

South Dakota State University
Housing & Residential Life
Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation
Guidelines and Process – Financial

This policy establishes the guidelines and procedures for students requesting an exemption from the South Dakota State University (SDSU) Meal Plan program. The Meal Plan Exemption Policy covers meal plans for all students that live on campus and are required to purchase a meal plan.

Students living in the residence halls at South Dakota State University are required to participate in a University-sponsored meal plans, (see South Dakota Board of Regents policy 3:6.1a). A Meal plan is not required for Meadows apartment residents who is two or more years past their high school graduation year.

SDSU Dining Services features a variety of choices intended to meet the dietary needs of the University's diverse student body. In certain situations, a student may need to request special meal plan accommodation or in the event SDSU Dining Services cannot meet the student's documented dietary or religious dietary observance, an exemption from the meal plan participation may be requested.

Please note that a meal plan exemption will only be granted when the Dining Services program cannot meet the nutritional needs of a student.

Students requesting a meal plan exemption must provide supporting documentation as set forth below. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any and all required approvals or necessary documentation. In order for the request to be considered all required documentation must be submitted by the deadline. Incomplete requests will NOT be considered.

Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation Process

1. To initiate the Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation process, a student should submit a completed Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation Request Form to the Department of Housing & Residential Life by the deadline along with the appropriate accompanying materials for requested category (finance, medical, or religious) along with the necessary documentation to support the request.
2. Once the Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation Request Form is received, the Department of Housing & Residential Life will review this request in conjunction with Dining Services and Health Services and approve or deny the request. The student will receive communication regarding their exemption request status via their Jacks email account typically within 3-4 weeks.

FALL: The final deadline for fall semester exemption requests is the Friday following the first day of classes.

SPRING: The final deadline for spring semester exemptions requests is the Friday following the first day of classes

Important Related Information:

1. Exemptions for the following reasons will not be considered: dietary preference (e.g. vegan/vegetarian), work/class/practice schedules, or other personal preferences.
2. The health care provider must be a medical doctor MD, DO, NP or ND (correspondence from chiropractors and herbalists will not be accepted).

3. If the request is approved, the meal plan charge will be prorated from the date the decision was communicated. All charges up to that date are valid and will remain on the student's account.
4. **Failure to include required documents with the Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation Request Form could result in a delay and/or denial of request.**
5. Requests based on medical condition must complete the Physicians Form.
6. Requests based on religious observance must complete the Religious Leader Form.
7. Requests received after the deadline(s) will not be considered until the following semester unless a medical condition or a disability arises in the interim.
8. If you submit an exemption request and the board charge has been placed on your account, understand that you are responsible for meeting all payment deadlines. It is recommended that you pay for your meal plan and if your request is approved, your account will be credited on a pro-rata basis determined by the date the exemption is approved.
9. You must reapply for a meal plan exemption each year with current documentation dated within six months of your application.
10. Please keep a copy of the documentation that you submit for your files.
11. Appeals of the decision can be made to the administrator noted below within five business days of receiving the decision. Appeals will only be considered if there is new information to present. The appeal will be reviewed within 15 business days. Appeals should be directed to:
Jennifer Novotny
Senior Director-Student Activities
University Student Union Rm 150
Brookings, SD 57007
Appeal materials may also be directed electronically to jennifer.novotny@sdstate.edu.
12. Presentation of falsified information will be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct resulting in appropriate disciplinary action.

Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation FAQ

Please review the following FAQ before submitting a request:

Q: I moved off campus, do I still need a meal plan?

A: A meal plan exemption is not required – please review your housing application through your MyState portal. Here you can choose to have a commuter plan (just flex dollars) if you would like to eat on campus, or choose to not have a meal plan at all.

Q: The MyState Portal has closed the options for changing meal plans; can I submit a meal plan exemption to change my meal plan?

A: No, a meal plan exemption cannot be submitted. Students are given 30 – 45 days before the semester starts and approximately two weeks after the semester starts to change their meal plan.

Q: I am withdrawing, changing schools, or not returning for the spring semester, what do I do about my meal plan?

A: A meal plan exemption is not required – Funds remaining from the fall semester on the students who do not enroll for spring semester will NOT be refunded.

Q: I have a dietary condition and want to request a reduced or waived meal plan. How do I do this?

A: Submit the meal plan exemption/accommodation form. You must submit documentation demonstrating the medical necessity for a waiver. This documentation must be provided by a doctor's office, allergy clinic, or registered dietitian.

Q: My religious beliefs prevent me from finding options to eat with my current meal plan. Do I need to file a request?

A: Yes, a meal plan exemption/accommodation **IS** required. A written statement detailing dietary restriction associated with your sincerely held religious beliefs and a phone number from a religious leader are requested.



Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation Request Form – Financial

Department of Housing & Residential Life

| GENERAL INFORMATION | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Last Name: | | First Name: | |
| Email: | | Student ID: | |
| Graduation Year: | | Primary Phone: () | |
| Period of Request: | | Current Meal Plan | |
| Indicate Request period below with Academic Year (example 2021- 2022 or Fall 2021 or Spring 2022): | | Residence Hall/Apartment | |
| Academic Year | | Exemption Type (check below): | |
| Fall Only | | Financial Request | |
| Spring Only | | | |

| AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION |
|--|
| <p>To the Release Applicant: As noted on the Request for Release from Residence Hall Application form, releases based on financial need are granted only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. When you have a verified need for financial aid as indicated by Financial Aid Office records and are not funded by Federal Aid and/or Stafford Loan Aid to a level consistent with your need; or B. When financial circumstances are created by situations over which you have not control (e.g., verified reduction of family income, etc.). <p>Applicant: In order for your request to be reviewed, the SDSU Office of Housing and Residential Life must review your financial need and need-based financial aid awards as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and your scholarships. To authorize the release of this information, complete and sign the following:</p> <p>I, _____ (please print full name), the undersigned, authorize South Dakota State (SDSU) University Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to release my financial need (as determined by the FAFSA) and my need-based awards and scholarships to the SDSU Office of Housing and Residential Life for the purpose of determining my unmet financial need as required for this application.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> |

Completed forms can be sent to the following address or via fax:

Mail: South Dakota State University **FAX: (605-688) 6044**
Housing & Residential Life
Box 2810A
Caldwell Hall
Brookings, SD 57007

Student's Name: _____

Student SDSU ID#: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____
(Street Address/PO Box/Residence Hall and Room) (City) (State/Zip)

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (if student is under 18) _____ Date: _____

Explanation of Request for Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation based on Financial Need

Describe why you are requesting a meal plan exemption/accommodation. Please provide specific information related to this request:

Explanation of Financial Request for Meal Plan Exemption/Accommodation

For meal plan exemption applicant: For consideration of financial exemption, consideration is based on the following:

- A. When you have verified need for financial aid as indicated by Financial Aid Office records and are not funded by Federal Aid and/or Stafford Loan Aid to a level consistent with your need;
- B. Have completed and submitted the Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) to the SDSU Financial Aid Office (please note it can take a few weeks before the University receives the FAFSA information;
- C. Letter outlining significant financial change, as well as documentation that may support this exemption request.