



Dining



Town Hall Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Chartwells? Who are they accountable to at the University for improvements?

Chartwells is the University of Pittsburgh's dining partner, known on Pitt's campus as Pitt Eats. On campus, the Chartwells team is held accountable for improvements by the Office of Business, Hospitality, and Auxiliary Services, which includes a Dining Services team.

Where can we see the results of these internal investigations?

Internal audits are ongoing and shared in town halls, ensuring transparency.

These inspections happened simultaneously with another raw chicken incident. Is the level of supervision of cooks appropriate?

In response to complaints of raw chicken on Sept. 11, 2024, following the inspection by the Allegheny Health Department (ACHD) on Sept. 9, 2024, Pitt Eats implemented supplemental measures to further strengthen staff oversight and accountability. All raw chicken products are only be cooked by a certified chef at this time.

Why did the ACHD only inspect 6/33 of their items during the inspection?

The inspection on Sept. 9, 2024 was in response to the self-reporting of issues and complaints, with the ACHD inspecting high-priority items attached to these reports. The health department's full inspection of The Eatery is anticipated before the end of this week, which provided a clean bill of health and no violations.

Why is The Perch different from The Eatery?

Both dining halls operate with an all-you-care-to-eat model. The Perch is set up in a traditional, self-service model, where The Eatery features composed plates at 11 distinctive stations. Though The Eatery takes a unique approach to the all-you-care-to-eat model, guests are more than welcome to ask for modifications. Want more of a dish? Ask for a double portion. Don't like cheese? Ask an associate for assistance.

How is it possible that these incidents occurred? How do you not know about them?

At Pitt Eats, we are committed to safety in all that we do. When complaints occur, our team takes action to promptly review food handling, preparation and holding procedures, training and personnel in place. Those who are not upholding our dining standards are held accountable.

As noted in the webinar: if our systems and standards are not upheld during a dining experience, the team at Pitt Eats wants to know about it. Please use our feedback channels – [Dine on Campus](#), Text 2 Chat, and Happy or Not, to let us know. Then, our team can address this feedback quickly and hold our team accountable to strengthen your dining experience.



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What is Chartwells doing to run a better program at Pitt? How are you improving variety, quality, and safety?

As outlined in the webinar, Pitt Eats is committed to quality, variety and safety in everything we do.

All associates are completing enhanced food safety training and certification on food safety (started Sept. 2, 2024), which will be completed Sept. 19. Effective Sept. 12, 2024, in response to complaints of raw chicken on Sept. 11, 2024, only certified chefs are cooking raw chicken products at this time.

In addition, Pitt Eats is voluntarily conducting additional third-party inspections in our dining locations every week.

At Pitt Eats, we are always working to address meal variety at our dining locations. In the coming weeks, students will see new dishes and menus released at The Eatery, as well as other locations across campus. And, they can expect to see fun, pop-up events from Pitt Eats that will bring delicious, unique items to our spaces.

In line with variety, quality is also foundational at Pitt Eats. Pitt Eats is committed to providing the best dining experience possible for students, and are committed to providing fresh, unique, high-quality items at all of our stations.

Why are steps being taken this year, but were not last year when similar problems occurred?

At Pitt Eats, we can assure you that similar steps were taken last year to address raw chicken complaints, with a more robust internal audit assessment process in place this year.

Why are published menus not being followed? How do you identify when things run out on menus?

Menu changes are a natural part of our operations, and a number of factors can cause us to rotate menus from day-to-day. It is our goal to communicate these changes accurately and in a timely manner.

It is our expectation at Pitt Eats that posted menus and hours are updated and accurate at all times. With the menuing system in place, all digital menu boards and corresponding information on [Dine on Campus](#) is updated in real time.

Why don't stations stay open for all of the hours?

Based on students dining routines and traffic flow, stations in The Eatery operate with various hours. These will be represented at the individual station, with hours of operation also posted on Dine on Campus and throughout the space.

In our other dining spaces, you can find hours of operation on Dine on Campus, and, similar to The Eatery, the Pitt Eats team is posting detailed signage throughout these spaces.

Why do our kids need fancy food? Where can students find normal food?

Though a unique service style, The Eatery serves classic comfort foods daily. Find handmade pasta and fresh-made pizza at Cucina, scratch-made ramen at Kokumi, deli-style sandwiches at The Briny Pickle, American comfort classics like chicken tenders, cheeseburgers, and mac n' cheese at Food Truck, and more.

A full list of restaurants and what they serve is available at <https://www.theeateryatpitt.com/>.



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What is being done to address portion sizes? Why are students not allowed to self-serve?

You spoke, and Pitt Eats listened. Starting Friday Sept. 13, 2024, portion sizes at The Eatery have been increased. At Pitt Eats, we want our guests to feel comfortable in our dining spaces, leaving full and satisfied.

Modifications are also available. If you would like a double portion, don't want a topping, or don't like a certain ingredient, please don't hesitate to ask our associates for a modification without going through the line a second time.

To support this commitment, Pitt Eats conducts regular guest service training with our associates.

Every time I've visited The Perch or The Eatery, I've had to set aside one or two dirty plates.

At Pitt Eats, we never want our guests to experience a dirty plate. Our team is cleaning and sanitizing all of our dishes after use. If our standard is not met, our team needs to know about it. Please speak with an associate or leave feedback so it can be addressed, and those responsible can be held accountable.

What does a ServSafe certification entail?

The ServSafe certification is an in-depth course and assessment administered by the National Restaurant Association. It's an important measure to teach responsible food service measures, broken down into five sections: Basic Food Safety, Personal Hygiene, Cross-contamination and Allergens, Time and Temperature, and Cleaning and Sanitation. All staff handling food undergo ServSafe training.

Why did the Forbes Street Market Meal Swap change?

In order to provide a more balanced student dining experience, the Forbes Street Market Meal Swap program has been updated for the Fall semester to include an entrée, a side, and a drink.

How are you going to win back the trust of students?

Maintaining the trust of our community is of utmost importance to the Pitt Eats team. Pitt Eats and the University are holding a Dining Advisory Committee meeting on Sept. 26, 2024, to hear directly from our community members and gain additional feedback.

In addition, the Pitt Eats team is working to hold educational tabling sessions and will share videos of our chefs, managers, and other members of the leadership team, taking you behind the scenes to better understand our safety practices. The Pitt Eats team will continue to hold town halls on a regular basis virtually and invite you to visit us at any time.

A new Student Choice series will also be implemented, giving students the opportunity to vote on a dish they want to see in a dining hall.

At Pitt Eats, we want to hear from our community, and we always welcome feedback.



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What is being done about the number of mislabeling issues and allergen exposures?

If a student experiences symptoms of a food-allergic reaction, they should administer their own epinephrine, call 911 for further medical assistance, and notify a dining manager or staff member for additional assistance.

If a guest experiences an adverse reaction from dining on campus, they are asked to notify the Pitt Eats registered dietitian (dietitian@pitt.edu) as soon as possible, as our team has a standardized protocol in place for investigating such reports, including allergen protein testing of the suspected food/production area, reviewing product labels, interviewing pertinent staff, and more. The goal of the investigation is to examine how the allergen exposure may have occurred and take any necessary steps to help prevent future incidences from happening again, including but not limited to re-training of staff, removal of specific ingredients, and changes in procedures.

In addition to the investigation, the dietitian also connects with the individual student to ensure they are fully aware of the resources available to them for managing their diet, can work with them to determine if a dining accommodation may be appropriate, and address their concerns and needs.

Some of the information and resources students should be aware of to make confident food choices include:

- A meeting with the [Pitt Eats Registered Dietitian](#) to develop an individualized strategy for navigating dining on campus.
- Our Ingredient Experts are available in each dining operation across campus to address ingredient/allergen questions and serve as important resources. For support, guests should ask to speak to an Ingredient Expert or easily locate them by their Ingredient Expert-branded hat or button.
- A personalized tour by the registered dietitian of the dining locations, including an introduction to the dining management team to give guests direct access to the individuals responsible for your food preparation.
- Each of our dining halls features menu cards on the serving lines with information on each dish, including recipe names, nutrition facts, and dietary identifiers such as “Avoiding Gluten?”.

More detailed information about menu offerings can be found on the Pitt Eats Dine On Campus website under the “[What’s On The Menu?](#)” tab or on our Dine On Campus App, which can be downloaded from the app store on your mobile device.

- It is important to note that Pitt Eats does not confirm the presence or lack of specific allergens in menu items. Online ingredient listings contain only the main ingredients for menu items served. Sub-ingredients are not provided, as product substitutions from our vendors occur frequently, and at Pitt Eats, we do not want to disclose inaccurate ingredient and allergen information.
- Therefore, at Pitt Eats, we recommend that all individuals with special dietary needs speak directly to an onsite Ingredient Expert when making menu decisions. Through these individualized conversations, dietary needs can be discussed, ingredients and allergens can be reviewed in real-time, and the risk of cross-contact can be assessed for the meal in question.



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What is an Ingredient Expert?

- Ingredient Experts are dedicated associates who complete annual training that meets the [FARECheck](#) criteria for allergy-aware food handling. The [FARECheck](#) training program was developed by [Food Allergy Research and Education \(FARE\)](#), which works on behalf of the 32 million Americans with food allergies, including all those at risk for life-threatening anaphylaxis.
- Similarly, our frontline associates are required to participate in basic training on food allergies within the first 30 days of hire and then repeated training annually.
- Additionally, Pitt Eats conducts weekly allergen-related preservice chats with our team and allergen awareness posters are present in all of our kitchens.
- Retraining of staff is a standardized practice following any issues that do not adhere to protocol.

Do you know the inspections are coming?

No, we do not. Pitt Eats has a minimum of two inspections from the ACHD per year, with additional internal audits completed year round on a weekly basis.

Where is the link to all the menus and Dine on Campus?

You can find all menu information and more at dineoncampus.com/pitt.

How many unannounced inspections are conducted?

At least one internal inspection is held per week at this time. The ACHD inspect our spaces two times per year.

Is The Eatery renovation finished?

Yes.

Can you take food to-go in the dining halls?

Right now, Pitt Eats protocol is to keep all food inside the residential dining halls. Pitt Eats is actively working to launch a reusable takeout program in the future.

Why is it necessary to mandate meal plans this year, with these issues? Why are freshmen required to get a meal plan?

At The University of Pittsburgh, both Pitt Eats and the University want to ensure that all students can get a well-balanced, nutritious meal. Meal plans not only make this simple, but also make ensure that students have access to food in a new environment. As an incoming student, this is incredibly important to ease the transition into college life.

Both Pitt Eats and the University believe that it is still necessary for students to have a meal plan and to ensure that they have access to food on campus. Food also gives them a chance to build community, providing a welcoming destination to make a new friend than over a meal.



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Can you share information regarding the broccoli loopers?

At Pitt Eats, we take pride in including fresh, local produce and ingredients in our locations and uphold high standards of food handling practices when washing and inspecting fruits and vegetables prior to cooking and serving to ensure quality assurance. As soon as the product was identified, our team immediately pulled the product and set it aside for further inspection. Additionally, the Pitt Eats team has alerted our produce vendor to continue the investigation on the product lot.

Pitt Eats was informed that there is a higher chance of small, harmless cabbage loopers hidden in the stem of the broccoli due to the unusual weather patterns. Our team has increased our washing procedures – now operating with a triple-wash policy at all locations - are continuing to retrain our staff based on both our own safety protocols and from Board of Health recommendations and are planning to change produce vendors.

Where can students with allergens safely get a meal?

Flourish at The Eatery provides an inclusive communal dining experience for those with food allergies and celiac disease. Flourish is dedicated to foods prepared exclusively with ingredients that do not contain the top nine major allergens (peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, milk, eggs, soy, wheat, sesame) and gluten.

Extra precautions are taken at Flourish to reduce the risk of cross-contact with menu items from the Eatery proper. Staff who work at the Flourish station are [FARE-Allergy Certified](#) to better understand and meet the needs of our food-allergic campus community. Additionally, plates are kept behind the serving line and self-service is not permitted. Our Registered Dietitian also conducts routine equipment swabbing and food sample testing for the presence of allergens to uphold best practices.

Our culinary team is dedicated to offering minimally processed, fresh meals made from single-source ingredients without hidden additives or seasonings. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner seven days a week, Flourish offers something for everyone – from customizable smoothies and oatmeal at breakfast to soups, salads, and sandwiches at lunch and home-cooked favorites at dinner. In addition to the main hot line, there are staple daily offerings such as cereal, non-dairy milk, fresh fruit, and allergen-friendly desserts. If you can't find something you're looking for, do not hesitate to ask a staff member for assistance, as some items may be kept behind the serving line.

Anyone is welcome to dine at Flourish, as accommodations are not necessary. However, it is important to note that this serving line cannot accommodate special requests. So, it is important to review menus online in advance and speak with the Registered Dietitian to determine if the Flourish station menu can meet your dining needs or if additional accommodations are needed.

Additionally, the Perch at Sutherland is home to the Flourish Pantry, a dining station dedicated to food options made without the nine major food allergens and gluten.

The Flourish Pantry at the Perch offers the top nine allergen and gluten-free-friendly alternatives to commonly available dining hall menu selections, including sliced bread, bagels, sunflower seed butter, non-dairy milk, non-dairy yogurt, soups, and desserts.

This pantry is open to all, with no accommodations necessary to access readily available items, but at Pitt Eats, we suggest reaching out to the registered dietitian to discuss your individual needs, as a dining accommodation may be appropriate to connect students with additional options available at the Perch.



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Are you adding more items to Flourish? Are you expanding allergen-friendly options outside of the dining halls?

Yes! Our registered dietitian works closely with our chefs and Flourish team daily to get their feedback on the station.

They have also been fielding feedback from our students over the past few weeks, as the menu this year is different from prior years due to the recent renovation. So, close monitoring of the acceptability of the station has been taking place daily.

If students have specific recommendations or menu changes they would like to share for consideration, please [reach out to our dietitian directly](#), as we welcome all feedback at Pitt Eats!

Some of the current feedback Pitt Eats is addressing includes, but is not limited to:

- The existing smoothies at breakfast are moving toward a customizable smoothie bowl concept, in which students can add fresh fruit, seeds, granola, and more to make it more filling and nutritious.
- Customizable overnight oatmeal will be offered at breakfast with various toppings, such as fresh fruit, seeds, and more.
- More variety is being added to the hot sandwich options offered at lunch.
- With cooler weather approaching, the team is adding a house-made soup to the lunch menu offerings.
- In addition to the sandwiches and soups, lunch will be transitioning to a rotation of salad bowls, grain bowls, and stuffed potatoes, allowing guests the ability to customize their dish, while also ensuring adequate protein and more filling hot offerings.
- Pitt Eats is also dedicated to making allergen-friendly dessert options available at lunch and dinner as well.

How are you addressing allergen concerns at outside restaurants taking Dining Dollars?

There are numerous off-campus vendors who accept Dining Dollars, but because these vendors are not owned or operated by Pitt Eats, we cannot control their offerings or operational practices. If a guest has an allergen concern with an individual off-campus vendor, they are advised to address those concerns directly with that operation.

Students with food allergies should reach out to our registered dietitian with specific questions and concerns related to any Pitt Eats dining venues.

How are you improving mobile order times?

At Pitt Eats, we evaluate our mobile ordering results daily, working with staff daily to adjust to increased throughput of our mobile ordering platform, while also servicing our customers who order in person.

For those on a tight schedule, at Pitt Eats, we recommend ordering ahead. This ensures that you are able to pick up your food when it's hot and ready to eat, without rushing to class.

In addition, Transact kiosk ordering is available at The Petersen Events Center and The William Pitt Union.



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Is it possible to list allergens on Dine on Campus menus?

On our Dine on Campus menus, you can find icons outlining menu items that are vegetarian, vegan, avoiding gluten, climate friendly, and a good source of protein.

At Pitt Eats, we recommend that individuals with special dietary needs speak directly to an onsite Ingredient Expert when making menu decisions, as Pitt Eats does not confirm the presence or lack of specific allergens in the menu items. Online ingredient listings contain only the main ingredients for menu items served and sub-ingredients are not provided, as product substitutions from our vendors occur frequently, and at Pitt Eats, we do not want to disclose inaccurate ingredient and allergen information.

Through these individualized conversations, dietary needs can be discussed, ingredients and allergens can be reviewed in real time, and the risk of cross-contact can be assessed for the meal in question.

How are you addressing cross-contact at the salad bar, with tofu next to the chicken?

Guests should be aware that Pitt Eats handles and prepare eggs, fish, milk, peanuts, sesame, shellfish, soy, tree nuts, wheat, gluten, and other allergens in the food production areas of our dining facilities.

Pitt Eats trains and educates dining employees on best practices to reduce the potential for cross-contact during the food production process, including proper handwashing, changing gloves between recipes, and being mindful of shared utensils, cooking surfaces, and equipment.

However, guests should be advised that menu items prepared onsite may come into contact with common food allergens during production. This is especially true in a buffet-style dining environment and at service stations like the salad bar, where non-allergen ingredients are in close proximity to allergen-containing ingredients.

Our Flourish station is an excellent resource for guests who have food allergies, as all offerings at the station are made without the top nine allergens and gluten. Students can learn more about dining with food allergies by reaching out to our registered dietitian.

Can there be more grab n' go fruit?

Yes. Please reach out on Dine on Campus with feedback on specific locations you'd like to see more fruit.

Can the waffle machines go back to self-serve?

Self-serve waffle machines are now available at The Eatery and The Perch.

Is The Eatery nut-free?

The Eatery and The Perch are nut-conscious facilities. Each dining hall has a limited exposure peanut and tree nut policy in place.

Is there any chance for real eggs and chicken breast?

Across campus, all of our eggs are real egg – not powdered -- and are cage-free and Animal Welfare Approved. In addition, at The Eatery, Pitt Eats has transitioned to use Halal-certified chicken breasts.



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Can there be more meal swaps available on weekends?

The Meal Swap program was designed to support the business of the school week, allowing more flexibility for students as it can be challenging to make it to the dining halls between classes. Meal Swaps are available at our retail locations open during the weekend.

Do athletes have special dining halls?

No, Pitt Eats welcomes that all students to dine together at all our locations.

Can you order any type of sandwich at The Briny Pickle?

Pitt Eats is actively working on launching made-to-order sandwiches through our mobile ordering platform.

Are you considering certifying your eating locations to the ISO9001 quality?

This is not currently on our roadmap for the program, but the team at Pitt Eats will investigate it as a potential opportunity in the future.

Are there grab-and-go options available for students?

Yes. Grab-and-go options are available at The Cathedral Café, Forbes Street Market, The Market at Towers, and The Market at Sutherland.

Photos of the food do not represent how it looks on the plate. Can consideration be given to this?

Quality, in both taste and visual accuracy, is always a top priority at Pitt Eats. Our team is always working to provide the best dining experience we can.

Where and how can students use their Dining Dollars?

Dining Dollars can be used at any campus dining location. They are tax-free and roll over from the fall to the spring semester (if a student maintains the same or higher-value meal membership) but expire at the end of the spring semester. You will receive a 10% discount with any purchase at any on-campus non-national brand restaurant.

For a list of all participating locations, visit <https://acceptinglocations.com/pantherfunds/>. The blue squares accept Dining Dollars.