Anaphylaxis Policy for School-Aged Child Care Program

Purpose:

This policy outlines the procedures and protocols to ensure the safety of children with life-threatening allergies, specifically those who may experience anaphylaxis, while attending the Academic Plus program. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens, provide proper emergency response, and comply with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) regulations.

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, children, and parents/guardians participating in the school-aged child care program, including any special considerations for children with known allergies that may lead to anaphylaxis.

1. Identification of Children with Severe Allergies

- Upon enrollment, parents/guardians must inform the program in writing of any child's severe allergies or conditions that may lead to anaphylaxis. This includes food allergies, insect stings, medication reactions, or any other known allergens.
- Parents/guardians must provide a completed medical form, which includes details of the allergy, known triggers, and emergency action plans. This form must be signed by the child's healthcare provider.
- The program director or designated staff will keep this information confidential and will ensure that all staff members are informed about children with severe allergies.

2. Staff Training

- All staff will receive annual training in anaphylaxis recognition and emergency response, including the use of epinephrine auto-injectors (e.g., EpiPen®).
- Training will cover:
    - Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis.
    - The correct procedure for administering epinephrine.
    - The location of the child's emergency medication and emergency contact information.
    - The proper response to anaphylaxis in an emergency situation, including when to call 911.
- At least one staff member trained in anaphylaxis response will be on-site at all times during program hours.

3. Individualized Emergency Action Plans

- For children with known severe allergies, an Individualized health care plan and an Individualized Anaphylaxis Plan must be developed in collaboration with the child's parents/guardians and healthcare provider. This plan will include:
    - A list of the child's specific allergens.
    - Instructions on how to recognize an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis.
    - Step-by-step procedures for administering epinephrine and other emergency interventions.
    - Emergency contact information.
- These documents will be reviewed and updated annually, or as needed, to ensure it remains accurate and up to date.

4. Safe Environment and Risk Minimization

- The school-aged child care program will implement procedures to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens for children with known allergies, including but not limited to:
    - Labeling foods and snacks clearly to ensure that children with food allergies are not exposed to allergens.
    - Educating children and staff about not sharing food and drinks.
    - Creating allergen-free zones, where possible, particularly for children with severe food allergies.
    - Ensuring that any outdoor or field trip activities have an appropriate plan in place for allergy management, including bringing emergency medications.

5. Emergency Response Protocol

- In the event of an allergic reaction, staff will:
    1. Immediately assess the situation and follow the emergency action plan.
    2. Administer epinephrine (if prescribed) as outlined in the IEAP.
    3. Call 911 immediately and inform emergency personnel of the allergic reaction and epinephrine administration.
    4. Contact the child's emergency contacts and notify the parents/guardians.
    5. Monitor the child closely while awaiting emergency medical assistance.
- If a child is showing signs of anaphylaxis (e.g., difficulty breathing, swelling of the throat or lips, hives, dizziness, or loss of consciousness), epinephrine should be administered immediately, followed by a call to 911.

6. Medication Storage and Accessibility

- Epinephrine auto-injectors and other emergency medications will be stored in a secure, easily accessible location at all times. The program will ensure that:
    - Epinephrine auto-injectors are kept in a location that is accessible to trained staff but inaccessible to children.

    - Emergency medications are labeled with the child's name, emergency action plan, and expiration date.
    - At least one epinephrine auto-injector is available at all times, including during field trips and excursions.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring the epinephrine auto-injectors are current and replaced before expiration.

7. Parent/Guardian Communication

- Parents/guardians of children with known severe allergies will be informed of the program's anaphylaxis policy, including the procedures for managing allergens and emergency response.
- Parents/guardians will be required to sign consent forms acknowledging the policy, emergency protocols, and the necessity of providing updated medical documentation.
- If there is any change in the child's allergies, medication, or emergency action plan, parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the program immediately.

8. Record Keeping

- The program will maintain accurate records of all children with anaphylaxis or severe allergies, including:
    - A list of allergens and individual emergency action plans.
    - Staff training records.
    - Incident reports of any allergic reactions, including the use of epinephrine and emergency response actions.

9. Review and Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the program director and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with New York State Office of Children and Family Services regulations and to incorporate feedback from parents, staff, and medical professionals.

10. Compliance with OCFS Regulations

- This policy complies with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) regulations for school-aged child care programs. The program will adhere to all OCFS guidelines regarding the management of severe allergies and anaphylaxis in child care settings, ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in care.