

Substitute Handbook

Fairfax County Public Schools



Department of Human Resources
Gatehouse Administration Center I
8115 Gatehouse Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22042

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Human Resources

Gatehouse Administration Center I
8115 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042

571-423-3000

Dear Substitute Teachers, Assistants, and Attendants:

Welcome to Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) as a substitute instructional employee! FCPS is dedicated to preparing our students for their global future, and we trust that you will also embrace our goal, as our most precious resources are placed in your care. We are confident in your ability to fulfill the required duties and to exhibit the level of professionalism expected of all educators. We view you as a valuable member of our team.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with substitute instructional employment with FCPS. It will answer many commonly asked questions. As you assume your various assigned tasks, be assured that the Office of Talent Acquisition and Management (TAM) is ready to help you.

The valuable service that you provide to our schools each year is greatly appreciated. We wish each of you a rewarding experience as an FCPS substitute.



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FCPS Mission Statement

Fairfax County Public Schools inspires and empowers students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and be responsible and innovative global citizens.

Student Achievement Goals

1. Pursue Academic Excellence

All students will be literate, able to obtain, understand, analyze, integrate, communicate, and apply knowledge and skills to achieve success in school and in life.

2. Develop Essential Life Skills

All students will demonstrate the aptitude, attitude, and skills to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives.

3. Demonstrate Responsibility to the Community and the World

All students will understand and model the important attributes that contribute to the community and the common good.

Professional Expectations

You are Essential!

As a substitute teacher, instructional assistant, or attendant, you are an integral part of our professional team. By demonstrating self-confidence, initiative, and flexibility, you can have a positive impact on students while providing an essential service to our schools.

Following the teacher's lesson plan ensures that students are engaged in meaningful activities. Substitute teachers may request to review the Standards of Learning (SOL) documents, available at each school location. SOLs outline the instructional objectives of each subject area. Whether you accept an assignment in or outside of your primary competency, it is essential you provide appropriate instruction. Questions regarding lesson plans, procedures, or discipline should be discussed with a school administrator. You must always supervise students and plan appropriately for all activities.

Standards of Conduct

Your continued assignment as a substitute is contingent upon your ability to comply with professional standards of conduct. Our school community is diverse. Sensitivity to racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious differences is required of all employees. Employees must safeguard the privacy of student information kept in schools, whether on paper, computers, or in oral communications.

Exemplary conduct is expected of all employees. Conduct detrimental to the reputation of the school system, not in the interest of the instructional program, or that poses potential harm to students or school employees will be a cause for discontinuation of service as a substitute.

FCPS is committed to the substitute program and recognizes the impact that you as



an educational employee will have on our children. The School Board has adopted policies and regulations to ensure educator success while supporting the vision for excellence in education.

Visit www.fcps.edu/Directives.shtml to review all policies and regulations. These policies may be of particular interest to substitutes:

Controversial Issues

Preparation for effective citizenship includes the study of issues that are controversial. The study of controversial issues shall create an environment in which knowledge can be freely imparted and promotes the development of critical thinking skills through research and discussion. Such studies shall be carried out in an atmosphere free from bias, prejudice, or coercion. See Regulation 3280.4 Controversial Issues.

Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace

FCPS is an alcohol- and drug-free workplace. The school system will not tolerate the possession of alcohol or illegal drugs or the unlawful use of prescription drugs by its employees on the job or in circumstances that may affect the job. In addition, the system will not tolerate the possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs by its employees in any situation, whether in or out of the workplace. See Regulation 4418 Alcohol-and Drug-Free Workplace.

Maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment – Use of Physical Interventions

The School Board views physical discipline of any kind as unacceptable and does not authorize its use. As a substitute employee, your good judgment is essential to ensure your safety and that of other staff and students. Questions regarding discipline procedures should be discussed with an administrator prior to your assignment. Touching a student in any way to control or modify behavior will result in discontinuation of your service as a substitute. See Regulation 2614.6 Maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment – Use of Physical Interventions. Physical forms of affection are also discouraged. Even though you are an employee of FCPS, students may view you as a stranger. Once again, good judgment is necessary.

Electronic Devices

FCPS recently developed a framework for managing the use of personal electronic devices in schools. Known as BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), students are allowed to register and bring in their laptops, netbooks, tablets, and smartphones for authorized instructional use. Specific rules related to electronic device usage in class may vary among schools. Speak to someone in the school office if you have questions.

Commitment to Human Relations

The School Board recognizes that achievement of its mission depends, in no small part on the practice of good human relations and the elimination of discrimination – particularly in the areas of race, sex, color, age, religion, national origin, genetic information, and disability. The School Board, therefore, places the responsibility for complying with all applicable laws affecting equal opportunity and promoting good human relations on all FCPS employees. See Regulation 4910 Commitment to Human Relations.

Important Information

Salary and Payment Procedures

Substitutes are paid biweekly in accordance with salary schedules set yearly by the School Board. A time and attendance report must be completed at the school location each day. A copy of this report must be secured by the substitute before leaving the school. Your signature, employee number, and job number should appear on the time and attendance report. Payment will be made by direct deposit to your banking institution. Employees will receive pay notices via e-mail; direct deposit is mandatory. *Retroactive payment will be limited to 60 days and will not be paid after the closing of the fiscal year.*

All changes to direct deposit and questions concerning pay for days worked are to be directed to the Welcome Center, 571-423-3000, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Work Schedules

Your substitute assignments will reflect the need of the instructional employee. You will be paid for actual hours worked. All assignments will be paid at a minimum of 3 hours and will not exceed 7 1/2 hours to include a 30-minute unpaid duty-free lunch.

Substitute employees assigned to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and Excel schools will be paid at a minimum of 3 hours and will not exceed 8 hours. Substitutes accepting public health training assistant and public health training attendant assignments will be paid a minimum of 3 hours and will not exceed 7 1/2 hours to include a 30-minute paid lunch for which duties are assigned.

You are to report to the administrative office of the school to which you have been assigned according to the time recorded by SmartFindExpress (SFE—see page 7). Substitutes are expected to know the reporting time for assignments and to report promptly. If you are called too late to arrive on time, call the school for assistance.

“Do Not Send” Requests

Administrators are responsible for the educational programs at their school and have full authority regarding substitute assignments. In accordance with Regulation 4311 Terms and Conditions of Employment – Temporary Personnel, a school administrator may request that a substitute employee not be assigned to the school, with or without cause. This is known as a “Do Not Send” request.

When possible, an administrator will inform the substitute of this action and submit written confirmation to the Substitute Employment Supervisor. Substitutes will be informed by an administrator either by phone, in writing, or in person. In the event that the school administrator does not inform the substitute, the Substitute Employment Supervisor will inform the substitute that they are ineligible for future assignments at that location.

Three “Do Not Send” requests will result in discontinuation as a substitute with FCPS. Any one “Do Not Send” request may result in discontinuation, provided the reason is determined to be sufficient by the Substitute Employment Supervisor. Substitutes who are ineligible to continue employment shall be notified in writing by the Substitute Employment Supervisor.

SmartFindExpress (SFE)

SmartFindExpress (SFE) is a centralized, interactive voice response system designed to provide efficient assignment of substitute teachers, instructional assistants, public health training assistants and attendants. The employee, the administrator, or the administrator's designee, using a touch-tone telephone, registers with SFE all impending instructional absences requiring a substitute.

School, subject, and grade-level preferences of administrators and substitutes are honored whenever possible through the use of priority lists submitted by administrators. Substitutes can make changes to their profiles at any time online to update locations and classifications.

Using SFE

Assigning a Substitute

FCPS uses SFE to process incoming requests from schools to fill teacher, instructional assistant, public health training assistant and attendant absences and to call out to substitutes to fill daily classroom absences. The system is accessed by a touch-tone telephone or online by both teachers and substitutes. This is how the system works:

- An employee calls SFE to report their absence, recording the subject, time of assignment, and any special instructions.
- The employee receives a unique job number for this assignment.
- SFE searches its database to find a qualified substitute for the job.
- SFE calls the qualified substitute to offer the job. If you do not receive a job number, you did not accept the job.
- The substitute accepts the job and receives the unique job number.
- The substitute provides the office staff with the job number when reporting to the school.

As a substitute, you will be assigned your own personal identification number (PIN) to access the system. With your PIN, you will be able to hear information 24 hours a day on jobs that match your profile.

All substitute assignment offers are made by SFE or are prearranged by the school directly with the substitute. This procedure establishes an assignment record and prevents duplicate offers. As a substitute, you are required to call SFE the morning the assignment begins to confirm the job. If no job number is listed with SFE the morning of the assignment, there is no job. You may either accept another job when SFE calls you during the morning call-out or call into SFE to review assignments that are available for you to accept.

SFE will establish a calling history record for each employee and will document the disposition of each assignment offer. A call from SFE that is answered by a machine or an answering service will be recorded in the calling history as a hang-up.

To the extent possible, you are required to substitute on those days that you have indicated availability. Please note inactivity for a 6-month period will result in discontinuation of your service as a substitute with FCPS. To be considered for future employment, it will be necessary to reapply following the current employment process. Information on this process can be obtained by calling 571-423-3030, option 8, or accessing our website at www.fcps.edu/hr/employment/subs.

All Substitutes Must Register First

1. Once you receive an email informing you to log back into the hiring portal and retrieve your employee number.
2. Call SmartFindExpress (SFE) at 703-962-1572, then enter your Access ID\Employee Number followed by the * key and your PIN Number which will also be your employee number if you are new employee followed by the * key. The system will prompt you to create a new 6-digit PIN number during your call.
3. Follow the recorded instructions.

Confirming Jobs

As a substitute, it is your responsibility, on the morning of the assignment, to confirm your assignment by calling SFE and reviewing your job number. If the job has been canceled and the system or school tries to contact you an hour or more before your start time, no compensation is granted when you report for a canceled assignment.

If, upon arrival at an assigned school, you discover that you are not needed, *do not leave the school!* Please call the Substitute Help Desk and an effort will be made to reassign you. A substitute who declines an alternate assignment will leave the school and will not receive payment for that day.

When an error in reporting the job is documented and authorized by the Substitute Employment Supervisor and no alternate assignment is available, you may remain at the school location for 3 hours and be paid. An administrator or designee may assign work to you during the 3 hours.



Long-Term Assignments

Long-term assignments may be offered by SFE or by school administrators. Because long-term assignments require additional duties and responsibilities, such as student grading and parent conferences,

substitute teachers on these assignments receive a higher rate of pay beginning on the eleventh consecutive day of continuous service in the same position.

VA 90-Day Rule

Any substitute teacher working as a long-term sub must follow the Virginia 90-day rule established by the Code of Virginia. It states that no substitute teacher may work in one classroom for more than 90 consecutive school days. This excludes teacher workdays and holidays.

The 90-day rule applies to all long-term substitute teachers. The long-term record will expire on the ninety-first day.

Cancellations

You are expected to fulfill your obligation to report to a school when assigned. However, emergencies do occur, and you must sometimes cancel assignments. Should this happen, you must contact the school and the help desk immediately. Repeated cancellations will result in discontinuation of your employment as a substitute with FCPS.

End of Day

It is strongly recommended that you leave a brief account of the day (in writing) for the returning teacher. Be positive and specific in your comments. You may want to include your first and last name, telephone number, e-mail address, and employee number. Let the teacher know that you can be called directly with questions or for future prearranged assignments.

You must complete your final checkout in the main office. Return all materials that were released to you and secure a copy of your time and attendance report. This would be an ideal time to see if you may be needed for future dates.

Important Contact Information

FCPS Substitute Services:

Web: www.fcps.edu/hr/employment/subs

Fax: 571-423-5022 (24-7)

General Info/Help Desk: 571-423-3030, option 8 (M-F, 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

- Speak with a substitute help desk operator
- Receive SFE profile information
- Cancel a job the day of an assignment

SmartFindExpress

Automated telephone system: 703-962-1572

Web: fairfaxcounty.eschoolsolutions.com

- Review available jobs
- Review assignments
- Cancel jobs
- Modify dates of availability
- Change telephone number SFE uses to offer you assignments

Welcome Center: 571-423-3000 (M-F, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

- Help with general questions
- General employment information

Employment Verifications: 571-423-3300 (M-F, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

FCPS Schools & Centers Directory: <http://commweb.fcps.edu/directory>

Payroll Services:

- 571-423-3518 (A-Gi); 571-423-3517 (Gj-Ok); 571-423-3516 (Ol-Z)

IT Service Desk: (703) 503-1600 or itservicedesk@fcps.edu

- Information regarding e-mail account or computer password

**Office of Equity and
Employee Relations:**
571-423-3050

Inclement Weather:
571-423-3050



Frequently Asked Questions

What if I show up for a job assignment and someone else is there with the same job number?

Please do not leave the school. Have the office call the Substitute Help Desk at 571-423-3030, option 8, with the job number.

I accepted a job, and verified it the morning of, but when I got to the school I was told it was cancelled. What should I do?

Please do not leave the school. As a courtesy, we will pay you for 3 hours. However, you must stay and do other duties as assigned or you can call the Substitute Office at 571-423-3030, option 8, for assistance with finding another job. If you leave the school, you will not be paid for 3 hours.

I accepted a job, but when I got to the school I was told it was cancelled. The school informed me they tried to call me for an hour or more with no success. What should I do?

If the school tries to call you for an hour or more and has no success in reaching you, FCPS will not pay you. We will assist you in finding another job. Just call the Substitute Office at 571-423-3030, option 8.

I did not get paid for all the hours I worked. What should I do?

First contact the Time & Attendance person at the school where you subbed. Verify your hours with them. If they submitted the time correctly to Payroll Services, please contact your payroll representative.

How do I stop the system from calling me if I am doing a long-term assignment?

The school or teacher must create an absence in SmartFindExpress and provide you with a job number. This will prevent calls for that time period.

Do substitutes receive badges?

No, substitutes do not get photo ID badges. Each school will provide you with a badge that you must return at the end of the day. If you are hired as a long-term sub, the administrator of the school where you will work will need to fax a special request memo to the fingerprint department at 571-423-3017.

What does “prearranged” mean?

A verbal agreement made between you and the teacher or school that you will substitute on a particular day. You must receive a job number from the school before reporting.

I misplaced my Access ID. How can I get it again?

Your access ID is the same as your FCPS employee number. If you cannot locate that number, contact the Substitute Office at 571-423-3030, option 8, between the hours of 6:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. We will gladly assist you.

I misplaced my PIN. How can I get it again?

Go to <https://fairfaxcounty.eschoolsolutions.com>. Click **Trouble signing in?** Follow the instructions, and your PIN will be e-mailed to you.

How do I add schools and subjects to my profile?

Subjects and locations can be added to your profile by logging into your SFE account and click on the schedule tab. There you will see locations and classifications.

How often do I have to work to remain active in SFE?

You must work at least 10 days in a 6-month period and 20 days within a school year excluding the summer months.

Are substitutes eligible for benefits?

No, benefits are not offered to substitutes. A 403(b) tax-deferred retirement plan is available for all FCPS employees. For more information, visit www.fcps.edu/hr/benefits.



Do substitute assistants get long-term pay?

No, there is no long-term pay for substitute assistants.

Can we leave the school premises during our lunch time?

This is at the discretion of the individual school.

Are substitutes allowed to sub in their child’s school?

This is at the discretion of the individual school.

I am subbing at a school for one day, and the teacher has a planning period. What should I do during this time?

When arriving for an assignment, speak to the head of that department or the front office for an assignment to do during that time frame. They may assign hall duty, bus duty, working in the front office, etc.

Are jobs offered to substitutes during the summer?

Unfortunately, we do not have jobs for substitutes during the summer. If requested, we can add your name to the list of substitutes interested in teaching, if one of the summer school teachers needs to take a day off. SmartFindExpress is not used in the summer, so the school will contact you by phone.

Comments? or Suggestions?

Substitute teaching is a demanding yet rewarding job. We hope this handbook provides you with the information you need to make your employment with FCPS successful. Substitute Employment welcomes all suggestions and comments. Please write to:

**Department of Human Resources
Gatehouse Administration Center I
8115 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
Attn: Substitute Employment Supervisor**

