

Assumption University is deeply committed to the full participation of students with disabilities in all aspects of university life, including the dining experience. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Assumption has established procedures to ensure that students with documented disabilities have access to meal plan accommodations that reasonably meet their needs as required by law. According to the ADA, a disability is defined as any mental or physical impairment that substantially limits the individual in a major life activity. There must also be a legitimate connection between the disability and the requested accommodation.

As a residential university, Assumption requires all students living on campus to participate in the meal plan available through the University's Dining Services, with the exception of students living in on-campus apartments. The University strives to meet all students' needs through the standard meal plan. Dining Services offers many options to meet students' needs and is happy to accommodate dietary requirements. Taylor Dining Hall features True Balance, a balanced meal option for students allergic to any of the Top 9 allergens offering meals made without eggs, dairy, soy, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, sesame, and gluten-containing ingredients. Taylor Dining Hall also features Conscious Bites which is a card-access pantry that offers a variety of items that do not contain gluten, peanuts, or tree nuts. This pantry is equipped with dedicated appliances, toasters, and microwaves to reduce the risk of cross-contact. Students that require access to Conscious Bites must be registered with Student Accessibility Services. A trained chef is also able upon request to prepare meals for individuals with specific allergies and other dietary sensitivities.

Students who believe that their medical dietary need/restriction cannot be met through True Balance and/or Conscious Bites may request a meal plan accommodation. Students must meet with Dining Services to discuss their specific food allergy or medical dietary need/restriction and submit supporting documentation to Student Accessibility Services as requested. Dining services will work with registered students to reasonably accommodate their needs. If it is determined that the student's needs cannot be met by Dining Services, the student may request a meal plan exemption. Requests are submitted to the Office of Student Accessibility Services and must be accompanied by the Assumption Disability Verification Form, completed by a physician or other qualified professional as determined by the University. Students are also required to meet with a member of Student Accessibility Services for an intake meeting. Given the ability to accommodate a varied range of dietary needs, an exemption from participation in the meal plan is rare and will only be considered when the student's needs cannot be met by Dining Services. Requests for meal plan exemptions based on dietary preferences or for financial reasons will not be granted.

Requests for meal plan exemptions are reviewed by the Student Accommodations Committee. The Committee is comprised of representatives from Health Services, Counseling Services, Residential Life and Student Accessibility Services. Students are informed of the Committee's decision by email within one week of the Committee's review.

Students who are not granted a meal plan accommodation or exemption through this process have the right to appeal the Committee's decision. Appeals must be received, in writing, by the Assistant Dean of Students within 7 working days of the Committee's communication.