



Office of Children and Family Services

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE
Commissioner

June 9, 2022

Dear Provider,

In recent months, OCFS has seen a dramatic increase in the number of complaints of children with **diagnosed** allergies ingesting known allergens while in the child care program. These cases are deeply concerning. Empower yourself and your staff with information! The time to become familiar with the allergy plan is **before** an emergency. During the medical emergency, the program **must** follow the plan approved by the child's health care provider, parent, and program.

Please take time to review every child's Medication Consent Form (OCFS-LDSS 7002), Individual Health Care Plan (OCFS 7006), and Individual Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan (OCFS 6029 or **approved equivalent**) to verify that the information on the forms is *consistent and clear*. NOTE: All three forms **MUST** be completed for a child with a diagnosed allergy. It is critically important that all staff caring for a child with an allergy have the information they need to keep children safe. Ongoing training on allergy plans, strategies for preventing exposure, and how to respond in an anaphylaxis emergency is the key!

Important Updates:

"Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis: Elijah's Law" is now available in Spanish. This valuable training will help you prepare for preventing and responding to allergic reactions and provides the opportunity to participate in the OCFS auto injector initiative.

The no-cost course provides 1 hour of training credit and covers the following training topics:

- Principles of Childhood Development
- Safety and Security Procedures
- Business Record Maintenance and Management

"Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis: Elijah's Law" is now available as an On-Demand Training (in English and Spanish). For more information, go to the On-Demand section of the ECETP website at: www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu.

Epinephrine Auto Injector Initiative

OCFS continues to partner with HealthFirst, the authorized distributor of AUVI-Q, an epinephrine auto injector for children weighing between 16.5-33 pounds. Each participating program will receive a package containing two non-patient specific auto injectors and one training device. This opportunity is available through July 2022. To participate, each interested program must:

- Designate at least one individual per program who successfully completed an approved epinephrine training course. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The OCFS auto injector initiative is now a fully automated, paperless process. During the "Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis: Elijah's Law" training course, the participant is asked **twice** to respond "yes" or "no" about participating in the auto injector initiative. When the individual completing the training clicks "yes", the auto injector package will be shipped directly to the child care program. **Once requested, the auto injector cannot be returned to the distributor or OCFS.**
- Record each individual who has successfully completed the approved epinephrine course on Appendix H of the Health Care Plan (HCP).
- Update the HCP to indicate the program is stocking non-patient specific auto injector.
- Update Appendix J of the HCP. Submit the revised HCP to their regulator.
- The OCFS 6029A Hold Harmless Agreement is no longer required. This form has been removed from the website and the training.

Why is allergy awareness so important?

Child care providers play an important role in the health and well-being of children. Children with a diagnosed allergy rely on their caregivers to prevent exposure to allergens and to have a plan in place in the event of allergic reaction. Many of the children in your program are experiencing events for the first time, including new foods and insect bites. There is no way to predict when a child will have an allergic reaction. **If anaphylaxis were to occur, do you and your staff know what to do?** If the answer to this question is not a confident "YES!", now is the time to educate yourself and your staff until you are all allergy aware.

Epinephrine is the first line drug of choice for the emergency treatment of severe allergic reactions. It is a safe medication. There is no medical reason for trained, designated staff to withhold administration of an auto injector in an emergency if anaphylaxis is suspected. The goal of this initiative is to spread allergy awareness to all caregivers and families, thus preventing further tragedy. Having a non-patient specific auto injector in your program's emergency tool kit, and the knowledge on how to use it, is a potentially lifesaving investment.

In December 2021, OCFS printed 100,000 posters entitled "What is Anaphylaxis?" and shipped one copy directly to each licensed/registered child care program. Each Regional and Borough Office received 8,000 additional copies that are available for distribution to programs that would like extra copies. Please reach out to your regulator to obtain additional posters for your program. Ideally, the posters will serve as a visual reminder to staff in every classroom. A fun fact to share: when you scan the QR code in the lower right corner of the poster with a smart phone, it takes you directly to the "Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis: Elijah's Law" training—please check it out! Also, a downloadable paper size version of the poster is posted at: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/elijahs-law.php>.

Coming Soon

In the coming weeks, OCFS anticipates sharing new information about the expansion of the auto injector initiative. Please stay tuned for this exciting update!

Thank you for your investment in allergy and anaphylaxis awareness. If you have any questions, please reach out to your regulator for assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice Molnar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Janice Molnar, Ph.D.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services