



CANYON-OWYHEE SCHOOL SERVICE AGENCY  
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# COSSA



# Substitute Manual

*Revised – February 23rd, 2022*

*Canyon-Owyhee School Service Agency (COSSA) is a public school cooperative serving the special education, career technical, and alternative education needs of students from Homedale, Marsing, Notus, Parma, and Wilder School Districts.*

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# CANYON-OWYHEE SCHOOL SERVICE AGENCY (COSSA)

## SUBSTITUTE MANUAL

### Acknowledgment

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the COSSA Substitute Manual. I realize that the manual contains agency policies and procedures, but is not intended to be a complete and exhaustive explanation of the same. I also understand that said policies and procedures are subject to change; that I am to familiarize myself with its contents; and that I am to abide by the policies and procedures stated herein and of the agency. Complete COSSA Policies are available for review at the COSSA Administrative Office and on the website at [www.cossaschools.org](http://www.cossaschools.org)

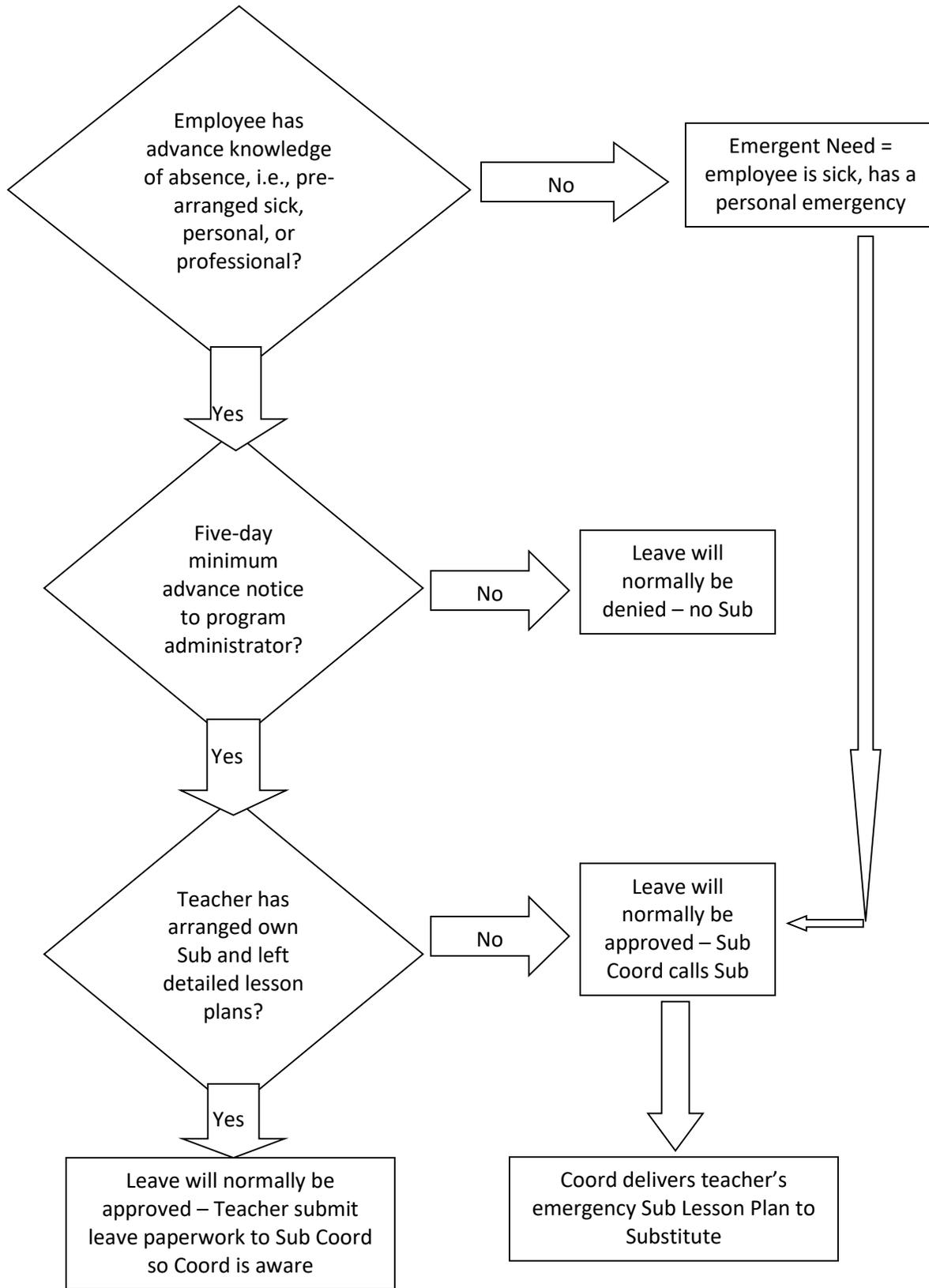
I further understand and agree that this manual does not constitute a contract of employment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Substitute Assignment Process



## **STAFF ABSENCES**

Staff members who are unable to work must notify the COSSA office and are responsible for notifying their building (*through the school office staff*) and the COSSA Teacher or Assistant(s) (*as applicable*) in their program prior to the arrival of students.

Staff members will call the COSSA office for each incidence that they are absent. There is a voice mail system available to record information at the COSSA office (482-6074), where staff may leave a message between 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. When reporting absences, staff will indicate the following:

- Name
- Date of absence
- Leave that will be used to claim day(s)
- School(s) of assignment
- Request substitute or indicate arrangements that have been made, and
- Length of absence

If a substitute is needed, staff must notify the COSSA office as soon as possible but no later than 7:30 a.m. on the day of the absence.

Pre-arranged personnel leave, professional leave, and sick leave must be submitted in advance so that substitutes can be arranged well in advance. A minimum of 5 days advance notice is normally required. The Substitute Coordinator will email and/or put a copy in employee mail box to advise them if their pre-arranged leave request has been approved or denied.

## **HIRING SUBSTITUTES**

Substitutes will be hired, or arrangements for coverage will be made, for Certified Staff and Special Needs Assistants. Substitutes for other aide positions may not be filled until after the employee's third consecutive day of absence.

## **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION**

Substitutes must successfully pass a background investigation to ensure student safety. Substitute candidates must pick up fingerprint cards and instructions for completion from the COSSA administrative office prior to being assigned. The Substitute Coordinator may be able to assist in scheduling a fingerprint session with local law enforcement personnel. Once a background investigation has been requested the substitute may begin to work.

## **SUBSTITUTE PROCEDURES**

### **PREPARATION/ARRIVAL**

Substitutes need to familiarize themselves with the districts/schools before taking their first assignment. A drive through the area, especially if new to the area, will help to avoid confusion. If the substitute is unfamiliar with a school site, they should plan on arriving earlier than what is required. This gives time to check-in, find the classroom, locate the faculty room and restrooms, and get prepared for the day. It can get frustrating and time consuming if the substitute does not know their way around the building.

The school hours and locations, with their addresses and phone numbers, are found in the substitute packet. Please refer to this information. If the substitute cannot arrive at a school on time, please call the COSSA office and the school's office and let them know. Otherwise, the COSSA Substitute Coordinator might believe that the substitute did not understand and might assign a second person to cover the absence. Remember to check in and out with the building secretary on arrival and departure. They are the people who verify substitute time for pay purposes.

### **PAYROLL**

To be paid for a full day, substitutes are required to be on the school site for the full day. A full day consists of any time over 4 hours. A half-day is 4.0 hours or less. Substitutes must submit a time card to the COSSA administrative office in order to be paid. Pay is based on a flat daily rate of pay paid in either ½ day or full day amounts.

The payroll office will send out pay checks on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. This covers the 16<sup>th</sup> of the previous month through the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month. If a substitute does not claim their check by 4:00 p.m. checks will be mailed and they may not arrive at the substitute's mailing address for two days. COSSA encourages the staff to participate in direct deposit of pay to their personal checking account.

If the substitute's mailing address changes, please ensure that the COSSA payroll clerk is informed. Otherwise, pay may be severely delayed.

Long-term substitutes who are required to be certified in the area of instruction that they are covering will negotiate a "daily rate of pay" that approximates what they would be paid as a normal COSSA employee. Benefits may also be offered to long-term substitutes.

### **PLACEMENT**

The Substitute Coordinator in the COSSA administrative office has the substitute's name, address, phone number, and preferred teaching sites and subjects. When a COSSA employee, who is eligible for a substitute, contacts the Substitute

Coordinator to let him/her know of an absence, the Substitute Coordinator will make every effort to match the substitute's preference for site and subject with the need. The Substitute Coordinator will make every effort to arrange the substitution several days in advance. Emergencies and sickness do happen, so this will not always be the case. The goals are:

Pre-arranged Personal/Professional/Sick Leave: arranged at least one week in advance

Emergency Leave: arranged by 7:30 a.m. of the day of absence

When the substitute is called and asked to fill a spot, that substitute may decline the request. However, if the substitute declines or cancels frequently, the Substitute Coordinator may remove that substitute's name from the active list.

In some cases, secretaries and/or teachers may previously talk to the substitute and schedule that individual for a future placement – in which case BOTH the secretary/teacher and substitute must contact the Substitute Coordinator and inform him/her of this arrangement. The substitute may not get paid if the Substitute Coordinator does not know of the arrangement. Prearranged substitutes MUST be employees of COSSA. When in doubt, the arranging teacher should contact the COSSA Substitute Coordinator.

Emergency situations requiring a substitute may be filled by an individual who is readily available when a request is made.

### **AVAILABILITY OF SUBSTITUTES**

Long term. In the event the substitute requires an extended absence such as for student teaching, pregnancy, vacations, family matters, or any other circumstance that prevents the substitute from subbing for a 30 day period, that substitute must contact the Substitute Coordinator so that they will not be removed from the active list.

Short term. Communication plays a huge part in assigning substitutes. When calling for a substitute assignment, the Substitute Coordinator will make every effort to speak in person with the substitute. Make sure the Substitute Coordinator has correct contact information. If he/she cannot contact a substitute in a 30-day period, the substitute will be removed from the list.

The Substitute Coordinator is only interested in keeping substitutes on the active list who are dedicated and who want to work. Please call him/her if you no longer want to substitute.

## **GUIDELINES**

**Dress appropriately.** The substitute should be dressed professionally and be well groomed. Please use common sense. Women should avoid short skirts, low cut tops, and any clothing that will be revealing when she bends down, bends over, or reaches up high. Men should wear a button-down shirt, although a nice polo shirt also works. Sweats, t-shirts, flip-flops, and hats are never okay. Slacks are preferred. Tattoos or body piercings may be determined as being such that detract from the learning situation or task being performed. Employees will cover tattoos and refrain from displaying personal body piercings when requested.

**Be to work on time.** Being prepared the night before should help the substitute get to the job site at the required time. Being early is always better, especially if the substitute has never been to the school site. Remember, if the substitute is running late; call the COSSA Substitute Coordinator and the school site to let them know.

**No cell phones.** If the substitute brings a cell phone, they must be turned off while students are in the classroom. That also means no texting while class is in session. Students are not allowed personal cell phone use in the classroom, and the substitute should set the example.

**No playing on the Internet.** Some teachers might give the substitute the password to get on to the computer to help with lesson plans, documenting attendance, etc. This does not mean, however, that the substitute is allowed to get on the computer for personal use.

**Prep Periods.** Teacher's prep periods are for the teachers to prepare their lesson plans. Because the substitute does not normally do lesson plans, if the secretary needs the substitute to fill in elsewhere during that time, the substitute should be available to do so. Therefore, always stay at the school site – don't "dash out" during the prep period in case they come looking for you.

**Read through the lesson plans.** Locate worksheets, books, and supplies that will be needed through the day. When the bell rings, stand at the door and greet the students as they enter the classroom. Make sure your name is written on the board (with Mr., Mrs., Ms., included). Introduce yourself but start the class in a timely manner. A prompt, well organized beginning will project an "in charge" image.

**Follow the teacher's lesson plans as closely as you can.** If there are no lesson plans readily available – which sometimes happens in an unforeseen emergency – possible resources may be the teacher's "emergency sub packet", either in the classroom or at the school office, which should contain a general lesson for that subject area. Don't just "wing it". If you can't understand the regular or emergency lesson plans, use a neighboring teacher to explain them to you.

CTE Subs. Students are not allowed to use shop equipment unless approved in the instructor's sub plans.

Leave a note for the teacher describing your day. Make sure to leave a note that lists both positive and negative events. Any sort of discipline issue should be recorded. If you feel comfortable, you may leave your email and/or phone number so the teacher can contact you with questions.

Do not touch a child, especially in anger or frustration. You are expected to have friendly, but firm, control over the classroom. If there are problems, use the school's procedure for removing the student – this usually involves sending the student to the In-School Suspension (ISS) room or asking an administrator to come to your room. Determine the school's process for discipline BEFORE the day begins.

## **SUBSTITUTE TRAINING**

Substitute training is offered for new and returning substitute teachers at the beginning of the school year, and when the substitute is hired for new substitutes. This training is free, but it is MANDATORY before the substitute starts their substitute service. The Substitute Coordinator will schedule this training near the start of the school year or date of hire and will inform all returning/new substitutes of the date. New substitutes brought onboard after the start of the school year will receive this training as part of their orientation. Training topics will include:

- Substitute Procedures
- Payroll
- Classroom Management
- Discipline Procedures
- SafeSchool training



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Dear COSSA Substitutes:

We are updating our sub list for the upcoming school year \_\_\_\_\_. We need your updated information; so please fill out the form below and send it back in the envelope provided by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to have my name on the COSSA substitute teachers list.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, please remove my name.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home

\_\_\_\_\_ Cell

Please list me for these preferred substitute options (Check the areas you want to sub for):

COSSA Academy \_\_\_\_\_ Special Education \_\_\_\_\_ CTE \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you.