

Terms and Definitions

Allergy or **allergies** refers to an overreaction of the immune system to a substance that is harmless to most people. During an allergic reaction, the body's immune system treats the substance or "allergen" as an invader. The body overreacts by releasing chemicals that may cause symptoms ranging from mildly annoying to life threatening. Common allergens include certain foods (milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, common tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, and soybeans) pollen, mold, or medication.

Anaphylaxis is the result of a release of chemicals causing one's body to go into shock; a person's blood pressure drops and their airway narrows, blocking breathing.

CACFP means the Child and Adult Care Food Program established by Congress and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Early learning professionals are all early learning providers, child care licensing staff, and other professionals in the early learning field.

Individual care plan means a specific plan to meet the individual needs of a child with a food allergy, special dietary requirement due to a health condition, other special needs, or circumstances.

Parent or **guardian** means birth parent, custodial parent, foster parent, legal guardian or those authorized by the parent or entity legally responsible for the welfare of the child.

RCW means Revised Code of Washington.

USDA means the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

WAC means Washington Administrative Code.

Written food plan is a document designed to give alternative food to a child in care because of a child's medical needs or special diet, or to accommodate a religious, cultural, or family preference. A parent or guardian and the early learning provider must sign a written food plan.