



# Samford University

## Office of Accessibility and Accommodations

### **Meal Plan Accommodation Policy**

Living and dining on campus are an integral component of the Samford University undergraduate experience. Through the Office of Residence Life, the student application for housing states that students who live in campus housing must also purchase a meal plan. Meal plan accommodations are considered only for students with a disability or medical condition. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis to best ensure equal access to campus services. Dietary preferences unrelated to a disability should be addressed with Dining Services.

#### **The process for requesting a meal plan accommodation is as follows:**

1. The student should first meet with Dining Services to discuss specific dietary needs and options available on campus. Dining Services can be contacted at [samforddining@samford.edu](mailto:samforddining@samford.edu) to arrange a meeting. Their phone number is 205-726-2480. Many times a student's needs can be accommodated by working with the Dining Services staff. If the outcome of the student's meeting with Dining Services is not satisfactory and additional accommodations need to be requested, the student should complete the remaining steps below.
2. The student should complete the application for accommodations. Instructions for accessing this can be found at [www.samford.edu/dr](http://www.samford.edu/dr), click on "Requesting Accommodations."
3. The student should submit documentation of their disability which corresponds to the documentation guidelines (see pages 2 and 3). Documentation that does not meet the guidelines will not be eligible for consideration and additional documentation may be requested.
4. The student will be asked to meet with a Disability Resources staff member to discuss their disability and the requested accommodations.
5. The above information will be shared with the Meal Plan Committee, which meets once per month. The committee will determine reasonable meal plan accommodations based on the information provided.
6. The student will be notified of the committee's decision.

**Note:** If a student's dietary needs can be met by Dining Services, no accommodation will be granted. Meal plan accommodation effective dates coincide with monthly meetings of the Meal Plan Committee. Approved meal plan accommodations will result in a prorated meal plan to take place on the effective date of the accommodation. Accommodations are not retroactive and therefore reimbursement cannot be retroactively applied to a student's account prior to the effective date of the accommodation.

#### **Questions regarding meal plan accommodations should be addressed to:**

Samford University Office of Accessibility and Accommodations    Dwight Beeson Hall Room #104

Phone: 205-726-4078

Fax: 205-726-2842

Email: [access@samford.edu](mailto:access@samford.edu)



### **Documentation Guidelines for Meal Plan Accommodations**

**Important note:** Students who request a meal plan accommodation must submit documentation of their disability from an appropriate treatment provider. The purpose of documentation is to provide objective evidence that the student meets the criteria for having a disability, which is defined as 1) being diagnosed with a condition, and 2) experiencing a functional impairment or substantial limitation in at least one major life activity. Information provided below clarifies the data needed from treatment providers to assist in determining the student's eligibility for a meal plan accommodation. If the documentation is not adequate in content or does not address the student's current level of functioning and need for accommodation, additional documentation may be requested. Please contact Disability Resources with any questions or concerns regarding these guidelines.

#### **Documentation should thoroughly address each of the following:**

##### **1. Basic components of documentation**

- Submit information that is typed or printed on letterhead, dated and signed. Treatment providers are responsible for ensuring documentation is legible.
- Treatment providers should include their name, title, and credentials. Documentation should be submitted from an appropriate licensed professional who is not related to the student. For conditions requiring a meal plan accommodation, this is typically an allergist/immunologist, gastroenterologist, or other specialist qualified to make such a diagnosis.
- Include the student's identifying information, such as full name and date of birth.

##### **2. History to support diagnosis**

- Provide information regarding how long you have been treating the student, the date of their most recent evaluation or visit, etc.
- Provide any information regarding the student's medical, familial, and social histories which may relate to their diagnosis, symptoms, and/or functional limitations.
- Provide information regarding the onset, duration and severity of the disorder, particularly as it relates to the student's dietary needs.

##### **3. Assessment to support diagnosis**

- Provide information regarding data used to determine a diagnosis and your interpretation of the data. Also address whether the student's difficulties could be better accounted for by other medical conditions.
- Appropriate diagnostic tools may include, but are not limited to: results of lab work, diagnostic tests/procedures, allergy testing, etc.

##### **4. Diagnostic statement and evidence of current impairment**

- Eligibility for accommodations is based on the current impact of the student's disability. Therefore, it is important to provide recent information.

- Provide a clear statement of the diagnosis based on your assessment, including diagnostic criteria and symptoms currently endorsed by the student. If a diagnosis could not be determined, provide information on plans for further assessment.
- Provide information on how the disability currently impacts the student's dietary needs, with particular attention to the following functional limitations that are impaired when the student's dietary needs are unmet:
  - major life activities: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working
  - major bodily functions: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions

## 5. Recommended accommodations and treatment

- Provide information regarding any medication, treatment, or strategies you would recommend based on the student's diagnosis and current impairment. If the student is currently receiving any medication or treatment, list any potential side effects that may interfere with academic or social functioning or dietary needs.
- Provide your recommendation and rationale for an appropriate meal plan accommodation. Include a list of specific foods the student can / cannot have exposure to, along with a sample meal plan based on the student's dietary needs / restrictions. This information is necessary in order to determine whether campus dining options can meet the student's needs. *Recommendations made by treatment providers are taken into consideration but cannot be guaranteed to be approved as accommodations.*

**Please submit the report or address questions regarding documentation to:**

Samford University Office of Accessibility and Accommodations

phone: 205-726-4078

fax: 205-726-2842

email: access@samford.edu

mailing address: Samford University  
 Attn: Office of Accessibility and Accommodations  
 800 Lakeshore Drive  
 Birmingham, AL 35229

*In compliance with FERPA and the ADA, documentation submitted to Disability Resources is confidential and will not be shared with other internal departments or external entities. Students may request that a copy of their documentation be sent to another institution or released for their personal records.*