



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

This document outlines frequently asked questions for substitutes. Other relevant documents can be found on the Temporary Services Website:

[Long Term Substitute FAQ](#)

[SmartFind Express \(SFE\) Guide for Substitute Teachers](#)

[Substitute Teacher Handbook](#)

### General Questions

What is a substitute teacher?

In the absence of the regular classroom teacher, substitute teachers assume responsibility for implementing the day's lesson and providing the school with the opportunity to continue a quality educational program.

How can I become a substitute teacher for Baltimore County Public Schools?

Individuals interested in substitute teaching with Baltimore County Public Schools should complete the Substitute Teacher application on the [BCPS Careers Website](#). The Substitute Teacher position can be found under Sub & Temp Positions – Substitute Positions. A completed and submitted application is required. Copies of transcripts or degrees should be uploaded into the Applitrack application system.

All applicants must attend a screening interview, orientation and be fingerprinted to work for BCPS. All necessary steps must be completed in order to substitute. ***Instructions and links to each step can be found by clicking on the Substitute Teacher Application Process link*** under Resources on our webpage.

General substitute interviews are held once a month at our Greenwood location. School administrators are also welcome to conduct substitute interviews and return the interview form to Temporary Services. The candidate will still need to attend orientation and fingerprinting.

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#### What are the qualifications/ requirements to substitute teach?

The minimum requirements to work as a Substitute Teacher with Baltimore County Public Schools are as follows:

For the Degreed Rate of Pay:

A conferred (completed) 4 (four) year bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

For the Non Degreed Rate of Pay:

A minimum of 48 college credits from an accredited college or university, OR a High School Diploma and proof of a passing score on the Para Professional Exam.

Preferred qualifications are as follows:

- Experience working in an instructional or childcare environment
- Credentials aligned with BCPS critical needs areas
- Maryland Teaching Certification.

#### How can I determine if my college or university is accredited?

You may use the directory on the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation website](#) to determine if your college is accredited.

#### When will I hear from you regarding my application?

Applications are reviewed weekly, those meeting the qualifications will be invited to attend a substitute screening interview. Interview preference will be given to candidates meeting the preferred substitute qualifications outlined above. Your application will remain active and you will be contacted based on the needs of the school system.

#### How can I take the Para Professional Assessment?

The ParaPro assessment is administered by ETS. You may find more information about this assessment on the [ETS website](#).

#### How much do you pay substitutes?

As of July 1, 2019, the pay rate for degreed daily substitutes is \$15.36 per hour and \$21.43 per hour for a long term assignment. The non-degreed rate is \$11.00 per hour and \$ 15.39 per hour

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for a long term assignment. For information on long-term assignments please see the Long-Term Substitute FAQ.

#### When are substitutes paid?

Pay checks are issued every two weeks, two weeks after the close of the pay period, in which the substitute worked. Substitutes are paid two weeks in arrears. Checks are mailed directly to the substitute's home unless the substitute has signed up for direct deposit. Substitutes are paid based on the jobs entered into the SmartFindExpress substitute system. Payroll cycles and forms for direct deposit can be found on the [payroll website](#).

#### Are substitutes expected to perform other duties?

Yes. Substitute teachers are expected to perform all the duties that were assigned to the absent teacher. This may include cafeteria duty, lunch duty, bus duty and other responsibilities. Schools may also ask substitute teachers to perform other instructional related assignments beyond the absent teacher's assigned duties.

#### Do substitute teachers receive a planning period?

Daily substitute teachers do not receive a planning period and may be asked to assist with other duties during the absent teachers scheduled planning period. Substitutes may be asked to assist with bus duty, lunch duty or other teacher activities. Please be flexible as the needs of the schools change.

#### What duties can substitutes not perform?

Substitutes should not be asked to perform duties outside of teacher duties. Substitute Teachers should not fill in for other positions including clerical staff, additional support and paraeducators.

#### What is the maximum length of a work day for substitute teachers?

The maximum length of a work day is 7 hours which includes a 30 minute duty free, unpaid lunch. Substitute teachers are expected to be in the building 15 minutes before the assignment start time and 15 minutes after the assignment end time. Assignment times may vary depending on the needs of the job.

#### What does the term Long Term Substitute mean?

"Long term" means 10 consecutive days or longer in the same assignment without interruption of service. Please see the [Long-Term Substitute FAQ](#) for more information.

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#### Do substitute teachers receive training?

All substitute teacher applicants are required to attend an orientation/training that covers BCPS policies and procedures, as well as classroom management tips. Additional professional development may be available to substitute teachers throughout the year.

#### How do the schools know that I am available?

A profile is created for all new substitute teachers from the application submitted. Once the substitute registers with SFE, he/she will be available to accept positions. As absences and vacancies are created by teachers or school personnel, the SFE automated system calls substitutes whose profile matches the needs indicated. Once hired by the Office of Temporary Services, you can visit schools that you are interested in working for to inform the administrative office that you are available and request to be placed on the school's priority list.

#### Who will contact me about jobs?

SmartFindExpress is our automated calling system. SFE will contact you when your profile matches the needs of an assignment. Also, schools may contact you to pre-arrange assignments. Substitutes are encouraged to log in and use the internet version of SFE to schedule jobs up to 90 days in advance.

#### Can jobs be accepted on the same day if they have already begun?

If the school day has already begun and you accept a job for that same day, you must first call the school to verify they still want a Substitute to report for the day. If you go to the school without calling and they do not need a Substitute, you will not be paid.

#### What is the procedure for job cancellation?

Please note that job cancellations may occur due to the size of our system and needs of the schools. As a general rule, job cancellations will not result in payment to daily substitute teachers or substitute nurses. Substitute teachers/nurses that cancel an assignment on the same day, or the day before, need to contact the school directly. Please notify the school as early as possible prior to the start of the assignment. Substitutes who cancel a same day assignment are not eligible to accept another assignment for that day.

#### Are substitutes paid if a job is canceled by the school?

If an assignment is cancelled by the school prior to the start of the assignment, the school will try to find a related instructional assignment in the building. If the school does not have an assignment available and you are unable to find another comparable assignment using the SFE

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system, you may contact temporary services to determine if you will be compensated for two (2) hours of pay.

#### How can degree status be updated to receive the degreed rate of pay?

Please make the Office of Temporary Services aware of your change in education status by sending updated copies of transcripts or degrees via [email](#). Your pay rate will be adjusted from the date the degree is received and will not be backdated.

#### Do substitutes receive badges or email accounts?

Newly hired substitutes will receive an email account as part of the BCPS onboarding process in Silk Road. The Office of Technology can be contacted regarding email related issues. Substitutes are not issued badges or granted access to buildings.

## SmartFindExpress Questions

#### Do new substitute teachers have to register in order to use SFE?

Yes. Any substitute teacher who has not registered with SFE must call (410) 427-3031 and wait to be prompted to register as a new user. Substitute teachers will be directed to create a personal identification number (PIN). Your PIN should not start with the number 0 (zero). Directions are found under [Quick Reference Brochures](#) received by every substitute. Registration occurs only one time.

#### How can substitute teachers retrieve a forgotten Personal Identification Number (PIN)?

Substitute teachers who have forgotten their PIN must call the Office of Temporary Services at (443) 809-8954 to have their PIN reset. Or go to [SmartFindExpress](#) and select "Trouble Signing In" and the PIN will be emailed.

#### Can substitute teachers change their PIN?

Yes. Access the system at (410) 427-3031 with the current access ID and PIN. Follow the prompts to change your PIN. A PIN can also be changed on the website by selecting the profile dropdown.

#### How specific can substitute teachers be in their SFE profile?

Substitute teachers can restrict their assignments to particular schools and/or subject areas.

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No. Substitutes can call the system to hear open jobs for which the substitute is eligible. Substitutes are eligible for areas entered in their profile. Substitutes can contact the SFE help desk at (410) 809-8954 to modify their profile Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. through 4:45 p.m.

#### Can schools request specific substitute teachers to be called first in filling a position?

Yes. Schools may create a preferred list that identifies substitutes that may work in any subject area assignment at the school. Substitutes from this list will be called and offered jobs before they are opened to the general Substitute pool.

#### When substitute teachers call in to listen to available jobs, what information will they hear?

The job information will include the teacher's name or state "vacancy", work location, subject area, job start and end time, and any special instructions the teacher/school chooses to record.

#### Will call intercept or a telephone number zapper affect SFE?

Yes. This technology may interfere with the substitute teacher's ability to receive calls from SFE.

#### If a substitute teacher declines a job offer, what happens?

Substitutes may decline three jobs within the morning call period. After declining the third job, the system will stop calling until the next call period. Substitute teachers are not removed from the eligibility list.

#### What happens when SFE receives an answering machine?

SFE will hang up when it does not receive a response to its prompt. If a call is missed you cannot access that call information again.

#### Can substitute teachers give more than one callback phone number—home and cell?

No. Only one telephone number can be recorded at one time as the callback number. Substitute teachers may change that number as often as they wish.

#### How far in advance can teachers request a substitute?

Substitute jobs can be created up to ninety (90) days in advance.

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#### When will substitute teachers be called?

SFE begins calling at 5:30 a.m. for that day's jobs and will continue to call to fill an assignment until that assignment is 50% complete. Future jobs are called between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Call out times are indicated on your [Quick Reference Brochure](#).

#### Can substitutes determine the time they wish to start receiving calls in the morning?

Yes. SFE has a do not disturb feature which directs the system not to call until a time specified by the substitute. Directions are found under [Quick Reference Brochures](#) received by every substitute.

#### What is a job number?

A job number is provided when a job has been successfully created by an employee/school. It serves as confirmation for successful entry by the employee/school and acceptance of a job by the substitute.

#### Where can the job number be located for pre-arranged assignments?

To obtain the job number, substitute teachers need to call SFE and review their current assignments. The assignment entered by the employee/school will be among the assignments they hear. Substitutes can also login to the [Smart Find](#) website and review assignments.

#### Will all assignments have the same job number?

No. Every new assignment reported receives its own job number.

#### Who do substitute teachers call with questions regarding the system?

The Office of Temporary Services (SFE Help Desk) can be contacted via phone at (443) 809-8954 or via [email](#).