



# **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER GUIDE**

**(To be used in conjunction with  
DCSD's Employee Guide and Board Policies)**

DCSD Substitute Program - 620 Wilcox Street, Castle Rock, CO 80104

Phone: 720-433-0140 Email: [info.human\\_resources@dcsdk12.org](mailto:info.human_resources@dcsdk12.org)

Website: <https://www.dcsdk12.org/human-resources-for-employees>

Welcome to Douglas County School District! We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of our team as a substitute teacher. In this guide you will find answers to some commonly asked questions for subs, as well as general guidelines for having a successful experience in the classroom.

We hope that you will find this guide helpful and look forward to assisting you with any questions or concerns you may have. Contact our office at (720) 433-0140 or [info.human\\_resources@dcsdk12.org](mailto:info.human_resources@dcsdk12.org) and let us know how we can help you. Thank you for the valuable contribution you make to our schools!

## I. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) **Active Status:** Substitute teachers must work *twenty* days in the school year in order to retain active status and remain in the DCSD Substitute Pool. If the 20 day threshold is not obtained, substitutes will be removed from the substitute teacher pool. A substitute would not be eligible for rehire until second semester of the following school year. Rehiring would be based only on the District's program needs. Long term assignments count towards the 20 days needed.
- b) **Changing Positions:** Obtaining any classified or full-time teaching position in the District will be considered a resignation from the sub pool. A return to substitute teaching would require re-application during the next hiring window.
- c) **Resignation:** Substitutes who terminate their services with the Douglas County School District are requested to submit a written resignation to the Sub Program Manager. If written resignation is not received and the sub has not reached the 20 day minimum by the end of the school year, the sub will be terminated in Workday / Absence Management.
- d) **Certification:** In order to substitute teach, all substitute teachers must hold a current license from the Colorado Department of Education. Types of licenses accepted are: Substitute Authorization (3- and 5-year) or Initial and Professional teaching licenses. Subs are required to maintain active license status. Absence Management notifies substitute teachers sixty days in advance of the certification expiration. Once a sub's license is expired, she / he is inactivated in Absence Management, and assignments cannot be scheduled until valid license information has been updated in Workday by the substitute teacher and confirmed by HR.
- e) **License Renewals:** All licenses must be renewed through the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). For information regarding licensure/renewal, contact CDE at (303) 866-6628 or visit their website at [www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us).
- f) **Personal Information Update:** All information regarding name or address changes, phone, and licensure must be current in Workday and are updated in Workday as

needed through your Personal Information worklet. **To complete a name or address change**, obtain a PERA (Public Employees' Retirement Association) Member Information Form from the DCSD website Substitute Program page. Send the completed PERA form directly to PERA at the address on the form.

If a name change is submitted, a copy of the new Social Security card or letter from the Social Security Administration must be uploaded into Workday under your Documents tab for verification by HR and the Change Legal Name task in Workday completed.

### **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

- a) **Cancellation of an assignment:** Should you need to cancel an assignment, we ask you follow the following procedures. **Cancellations within a 24-hour window from the job's start time** – 1) you must cancel the job in AM and 2) call the school. **Cancellations within a 12-hour window from the job's start time** – 1) you must cancel the job in AM, 2) call the school and 3) call HR at 720-433-0140. All cancellations should be limited to extenuating circumstances beyond your control. HR audits cancellations and substitutes who cancel jobs frequently within the 24/12 hour window may be removed from the substitute pool. *Please be careful accessing AM with your phone as accepting a job unintentionally on the smaller screen is easy to do and may leave the school without a sub for the day should you feel you must cancel.*
- b) **Report times** vary by site and school level. Substitute teachers must report at the time listed in the job assignment. Preparation time is built into the schedule. Do not arrive earlier or later than the job assignment report time. If there is any reason you cannot report on time, it is critical to notify the school and/or HR as soon as possible. If you know in advance you cannot arrive at the scheduled report time, the job should not be accepted.
- c) **Substitute work day:** Substitute teachers are expected to maintain the same hours as the regular teacher, including plan times. A half day is any job 4 hours or less, and full days are all jobs over 4 hours. Subs should not report late to or leave early from a job site without permission from the school secretary or principal.
- d) **Pay rates** for substitute teachers are available on the Licensed Substitute Program page of the Douglas County's main website.
- e) **Confirmation numbers** are issued by Absence Management as soon as a job has been entered. This confirmation number is necessary to cancel a job. Do not accept a job without a confirmation number attached.
- f) **Check-in:** Report to the school's security area, which will require presenting a photo I.D. Check in at the main office to receive substitute information for the day's

assignment; such as lesson plans, duties, keys, and materials for the day. If there is a need to leave the building during the course of the assignment, please notify the main office, and Security, and follow school protocol with sign-out procedures.

**g) Responsibilities:** Subs are responsible for the following:

- Location of materials and forms.
- Awareness of schedule and any changes.
- Policies specific to the school (i.e. allergies, electronic device usage).
- Restrict personal cell phone/computer use to scheduled planning period and/or lunch (if no other duties assigned by school).
- Become familiar with the physical building setup including procedures for emergency evacuations, lock downs, and fire drills. Be clear on procedures if the classroom is a mobile unit. Keys are provided when necessary.
- Know the procedures for a student emergency, such as illness or injury

**h) Professionalism** should be maintained at all times. Substitute teachers are expected to observe the same ethical codes and standards as all district employees. To review these policies, visit the Board of Education's policy page >G-Personnel from Douglas County's main website. Professional behavior and a good attitude will have a positive effect on your interactions with school staff and students.

**i) Personal appearance and attire** are important to maintain a professional environment. Attire should reflect the nature of the position, be neat and clean, and be appropriate for the assignment. Teaching physical education requires different attire than a classroom position. Jeans, hats, or sweats are not acceptable for a regular classroom assignment. The teacher may include what to wear in the notes attached to the assignment in AM.

## **II. Classroom Procedures**

- a. Lesson plans:** All substitute teachers are required to follow the teacher's specific schedule for the day, including duties and/or supervision. Come dressed for the weather, especially for elementary assignments as you will be outside in all types of weather. Lesson plans may be attached electronically to the assignment in AM. If lesson plans are unclear or unavailable, clarify with another teacher, department chair, or administrator. Follow each school's or teacher's instructions on grading assigned work or administering tests.
- b. Record Keeping:** It is important to complete accurate records for the classroom and school. Reporting should be done in the manner requested by the school. Attendance should be taken immediately, so the sub should become familiar with the class roster and/or seating chart(s).

- c. **Student personal injury or illness** should be reported to the office immediately.
- d. **Know and administer correctly** the policies of students leaving the classroom.
- e. **Classroom materials:** The substitute teacher maintains responsibility for proper use and care, and clean-up of all classroom materials.
- f. **Contacting teacher:** Please do not contact the teacher directly unless specifically requested by the teacher or school administrator.
- g. **Additional class coverage** is occasionally requested of substitutes during their teacher's plan time. Please be flexible and understanding if asked to perform duties in another classroom as this time is not needed for you to plan.
- h. **Discipline problems / class disruptions** should be handled in an age-appropriate manner and according to school policy. Report significant problems and concerns to the school's administrator. Profanity, negative remarks, or disparaging remarks should never be directed to, or used, toward students.

### III. **Interactions with Students**

- a. **Student information** such as grades, behavior, or medical information is confidential and must be handled as such. If a sub is unclear about a situation, an administrator should be contacted to provide clarification.
- b. **Physical contact with students:** Substitutes are strongly cautioned against making physical contact with students for any reason. Physical contact with a student by a person with whom the student is unfamiliar can result in a misunderstanding about the nature and purpose of the contact. As a general rule, substitute teachers should not initiate physical contact with a student unless the contact falls under the umbrella of District Policy, is part of the regular teacher duties and, when necessary, is expected of a trained employee to follow recognized procedures that govern the appropriate application of restraint under specific and defined circumstance. Such circumstances would include maintaining a safe learning environment in the event a student must be restrained to prevent harm to himself / herself or others; or the policies and procedures applied to students with disabilities under the IDEA and IEP and behavior planning process.

### IV. **Assignment Completion**

- a. **Classroom appearance:** Leave the room/area neat and orderly. Close and lock windows and doors.
- b. **Note to teacher:** Provide a brief, but detailed follow-up of the day for the classroom teacher.
- c. **Check out** at the main office at the conclusion of the assignment. Staying in the building after the assignment is complete is prohibited. If there is a need to remain in the

building after the completion of the assignment, this must be reported to the main office. Return all materials to the main office in a timely manner.

**V. Performance Reporting**

- a. Issues of concern:** During an assignment, if issues of concern arise regarding the substitute teacher, the school administrator will notify the Substitute Program Manager using a Substitute Performance Report Form and the sub will be informed by the building principal / assistant principal. Serious concerns include arriving late to / leaving early from an assignment, not showing up to an assignment, failure to follow teacher's lesson plans, physical contact, improper classroom management, or other major concerns noted by the school or Sub Program.
- b. Documentation of concerns:** After an administrator completes the form and discusses the concerns with the sub, the principal may restrict the substitute teacher from working at the school site. Reports are maintained by the Sub Program Manager, and subs receive a copy of the completed document. Human Resources or the Sub Program Manager may contact substitutes who have documented significant concerns and discuss their substitute status.
- c. Termination** of employment as a substitute could result if concerns are significant or habitual.

Published documents, FAQ's, and pay rates are located on our district website on the Licensed Substitute Program page, with which you should become familiar. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with this information, as well as, the Employee Guide and Board Policies.

**NOTICE OF REASONABLE ASSURANCE**

This letter provides notice of reasonable assurance of continued employment with Douglas County School District when each school term resumes after a scheduled school break where work is not available if you are a current, active substitute teacher. By virtue of this notice, you may not be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits drawn on school district wages during any established vacation period, holiday recess, or summer break between academic years.

This is also intended to inform you that your employment status will remain active as an at-will employee unless you notify us of your intent to resign, or should the District notify you that your substitute status will be terminated as a result of your failure to adhere to Douglas County School District policies and/or performance standards, or for any other good and just cause.

**Douglas County's success can be attributed to teamwork, dedication, professionalism, and our employees. As a substitute teacher, you are a part of our team. The importance of your role in helping to educate the students in Douglas County cannot be measured. Quality substitute teachers are viewed as essential, and we are happy that you've chosen to share your knowledge, caring, and professionalism with our staff and students.**