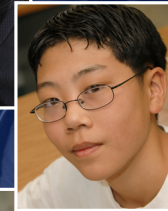


# Substitute Handbook

Fairfax County Public Schools



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

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**Department of Human Resources**  
Gatehouse Administration Center I  
8115 Gatehouse Road  
Falls Church, Virginia 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 of 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 will 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 Instructional Employment 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 a substitute with FCPS.



Kevin L. North  
Assistant Superintendent  
Department of Human Resources



La Shawna Fann-Scott  
Supervisor, Substitute Employment  
Department of Human Resources

## Substitute Handbook

### You Are Essential!

Welcome to Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). As a substitute teacher, instructional assistant, or attendant, you are an integral part of the professional team. As such, you are expected to maintain a professional attitude toward your work. 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 kept busy with meaningful activities. Substitute teachers may request to review the Standards of Learning (SOL) documents, which are available at each school location. The SOL outlines the instructional objectives and goals within each subject area for all students.

School Board policies and regulations guide the operation of the school system. Should you want to review a policy or regulation, visit our school web page at [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu).

Whether you accept an assignment inside or outside your primary competency or training, it is essential you maintain order and provide appropriate instruction. Questions that arise regarding lesson plans, procedures, or discipline should be discussed with a school administrator. You must always supervise students and plan appropriately for all activities.

# FCPS Mission Statement

## Our Mission

Fairfax County Public Schools, a world-class school system, inspires, enables, and empowers students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and demonstrate responsible citizenship.

## Student Achievement Goals

### 1. Academics

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

### 2. Essential Life Skills

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

### 3. Responsibility to the Community

All students will understand and model the important attributes that people must have to contribute to an effective and productive community and the common good of all.



# Professional Expectations

## 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, in computers, or in oral communications. Conduct that is detrimental to the reputation of the school system, is not in the interest of the instructional program, or that poses potential harm to students or school employees will be cause for discontinuation of service as a substitute with FCPS.

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 your success as an educator, while supporting the vision for excellence in education. Please familiarize yourself with some of the following policies and regulations.

### Controversial Issues

Training for effective citizenship includes the study of issues that are controversial. Such studies shall be carried out in an atmosphere of freedom without bias or prejudice. Teachers do not teach controversial issues but rather provide opportunities for their study.

### Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace

FCPS is an alcohol- and drug-free workplace. The use, manufacture, distribution, or dispensing of alcohol and prescription or illegal drugs in any job-related context is strictly prohibited.

### Corporal Punishment

The School Board views the use of physical contact of any kind as an unacceptable form of discipline and does not authorize its use except as outlined by regulation.

As a substitute employee, your exercise of good judgment is essential



to ensure your safety and well-being as well as that of other staff members and students. Questions regarding discipline procedures should be discussed with an administrator prior to the beginning of your assignment. Touching a student in any way to control or modify behavior will result in discontinuation of your service as a substitute.

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. There are many ways to show positive regard without touching.

### **Portable Communication Devices**

FCPS prohibits student possession of a cellular telephone, pager, or similar portable communication device on any school property. FCPS allows high school students to possess cell phones on school property; however, cell phone use is prohibited during the school day and on school buses.

Substitutes should report students who are in possession of a cellular telephone, pager, or similar portable communication device to the school administrator. Specific rules related to cell phone use may vary among schools. Speak to a representative in the main office if you have questions regarding specific policies.

### **Human Relations**

The School Board recognizes that achievement of its mission for all children depends at least in part on the practice of good human relations and the elimination of discrimination, particularly in the areas of race, sex, religion, ethnic origin, and disability, by all members of the school community. The Board, therefore, places responsibility on all personnel for practicing good human relations that provide dignity and respect for everyone in the school community.

### **Please refer to the current version of:**

Policy 4910 Commitment to Human Relations

Regulation 4950 Sexual Harassment

Regulation 4952 Investigation of Complaints of Discrimination or Harassment based on Race, Sex, Color, Religion, National Origin, Age, or Disability

For more information, please visit [www.fcps.edu/Directives](http://www.fcps.edu/Directives)

## **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 through the U.S. mail. Direct deposit is mandatory. *Retroactive payment will be limited to 60 days and will not be paid out 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, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### **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 SEMS (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 locations and have full authority regarding substitute assignments. In accordance with the current version of Regulation 4311, 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.

In the event that the school administrator does not inform the substitute, the Substitute Employment Supervisor will inform the substitute that he or she is ineligible for future assignments at that location.

Three “Do Not Send” requests will result in discontinuation as a substitute with FCPS. 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.



## Substitute Employment Management System (SEMS)

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

School, subject, and grade-level preferences of administrators and substitute employees are honored whenever possible through the use of priority lists submitted by school administrators and by the substitutes during the employment orientation. Substitutes may work in any school location.

### Using SEMS

#### Assigning a Substitute

Fairfax County Public Schools uses SEMS to process incoming requests from schools to fill teacher, instructional assistant, and 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 school instructional staff members and substitute employees.

This is how the system works:

- An employee calls SEMS and reports their absence, recording the subject, time of assignment, and any special instructions.
- The employee receives a unique job number for this assignment.
- SEMS searches its database to find a qualified substitute for the job.
- SEMS calls the qualified substitute to offer the job.
- The substitute accepts the job and receives the unique job number.
- If you do not receive a job number, you did not accept the job.
- If you have not received a call from SEMS by 5:15 a.m. and want to work that day, call SEMS. Same-day jobs can be

assigned by the help desk between 6 a.m. to noon.

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



SEMS will establish a calling history record for each employee and will document the disposition of each assignment offer. A call from SEMS 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 or accessing our web site at [www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/subs](http://www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/subs).

### **All Substitutes Must Register First**

1. Call 571-423-3030 (option 8) after noon on Tuesday to get your employee number from the Substitute Help Desk.
2. Call SmartFindExpress (SEMS) at 571-423-3175, then enter your Access ID\Employee Number followed by the \* key and your PIN Number followed by the \* key. If you are a new substitute, please use your Access ID/Employee Number again followed by the \* key as your PIN. The system will prompt you to create a new 6-digit PIN number during your call.
3. Follow the recorded instructions.

### **Confirming the Assignment**

As a substitute, it is your responsibility, on the morning of the assignment, to confirm your assignment by calling SEMS 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 pay 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 SEMS 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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 91<sup>st</sup> 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. Your work history will be reviewed when a cancellation results in an unfilled position. Repeated cancellations will result in discontinuation of your service as a substitute with FCPS.



## Important Telephone Numbers

**Substitute Services General Information: 571-423-3030**

**Substitute Web Site: [www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/subs](http://www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/subs)**

**Substitute Services Fax: 571-423-3037** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

**Help Desk: 571-423-3030** (Monday-Friday, 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

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

**SEMS SmartFindExpress Automated Telephone system: 571-423-3175**

**SEMS SmartFindExpress: [www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/subs](http://www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/subs)**

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

**Welcome Center: 571-423-3000** (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

- Help with general questions

**Employment Verifications: 571-423-3300** (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

**General Employment Information: 571-423-3000** (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

**FCPS Home page: [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)**

- Telephone numbers for all school locations

**Payroll Services Contact Information**

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](mailto:itservicedesk@fcps.edu)**

- Information regarding e-mail account or computer password

**Virginia Department of Education: 1-800-292-3820 or [www.doe.virginia.gov](http://www.doe.virginia.gov)**

**Office of Equity and Compliance: 571-423-3050**

**FCPS Emergency Hotline: 1-800-839-3277 or [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)**

- For school closing information



## End of Day

It is strongly recommended that you leave a brief account of the day for the returning teacher in writing. 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.

Substitute teaching is a demanding and 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, Virginia 22042  
Attn: Substitute Employment Supervisor**



## Frequently Asked Questions

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

Don't 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, but when I got to the school I was told it was cancelled. What should I do?**

Don't leave the school. As a courtesy, we will pay you for 3 hours. You must stay and do other duties as assigned or you can call the Substitute Office at 571-423-3030, option 8, for assistance to find another job. If you leave, 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 give the Substitute Office a call 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, you must 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 SEMS SmartFindExpress and provide you with a job number. This will prevent calls for that time period.

### **Do substitutes get badges?**

Substitutes do not get picture 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 in which 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 user name and password. How can I get it again?**

Contact the Substitute Office at 571-423-3030, option 8, between the hours of 6 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. We will gladly assist you.

**How do I add schools and subjects to my profile?**

You may fax your changes to 571-423-3037 or e-mail them to [substitute@fcps.edu](mailto:substitute@fcps.edu).

**How often do I have to work to remain active in SEMS?**

You must work at least 10 days in a 6-month period.

**Are substitutes eligible for benefits?**

No, benefits are not offered.

**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 or class?**

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. SEMS SmartFindExpress is not used in the summer, so the school will contact you by phone.