any point in the process, or if you'd like help completing the form, please contact:

- Codman Academy Main Office — 617-287-0700
- Jean-Donald Ismeus, School Nurse
- Garth Petracca, Food Service Director

If you need this guide in another language, in large print, or in another accessible format, please let us know and we will provide it.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), available online at www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from

any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442
- Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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This procedure complies with USDA Food and Nutrition Service regulations (7 CFR §210.10, §220.8), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the policies of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Office for Food and Nutrition Programs.