

SUBSTITUTE HANDBOOK

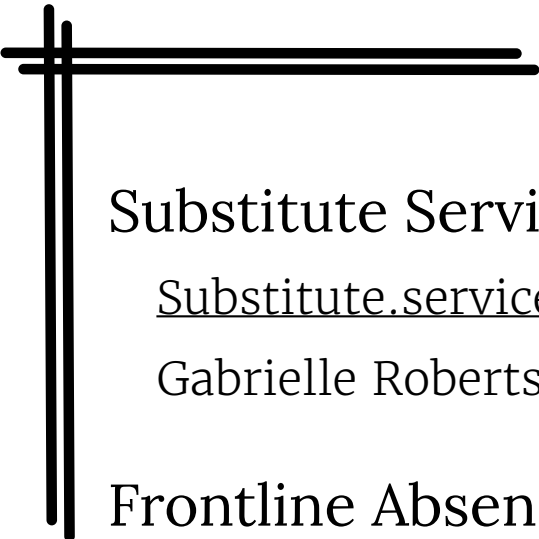


Bellingham
Public Schools

a collective commitment



2025-2026



Substitute Services

Substitute.services@bellingshamschools.org

Gabrielle Roberts 360-676-2784

Frontline Absence Management

Website www.aesoponline.com

Phone 1-800-942-3767

Human Resources

HR.Dept@bellingshamschools.org

Payroll

PayrollOffice@bellingshamschools.org

Phone 360-676-5009

Technology Help

Help@bellingshamschools.org

Phone 360-676-4357

Bellingham Public Schools

1985 Barkley Blvd

Bellingham, WA 98226

www.bellingshamschools.org



DISTRICT OFFICE **676-6400**
1985 Barkley Blvd, 98226
Greg Baker, Superintendent **676-6501**
Sheri O'Day, Executive Admin. Assistant FAX: 676-6528

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

ALDERWOOD - 201 **676-6404**
3400 Hollywood Avenue, 98225-1134 FAX: 647-6896
Amy Berreth, Principal - **7500**
Leah Rose, Administrative Assistant - **7571**

BIRCHWOOD - 202 **676-6466**
3200 Pinewood Ave. 98225 FAX: **647-6875**
Micah Smith, Principal - **6000**
Carmina Cisneros Gomez, Administrative Assistant - **6061**

CARL COZIER - 203 **676-6410**
1330 Lincoln Street, 98229-6238 FAX: 676-6578
Carissa Jangard, Principal - **5800**
Jamie Cullop, Administrative Assistant - **5840**

COLUMBIA - 204 **676-6413**
2508 Utter Street, 98225-2708 FAX: 647-6880
Minh Nguyen, Principal - **5500**
Michele Foster, Administrative Assistant - **5518**

CORDATA - 210 **676-6461**
4420 Aldrich Road, 98226-9680 FAX: 676-6462
Eva Warner Chazo, Principal - **2500**
Ashwinta Deo, Assistant Principal - **2508**
Abigail Warick, Administrative Assistant - **2502**

GENEVA - 206 **676-6416**
1401 Geneva Street, 98229-5218 FAX: 647-6893
Laura Britt, Principal - **6140**
Nicole Cook, Assistant Principal - **xxxx**
Mariangely Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant - **6150**

HAPPY VALLEY - 207 **676-6420**
1041 24th Street, 98225-8603 FAX: 676-4989
Kelly Gouveia, Principal - **5900**
Laura Murdzia, Administrative Assistant - **5901**

LOWELL - 209 **676-6430**
914 15th Street, 98225-6305 FAX: 647-6894
Stephanie Korn, Principal - **4900**
Lauralee Carbone, Administrative Assistant - **6430**

NORTHERN HEIGHTS - 205 **647-6820**
4000 Magrath Road, 98226-1729 FAX: 647-6824
Pam Pottle, Principal - **6820**
Sharece Steinkamp, Assistant Principal - **6820**
Linda Kirschman, Administrative Assistant - **7419**

PARKVIEW - 211 **676-6433**
3030 Cornwall Avenue, 98225-1817 FAX: 647-6882
Stephanie Johnson, Principal - **5400**
Erica Rasmussen, Assistant Principal - **5400**
Traci Kaiser, Administrative Assistant - **5430**

ROOSEVELT - 213 **676-6440**
2900 Yew Street, 98226-6127 FAX: 647-6895
Aaron Darragh, Principal - **5760**
Tina Allsop, Assistant Principal - **5724**
Jennifer Schmidt, Administrative Assistant - **5750**

SILVER BEACH - 214 **676-6443**
4101 Academy Street, 98226-4443 FAX: 647-6884
Jen Mallett, Principal - **2300**
Laura Lesley Administrative Assistant - **2340**

SUNNYLAND - 215 **676-6446**
2800 James Street, 98225-2639 FAX: 647-6891
Dustin Heaton, Principal - **5600**
Jeff Coulter, POSA - **5628**
Lillian Harris, Administrative Assistant - **5633**

WADE KING - 212 **647-6840**
2155 Yew Street Road, 98229-8812 FAX: 647-6841
Courtney Ross-Webb, Principal - **2400**
Nicole Cook, Assistant Principal - **2460**
Melissa Day, Administrative Assistant - **2471**

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

FAIRHAVEN - 316 **676-6450**
110 Park Ridge Road, 98225-7907 FAX: 647-6887
Steve Ruthford, Principal - **4600**
Shari Walsh, Assistant Principal - **4601**
Esmeralda Ortiz, Administrative Assistant - **4602**

KULSHAN - 328 **676-4886**
1250 Kenoyer Drive, 98229-2346 FAX: 647-6892
Kevin Terpstra, Principal - **4889**
Hazel Clapp, Assistant Principal - **4701**
Jeneen Durand, Administrative Assistant - **4702**

SHUKSAN - 317 **676-6454**
2717 Alderwood Avenue, 98225-1222 FAX: 647-6879
Craig Baldwin, Principal - **4840**
Rachel Grogan, Assistant Principal - **4800**
Cindy Schuitema, Administrative Assistant - **4884**

WHATCOM - 318 **676-6460**
810 Halleck Street, 98225-3243 FAX: 647-6899
Mischelle Darragh, Principal - **4300**
Breann Hulford, Assistant Principal - **4361**
Karly Brannen, Administrative Assistant - **4355**

HIGH SCHOOLS

BELLINGHAM - 419 **676-6575**
2020 Cornwall Avenue, 98225-3648 FAX: 647-6803
Ben Goodwin, Principal - **7104**
Chris Carlson, Assistant Principal - **7301**
Nikki Lockhart, Assistant Principal - **7302**
Monica Rasmussen, Administrative Assistant - **7101**

OPTIONS - 429 **647-6871**
2015 Franklin Street, 98225-3648 FAX: 647-6872
Bethany Barrett, Principal - **5100**
Nick Hayes, Assistant Principal - **5103**
Carmen Vassar Administrative Assistant - **5101**

SEHOME - 420 **676-6481**
2700 Bill McDonald Parkway, 98225-5909 FAX: 647-6863
Sonia Cole, Principal - **5203**
Mike Couto, Assistant Principal - **5290**
Camille Mora, Assistant Principal - **5290**
Monica Contreras, Administrative Assistant - **5203**

SQUALICUM - 427 **676-6471**
3773 E. McLeod Road, 98226-7728 FAX: 676-6561
Laurel Peak, Principal - **6464**
Meghan Dunham, Assistant Principal - **7697**
Jeremy Louzao, Assistant Principal - **7612**
Phyllis Crouse, Administrative Assistant - **7610**

COMMUNITY TRANSITIONS **676-6470**
1600 Birchwood Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225
Bethany Barrett, Administrator - **5100**
Nick Hayes, Administrator - **5103**
Erin Voiss, Office Assistant - **4502**

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM-555 **676-6424**
1409 18th Street, 98225
Kate Baehr, Principal - **4950**
Peggy Gallegos Administrative Assistant - **6424**

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock the door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

TEACHERS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Do business as usual
Take attendance



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard

Tornado
Hazmat
Earthquake
Tsunami

Safety Strategy

Evacuate to shelter area
Seal the room
Drop, cover and hold
Get to high ground

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



Dear Colleague:

Thank you for choosing to work as a substitute for Bellingham Public Schools! Whether you are new to the district or a returning substitute, we are excited to have you with us and look forward to your service to the students and staff in our district.

As a substitute, you provide an extremely valuable service to our schools. Without you, we would not be able to offer our students a seamless educational experience on the days when regular staff are not present. This is a highly valued and very important service, for which we thank you.

Please take some time to learn about The Bellingham Promise, which you will find online at <http://bellingshamschools.org/TheBellinghamPromise> and included in this Handbook. This important document is our guiding light that reminds us of the important work we do, and the commitments that we all make to the students of this community.

If you have any questions about processes and procedures in our district, please contact our Substitute HR Specialist, Gabrielle Roberts, at (360) 676-2784 or Substitute.Services@bellingshamschools.org.

Thank you, and welcome to Bellingham Public Schools.

Matt Whitten

Matt Whitten
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

the Bellingham Promise

vision

We, as a community, make a collective commitment to Bellingham's children. We will empower every child to discover and develop their passions, contribute to their community, and achieve a fulfilling and productive life.

mission

We collectively commit that our students are cared for and respected, and that they will graduate from our schools prepared for success. All students will be exceptional in their own way, with strong character, a passion for learning, and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options to support a diversity of life choices.

core beliefs

We believe:

- all children should be loved,
- the whole child is important,
- every child can learn at high levels,
- early learning and development are critical,
- learning is lifelong and essential to a high quality of life,
- compassion and service build community,
- teaching children to do their best involves self-reflection and reaching higher,
- diversity enhances a strong and healthy community, and
- together we achieve more than alone.

outcomes

We develop students and graduates who are...

- readers and writers,
- scientists and mathematicians,
- historians and global thinkers,
- artists and performers,
- artisans and technicians,
- multilingual readers and speakers,
- skilled users of technology and information,
- leaders, collaborators and team players,
- dependable and responsible people,
- confident individuals who continuously challenge themselves,
- respectful and compassionate humans,
- honest and ethical individuals who act with integrity,
- healthy, active individuals,
- critical thinkers and problem solvers,
- effective communicators,
- innovators and creators, and
- well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world.

key strategies

We will accomplish this by focusing on...

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We envision and strive for a more diverse, inclusive and equitable organization. Focus areas include, but are not limited to, race and ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, language and culture.

Innovation and Flexibility

We support the diverse needs and learning styles of our students by being innovative and flexible. We embrace change and creative thinking and know that this requires a high level of trust and engagement with our community.

Great Teaching with Strong Support

High quality instruction occurs every day in every classroom, where we establish a safe and engaging learning environment. We support culturally-responsive instruction through effective leadership, ongoing staff learning, and a diverse staff reflective of our students.

Early Childhood Education

We support students and families from prenatal through graduation. We invest in a strong early childhood program because of its powerful long-term return for our students and community.

A One Schoolhouse Approach

Our schools are part of a larger One Schoolhouse, and we focus on taking care of each other. We provide an equitable distribution of resources and services to ensure excellence for all students.

Student, Family, and Community Engagement

We develop partnerships and engage with a wide variety of stakeholders, including families and community partners, to support the success of all students.

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School Directory

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Substitute Information & Policies

Substitute Responsibilities

- Always arrive on time as listed in Absence Management. Check in with the school office and sign the Absence Management sign in sheet. Be sure the job description and times reflect your assignment, as this is what is reported to the Payroll Department. The sign in sheet must be signed each day you work.

Substitutes are required to work the duration of the day even on early release days unless you are directed otherwise.

- Obtain the employee's lesson plans or check with the school's administrative assistant. It is important to familiarize yourself with any schedule changes, fire drills and emergency procedures. An "Emergency Procedures for School Staff" flip chart should be displayed in each classroom.
- All substitutes should wear their substitute ID badge. If you have forgotten yours, temporary name tags can be obtained in the office.
- Personal Cell Phones - While at work, employees are expected to exercise discretion in using personal cellular phones. Personal calls during work hours, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity, student safety and may be distracting to others. Substitutes are only to make personal calls during breaks and lunch and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the district's policy.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is mandated by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for students and HIPAA laws for staff. It is the law, and it is imperative that school personnel follow this ethical code of conduct. We are expected to respect the legal and human rights of children and their families, as well as our coworkers and other district staff. Therefore, maintaining confidentiality is essential.

As an employee, you may learn confidential information about students in your school and staff of the District. It is of critical importance that you keep that information confidential and not divulge it, even to friends or family. Students and families trust you – just as they do other staff members – to maintain their rights and privacy. Employees should always think before discussing information with a third party. Only those individuals who are directly involved “need to know” information.

Dress Code

Bellingham Public Schools does not have an official dress code for staff. However, here are a few general guidelines to consider:

- Think about the type of work you will be doing.
- Be prepared for both indoor and outdoor settings by wearing appropriate shoes and outerwear.
- Be mindful of wearing scented perfumes and lotions.

Emergency Contact Forms

Although emergencies on the job are rare, it's important to be prepared. Please make sure to review and update your emergency contact form each school year. You can do this through your Skyward account by following these steps: **Employee Information > Online Forms > Click on Emergency Contact.**

Substitute Cancellations

Sometimes, it is necessary to cancel a job due to illness, emergencies, or other unforeseen circumstances. Please keep the following in mind:

- Canceling a Job Within 24 hours (Last Minute):
 - During school hours- Cancel and contact the school directly
 - Outside of school hours- Contact Substitute Services and cancel the job (if you can)
- If you are canceling a job for the future (more than 24 hours), it is not necessary to contact the substitute office, though schools would appreciate the heads up.

A substitute who demonstrates a pattern of last-minute cancellations may be removed from the substitute list.

Important Note: If the cancellation occurs within 24 hours of the assignment, Frontline will automatically mark it as a “non-work” day, and you will no longer have access to assignments for that day.

Once you have accepted an assignment, staff are counting on you to be there. Please do not accept a assignment if you are uncertain of your ability to commit. It is problematic when substitutes cancel an assignment to take on more desirable positions.

School Cancellations & Weather Emergencies

Schools may close for the day or open two hours late depending on weather conditions. Decisions are usually made in the early morning rather than the night before to ensure that the most up-to-date weather conditions and forecasts are taken into account. When there are changes to school schedules due to snow or bad weather, this information is typically communicated by 6:00 a.m. The district uses various methods to keep you informed.

Reasonable Assurance

Bellingham Public Schools will continue to offer you substitute employment for the 2025-2026 school year. It is anticipated that the district will have as much [or more] work available for you in 2025-2026 as was available for you this past school year, taking into account enrollment projections, the number of positions, and the size of our substitute list.

Employment with our district calls for several customary vacation/recess periods during the school year, as established by the 2025-2026 school calendar which is posted on the district website. The district expects to have substitute work available for you following each of these vacation/recess periods

Please contact Substitute Services if you are no longer available.

Removal from Substitute List

Substitutes may be deactivated for the following reasons:

- Inactivity - You are expected to work at least one assignment per month (10 instances in a year). *This annual minimum requirement will be prorated for substitutes who begin employment after the school year has started*
- Excessive last minute cancellations
- Failure to report to an accepted assignment
- Multiple late arrivals or leaving early

Depending on the circumstances, you will have the opportunity to reapply to substitute, which requires an online application, review of your history and updating HR and Payroll paperwork.

Annual Training

As district employees, all substitutes are required to complete mandatory training on an annual basis. This includes the Bloodborne Pathogen Training, which is completed during your onboarding session. New substitutes are expected to complete the remaining required trainings as soon as possible while actively substituting.

We recognize that substitutes may not work on a daily basis and that these trainings are completed outside of the regular workday. As such, we understand it may take longer for substitutes to complete all required modules. Please note that compensation is not provided for training completed outside of scheduled work hours. However, completion of these trainings is essential to remain active on the substitute list each year.

Professional Development

Bellingham Public Schools offers a wide range of training and professional development (ProDev) opportunities throughout the school year. Substitutes are welcome and encouraged to participate in these courses free of charge; however, please note that compensation is not provided for time spent participating in these trainings. Recommended ProDev courses for substitutes typically include:

- **Supporting All Students:** Effective Paraeducator Support in an Inclusive Setting for Learners with Complex Needs
- **Positive Behavior Supports:** Preventing and Responding to Escalation
- **Basics of Destiny Library Program** (For Substitutes)

Additionally, substitutes have access to the Brain-Based Regulation training series, which includes the following modules:

- [Part 1](#)
- [Part 2](#)
- [Part 3](#)
- [Part 4](#)

Participation in these trainings helps substitutes build valuable skills and better support students and staff across the district. We encourage all substitutes to take advantage of these opportunities as part of their ongoing professional growth.

Substitute Information & Policies

Job Titles and Descriptions

Paraeducators

Level E Paraeducators

Supervision – Helps promote a harmonious atmosphere and safe environment for students. May take place on the playground, in the lunchroom, at bus pick up/drop off points, on the school bus and other locations of the school site.

Skills Support – Assists in creating and maintaining an effective climate for student learning. Provides specific support for assigned students who are at risk, educationally disadvantaged, requiring program support for academic work necessary to meet state standards, course completion, graduation, and/or have a variety of disabilities. Works closely with certificated staff as part of a program or instructional team. Instruction may take place in the general education classroom or alternative location.

Multilingual Learner – Supports Multilingual Learners (MLL) with English language skills and academic concept development throughout the District, as directed by a certificated MLL staff member to create and maintain an effective and supportive climate for students whose first language is not English.

Childcare Lead – Assists in the delivery of total care to infants and toddlers enrolled in the Grads Childcare Center; supports an effective, stimulating, and safe environment for young students.

Level D Paraeducators

Library Media Technician - Helps promote a harmonious atmosphere and safe environment for students, assisting individuals or small groups with research, computer-assisted instruction, book selection, check out, designated assignments, activities and tasks as assigned.

Student Success Coordinator – Helps coordinate a process to identify students who are deficient in credits toward a four-year high school diploma; assists the administrative team in the development of strategies, interventions, and graduation action plans with students and parents; and provide ongoing tracking and monitoring to reinforce student progress toward on-time graduation.

Level C Paraeducators

Student Support – Assists in creating and maintaining an effective climate for student learning; provides specific support for assigned students with disabilities and provides these students with motivational support and reinforcement of student efforts and achievements. Instruction may take place in the general education classroom or alternative location.

Early Learning - Assists in creating and maintaining an effective, safe and stimulating climate for student learning and works closely with certificated staff as part of a program or instructional team to provide a strong learning environment supportive of all learners.

Childcare Site Supervisor – Assists in delivery of program at our childcare centers. Supervises other childcare team members.

Enrichment - Assist in creating and maintaining an effective climate for student learning. Provide specific support for assigned students with disabilities and provide these students with motivational support and reinforcement of student efforts and achievements.

Level B Paraeducators

Job Coach – Assists in creating and maintaining an effective climate for student learning; supervises student learning activities and monitors student behavior at a job placement site; works under the direction of a certificated staff member.

OT/PT Assistant - Assists in creating and maintaining an effective climate for student learning, as directed by the Occupational and Physical Therapists; assists in gathering and producing appropriate program and teaching materials.

School Support – Provides support to students and staff of all grade levels in all academic settings throughout the District; works closely with the Behavior Specialist and other staff to promote a safe and effective learning climate for students with complex needs.

Campus Monitor – Supports high school and/or middle school to provide a safe campus and assists staff in creating an effective climate for student learning.

Deaf/Blind Student Support – Specialist facilitates interaction, communication, and the transmission of information per the student's needs, as identified by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team, requiring a proficiency in the mode(s) of communication or language used by the student.

Substitute Information & Policies

Job Titles and Descriptions

Administrative Assistant, Business/Accounting, Educational Support

Level E Administrative Assistant

MS Athletic Administrative Assistant, MS Administrative Assistant – Provides clerical support to a variety of schools and offices, including support to the Administrative Assistant to the Principal and Assistant Principal; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the assigned school/program.

Office Administrative Assistant - Provides clerical support to a variety of schools and offices, including support to the Administrative Assistant to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Assistant Principal, Counseling, Options HS, Community Transitions, Traffic Safety Administrative Assistant, Special Education HS Admin Assistant, and District Office Receptionist – Provides clerical support to a variety of district offices, including Counseling, Attendance, Options HS, the offices of the secondary Assistant Principals, the District Office, Traffic Safety and Special Education; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Level D Administrative Assistant

Special Education Program Administrative Assistant – Provide administrative assistant support to a variety of school offices and specialized district-wide programs; Family Engagement and Special Education. Assist with support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the assigned school/program and Bellingham Public Schools.

Level C Administrative Assistant

Facility Use and Access Administrative Assistant – Provide Administrative Assistant support for the district's Facilities and Sustainability Department and administration. Support services for the Facilities and Sustainability Department include facilities rental management, access control system implementation and maintenance, and support for students, parents, staff, and the public and promote positive public relations for the assigned school/program.

Level E Administrative Assistant

MS Athletic Administrative Assistant, MS Administrative Assistant –

Provides clerical support to a variety of schools and offices, including support to the Administrative Assistant to the Principal and Assistant Principal; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the assigned school/program.

Office Administrative Assistant - Provides clerical support to a variety of schools and offices, including support to the Administrative Assistant to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Assistant Principal, Counseling, Options HS, Community Transitions, Traffic Safety Administrative Assistant, Special Education HS Admin Assistant, and District Office Receptionist – Provides clerical support to a variety of district offices, including Counseling, Attendance, Options HS, the offices of the secondary Assistant Principals, the District Office, Traffic Safety and Special Education; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Level D Administrative Assistant

Special Education Program Administrative Assistant – Provide administrative assistant support to a variety of school offices and specialized district-wide programs; Family Engagement and Special Education. Assist with support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the assigned school/program and Bellingham Public Schools.

Level C Administrative Assistant

Facility Use and Access Administrative Assistant – Provide Administrative Assistant support for the district's Facilities and Sustainability Department and administration. Support services for the Facilities and Sustainability Department include facilities rental management, access control system implementation and maintenance, and support for students, parents, staff, and the public and promote positive public relations for the assigned school/program.

MS Registrar & Student Services Administrative Assistant - Manages the student registration, grading, and a variety of student data and records within the middle school registrar and counselor's office; provides key technical support in the creation and maintenance of the middle school master schedule; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

HS Registrar - Manages the student registration, grading, and of a variety of student data and records within the high school registrar and counselor's office; provides key technical support in the creation and maintenance of the high school master schedule; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Level B Administrative Assistant

Principal Administrative Assistant – Manages the operation of a school central office at the Elementary, Middle and High School level and serves as Administrative Assistant to the Principal; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Operations Administrative Assistant – Provides administrative assistant support to a variety of specialized district-wide programs, such as Food Services, Facilities and Sustainability, and Transportation

Teaching and Learning Administrative Assistant – Manage the operation of a variety of programs within the Department of Teaching and Learning (DTL) office and serves as Administrative Assistant to a one or more Director(s) of Teaching and Learning. Provide various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the department and Bellingham Public Schools.

Special Education Program Assistant – Provides administrative assistant support to the Special Education Department. Assist in various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the assigned school/ program and Bellingham Public Schools.

Public Records Administrative Assistant – Organize and prepare documents for records requests under the direction of the Assistant Director of Communications.

HS Activities & Athletics Administrative Assistant - Provide administrative assistant support to a variety of school offices and specialized district-wide programs; Family Engagement, High School Athletics & Activities and Special Education. Support services for students, parents, staff, and the public and promotes positive public relations for the assigned school/program and Bellingham Public Schools.

HS Registrar - Manages the student registration, grading, and of a variety of student data and records within the high school registrar and counselor's office; provides key technical support in the creation and maintenance of the high school master schedule; provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public.

Level B Business/Accounting

ASB Bookkeeper – Manages the ASB financial and payroll operations for a high school office and maintains records for all ASB financial transactions; provides various ASB support services for students, parents, staff, vendors, and the public.

Accounting Technician – Provide accounting support to schools and district-wide programs through specialized business/accounting functions, including Purchasing, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Food Services. Assist in services for staff, families, students and the public, including vendors and customers, and promotes positive public relations for Bellingham Public Schools.

Level A Business/Accounting

Payroll Technician – Process and audit monthly payroll records and reports from a variety of sources and data systems. Provide payroll services for staff, administrators and vendors and promotes positive public relations for Bellingham Public Schools.

Level D Educational Support

Print Shop Assistant – Complete the assignments provided by the Print Shop Operator and promotes positive public relations for the Print Shop and Bellingham Public Schools.

Health Services Assistant – Provide health room services for students and maintaining health data and records under general supervision of the school nurse, and administrators. They will work closely with the school nurse, and community partners to provide exceptional care to enhance the health of all students to maximize their educational opportunities.

Level B Educational Support

Career and College Coordinator – Supports students as they plan for high school and beyond; focuses on preparing students for a wide range of educational and vocational options.

Theatre Technician – Provides technical and academic support to the Theatre program.

Frontline Absence Management

Accepting Substitute Assignments

Available jobs notifications will either go out via the Frontline automated phone system or you can view available jobs by accessing your account online or via the Frontline Education App.

One of the challenges that schools face on a frequent basis is the scheduling of substitute teachers on short notice. There may be times when the building will need to change your teaching assignment in order to ensure that the students receive the support and supervision that they require. As a rule, the buildings will seek all available options in order to avoid making same day changes to your assignment. However, if this does occur, it is up to the building administrator's discretion to make the assignment change.

How will I get jobs?

1. The automated call system may call you at home during one of the scheduled evening call-out periods, (between 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) or morning call-out periods, (starting at 5:45 a.m. until the job is filled).
2. You may call the automated call system at (800) 942-3767 to listen for open jobs.
3. You may log in to <http://www.aesonline.com> to review and accept open jobs.
4. An employee, school, or the substitute office may contact you directly to pre-arrange an assignment.
5. Frontline Education phone app- Its free

Instructions for accessing both the phone and web application of the automated sub system are included in your sub information packet. Please reach out to the Sub Desk if you're unable to log into Frontline.

What is the difference between specified and pre-arranged?

There is a rather large difference between the two concepts.

Preferred Subs - The employees have the ability to select preferred substitutes. These substitutes will be notified by email. Frontline will call these favorite substitutes first during the next evening call period. However, if you are not able to answer your phone at the time the call goes out, the system will then move on to the next person in an effort to fill the job.

Pre-arranged Jobs - These jobs are when you have already accepted the assignment, even though you didn't receive a phone call from Frontline. The system does not make outbound calls for pre-arranged jobs because it is assumed the employee and the substitute have already made arrangements before the job is entered.

Important Note: While it is the employee's responsibility to enter their jobs correctly, they sometimes neglect to check the box that indicates the job they entered is pre-arranged. If they do not mark the box indicating the substitute has agreed to the job, you will merely be specified, and the job may go to someone else. If the job you agreed to work does not show up on your account, contact the employee to double check that the job is still yours.

How do I let the teachers know that I would like to return to their classroom?

If you enjoyed your experience and would like to return, please feel free to leave your contact information on the Sub Notes.

What happens if I need to cancel a job?

Sometimes it is necessary to cancel a job due to an illness of yourself or a child. Please try to avoid canceling on the day of the assignment. If you must cancel on the day of the assignment, it is essential you cancel in Frontline first and then call or email the school's administrative assistant or the Substitute Coordinator to alert us of the late cancellation. Emergencies happen and we understand this, but cancellations are recorded in your profile. A substitute who demonstrates a pattern of last-minute cancellations may be removed from the substitute list.

If you are canceling a job for the future, it is not necessary to contact the school or substitute office. If you must cancel a pre-arranged job, contact the employee/school to give them an opportunity to prearrange the job with another substitute. If it is a late cancellation, call the employee and then cancel the job through the automated system.

Important Note: If the cancellation occurs within 24 hours of the assignment, the system will automatically mark it as a “non-work” day, and you will no longer have access to assignments for that day.

Once you have accepted an assignment, staff are depending on you to be there. Please do not accept a assignment if you are unsure of your ability to commit. It is problematic when substitutes cancel an assignment to work a more desirable position.

What do I do if I get a call for a job and the start time has already passed?

Frontline may call you after a job has actually begun. This means we are still looking for someone to fill the job. Accept the job, and then call the school to let them know you can take the assignment.

Things Frontline can do for you:

- Frontline can call you at home, your mobile, or any other phone. You can change your phone number. Enter it exactly as you would dial it, including area code and a #1 if necessary.
- Frontline remembers your vacations. If you will be out of town or unavailable to work for a period of time, simply change your availability dates under the Non Work Day tab in Frontline. You can block out a period of days during which you do not wish to be called.
- Frontline remembers your days off. If you have certain days each week that you cannot work as a substitute, you can set or modify your daily availability as often as you wish. For example, if you tell Frontline you cannot work on Fridays, you will not be called for jobs that include a Friday. It is your responsibility to modify your availability to allow employees to enter pre-arranged jobs that may fall on days you normally take off.

Failing to show for an assignment you have agreed to:

Sometimes substitutes forget to record an assignment they have accepted. This can sometimes lead to an empty classroom, unsupervised playground, or a shortage of support staff. It is essential that you keep an active and visible calendar of the jobs you have accepted. No-shows cause many problems for the schools and for the substitute office.

Absence Management Adjustments

When working as substitute there may be times when the hours you worked will be adjusted after you work the assignment. These changes occur when the administrative assistant reconciles the payroll report. Reasons for these adjustments might include the following:

- deducting the unpaid lunchtime for classified substitutes, usually ½ hour (.50)
- reporting the employee's leave time correctly
- correcting the employee's leave time

The important thing to remember is that you will get paid for the number of hours that you signed in/out for on the Absence Management sign-in/out sheet.

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Scheduling Errors

Occasionally a substitute will be assigned to a job in error. If you arrive at a school to find that there is no assignment for you, we will do our best to provide an alternate assignment at that school or elsewhere in the district. If you accept an alternate assignment, administrative assistants and paraeducators will be paid for a minimum of two hours and teachers will be paid for a minimum of a half day. If you choose not to accept the alternate assignment, it will be an unpaid day.

Classified Substitute Work Hours & Breaks

Generally classified substitutes shall receive 15-minute paid rest breaks and unpaid lunch periods of no less than 30 minutes as follows

Work Hours	Expected Breaks
Less than 4.0 hours	No break
4.0 to 5.0 hours	One 15-minute rest break
5.25 to 5.75 hours	One 15-minute rest break One unpaid lunch, no less than 30 minutes
6.0 and up hours	Two 15-minute rest breaks One unpaid lunch, no less than 30 minutes

Certificated substitute teachers will follow designated lunch/break schedules as listed on lesson plans.

Payroll Information

General Payroll Information

Substitutes can access their payroll information online through the Employee Access program in Skyward. You will be able to view this information before payday each month (typically four days prior to payday). The district does not print paper pay stubs for employees who have elected to be paid via direct deposit.

Through Employee Access you can review your complete monthly pay stub information including monthly gross and net pay, benefit, and deduction information. In addition, your pay history will also be available online if you wish to view information about a previous month's check.

- **Instructions:** Login instructions and how to navigate within the Employee Access program are available on the payroll page on the district Staff Hub. These instructions guide you through viewing your paycheck history and information. Note: It is important to keep your password confidential, as your personal payroll information will be accessible with it.
- The first time you log in, your login code and a link to set up a password will be sent to your district email account. If you have lost your password to your district network account or have not been provided with an account, please contact your school Library Media Specialist or the IT department by email at Help@bellingshamschools.org or by phone at 360-674-6470 x4357
- If you are having problems logging in to Employee Access, please contact the Payroll Department by email at payrolloffice@bellingshamschools.org or by phone at (360) 647-6857 or (360) 676-6470 x4434

Updating Information

Change of address and contact information is processed by the Payroll Department.

Name changes- By law, you must change your name with Social Security prior to requesting changes to payroll. You will need to provide your updated social security card to payroll.



Payroll Deadlines

The pay period is the 1st of the month through the last day of the month for all substitute hours worked. These hours are paid at the end of the following month. Payroll must receive time summaries from substitutes no later than the 5th of each month. If the 5th of the month falls on a weekend, then the due date becomes the preceding workday.

Example

- Substitute hours worked from September 1-30 will be paid in the October paycheck.
- Time Summaries for hours worked September 1-30, must be submitted to payroll not later than October 5th.

Pay Dates

Month Worked	Pay Date
August	9/30/2025
September	10/31/2025
October	11/26/2025
November	12/31/2025
December	1/30/2026
January	2/27/2026

Month Worked	Pay Date
February	3/31/2026
March	4/30/2026
April	5/29/2026
May	6/30/2026
June	7/31/2026
July	N/A

Substitute Pay Rates

When you report for a job, you will be required to sign an Absence Management sign-in sheet at each building you work. **This must be signed each day you work.** Substitutes will be paid for work that is performed from the first of the month through the end of the same month, at the end of the following month. **Example: you will be paid for time worked from September 1 through September 30 at the end of October.** If you have questions regarding pay received, contact the Payroll Department by email at payrolloffice@bellingshamschools.org or by phone at (360) 647-6857 or (360) 676-6470 x4434

The following rates of pay reflect the 2025-26 wage schedule

Certificated Substitutes

Bellingham Public Schools normally pays substitute teachers for half day or full days only. On occasion, and with prior communication, the district may pay per hour.

Half-day (3.75 hours) \$ 93.79

Full Day (over 3.75 hours) \$ 187.58

- When working two half-days at different schools, please inform the administrative assistant that you will require transition time.
- **For certificated, if work is available and you are not available for the whole shift, you will be paid for actual hours instead of half or whole day.**

Paraeducator and Administrative Assistant Substitutes

Steps/Years	A	B	C	D	E
1 (Substitutes)	\$ 29.71	\$ 28.30	\$ 26.96	\$ 25.67	\$ 24.44

- **For classified substitutes, if work is available and you are not available for the whole shift, you will be paid for actual hours instead of half or whole day.**

Substitute Sick Leave Policy and Use

Substitutes accrue paid sick leave at a rate of one (1) hour for every 40 hours worked. Substitutes can begin using accrued sick leave 90 calendar days after the start of their employment. Paid sick leave may be used for:

- employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition;
- preventive care for the employee such as medical, dental, or optical appointments and/or treatment;
- care of a family member with an illness, injury, health condition or for preventive care
- closure of the employee's work location or child's school/place of care by order of a public official for any health-related reasons;
- if the employee or the employee's family is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking

Guidelines:

You must have a sick leave balance available in order to be eligible. You can find your balance in your Skyward account.

You must be scheduled for an assignment in Frontline that is then canceled. The confirmation # of the canceled assignment is needed for your form.

How to Claim Your Sick Time:

1. Log into your Frontline and cancel your existing assignment with the reason code 'Sick- Using Paid Leave.' You can screenshot the cancellation.
2. Fill out the [Substitute Sick Leave Request Form](#). You **MUST** include the confirmation # of the canceled assignment. We recommend taking a screenshot before canceling your job. (For Certificated, Paraeducator, Administrative Assistant substitutes)

Approved sick leave will be processed and deducted in the next months pay period.



Unforeseen illness? Be courteous and professional:

Cancel your assignment as soon as possible and contact the school or Substitute Services

Payroll Information

Benefits & Retirement Information

Benefits Information

A substitute is eligible for health benefits AFTER working 630 hours each school year. All hours are tracked on a monthly basis and if a substitute becomes eligible for benefits, they will receive notification from the benefits office. Other factors may apply and requests for additional information about health benefits may be addressed by emailing Pam Lang at Pam.Lang@bellingshamschools.org.

SEBB Eligibility Notice for PEBB Retirees

If you are currently enrolled in PEBB Retiree insurance as a subscriber or dependent and, anticipate working 630 hours (WAC 182-31-040) or more as a substitute, your PEBB retirement coverage will automatically be waived. Your current PEBB coverage will stop at the end of the month that you become eligible for SEBB benefits.

Any deductibles and coinsurances already met under your PEBB retiree coverage will be forfeited. You will have a new deductible and coinsurance to meet under the SEBB benefits.

Once you are no longer eligible for SEBB benefits, you can choose to re-enroll in the PEBB retiree coverage.

It is the employee's responsibility to monitor their own work hours to avoid a conflict with PEBB retiree and SEBB benefit coverages.

Retirement Service Credit

As a substitute you may be eligible to purchase service credit toward a potential pension through the Washington State Department of Retirement. This is an optional program and you can learn more about it by contacting the Washington State Department of Retirement at 1-800-547-6657

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Affordable Care Act (ACA)

The ACA requires each state establish a Health Insurance Marketplace, which is a way for individuals to purchase health insurance online. Bellingham Public Schools currently offers employer-sponsored health insurance. Detailed information about this can be found at the back of this handbook.

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Employees

FROM: Pam Lang, Benefits and Payroll Coordinator

RE: Affordable Care Act Exchange Notice

Enclosed is the notice regarding health insurance options that are available as of January 1, 2014 as required under the Affordable Care Act, (ACA), passed in 2010.

The ACA required that each state establish a Health Insurance Marketplace, which is a new way for individuals to purchase health insurance online. Under the ACA, each state was allowed to either create its own marketplace, or adopt one developed by the federal government. For information on the marketplace available to you, based on the state you reside in, please go to <https://www.healthcare.gov/what-is-the-marketplace-in-my-state/>.

Bellingham Public Schools currently offers employer-sponsored health insurance. The employer-sponsored health insurance plan meets the minimum value and affordability requirements for all employees working 630 or more hours in a school year.

Please note: *You are not required to purchase individual health insurance through the marketplace.*

Individuals who choose to purchase individual health coverage through either a state or federally run marketplace may be eligible for premium and benefit subsidies in the form of federal income tax credits. To be eligible for these subsidies, individuals must meet certain requirements. Individuals and qualified family members are NOT eligible for subsidized insurance through the marketplace if they are eligible to participate in an employer-sponsored health plan meeting certain minimum value and affordability requirements under the ACA.

More information on the health care reform law and the online health coverage marketplaces is also available at www.healthcare.gov

If you have questions about the form or District benefits, please contact me at 676-6401 or pam.lang@bellingshamschools.org



Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage

Form Approved
OMB No. 1210-0149
(expires 12-31-2026)

PART A: General Information

Even if you are offered health coverage through your employment, you may have other coverage options through the Health Insurance Marketplace ("Marketplace"). To assist you as you evaluate options for you and your family, this notice provides some basic information about the Health Insurance Marketplace and health coverage offered through your employment.

What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?

The Marketplace is designed to help you find health insurance that meets your needs and fits your budget. The Marketplace offers "one-stop shopping" to find and compare private health insurance options in your geographic area.

Can I Save Money on my Health Insurance Premiums in the Marketplace?

You may qualify to save money and lower your monthly premium and other out-of-pocket costs, but only if your employer does not offer coverage, or offers coverage that is not considered affordable for you and doesn't meet certain minimum value standards (discussed below). The savings that you're eligible for depends on your household income. You may also be eligible for a tax credit that lowers your costs.

Does Employment-Based Health Coverage Affect Eligibility for Premium Savings through the Marketplace?

Yes. If you have an offer of health coverage from your employer that is considered affordable for you and meets certain minimum value standards, you will not be eligible for a tax credit, or advance payment of the tax credit, for your Marketplace coverage and may wish to enroll in your employment-based health plan. However, you may be eligible for a tax credit, and advance payments of the credit that lowers your monthly premium, or a reduction in certain cost-sharing, if your employer does not offer coverage to you at all or does not offer coverage that is considered affordable for you or meet minimum value standards. If your share of the premium cost of all plans offered to you through your employment is more than 9.12%¹ of your annual household income, or if the coverage through your employment does not meet the "minimum value" standard set by the Affordable Care Act, you may be eligible for a tax credit, and advance payment of the credit, if you do not enroll in the employment-based health coverage. For family members of the employee, coverage is considered affordable if the employee's cost of premiums for the lowest-cost plan that would cover all family members does not exceed 9.12% of the employee's household income.^{1,2}

Note: If you purchase a health plan through the Marketplace instead of accepting health coverage offered through your employment, then you may lose access to whatever the employer contributes to the employment-based coverage. Also, this employer contribution -as well as your employee contribution to employment-based coverage- is generally excluded from income for federal and state income tax purposes. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis. In addition, note that if the health coverage offered through your employment does not meet the affordability or minimum value standards, but you accept that coverage anyway, you will not be eligible for a tax credit. You should consider all of these factors in determining whether to purchase a health plan through the Marketplace.

¹ Indexed annually; see <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/rp-22-34.pdf> for 2023.

² An employer-sponsored or other employment-based health plan meets the "minimum value standard" if the plan's share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60 percent of such costs. For purposes of eligibility for the premium tax credit, to meet the "minimum value standard," the health plan must also provide substantial coverage of both inpatient hospital services and physician services.

When Can I Enroll in Health Insurance Coverage through the Marketplace?

You can enroll in a Marketplace health insurance plan during the annual Marketplace Open Enrollment Period. Open Enrollment varies by state but generally starts November 1 and continues through at least December 15.

Outside the annual Open Enrollment Period, you can sign up for health insurance if you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period. In general, you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain qualifying life events, such as getting married, having a baby, adopting a child, or losing eligibility for other health coverage. Depending on your Special Enrollment Period type, you may have 60 days before or 60 days following the qualifying life event to enroll in a Marketplace plan.

There is also a Marketplace Special Enrollment Period for individuals and their families who lose eligibility for Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage on or after March 31, 2023, through July 31, 2024. Since the onset of the nationwide COVID-19 public health emergency, state Medicaid and CHIP agencies generally have not terminated the enrollment of any Medicaid or CHIP beneficiary who was enrolled on or after March 18, 2020, through March 31, 2023. As state Medicaid and CHIP agencies resume regular eligibility and enrollment practices, many individuals may no longer be eligible for Medicaid or CHIP coverage starting as early as March 31, 2023. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is offering a temporary Marketplace Special Enrollment period to allow these individuals to enroll in Marketplace coverage.

Marketplace-eligible individuals who live in states served by HealthCare.gov and either- submit a new application or update an existing application on HealthCare.gov between March 31, 2023 and July 31, 2024, and attest to a termination date of Medicaid or CHIP coverage within the same time period, are eligible for a 60-day Special Enrollment Period. **That means that if you lose Medicaid or CHIP coverage between March 31, 2023, and July 31, 2024, you may be able to enroll in Marketplace coverage within 60 days of when you lost Medicaid or CHIP coverage.** In addition, if you or your family members are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP coverage, it is important to make sure that your contact information is up to date to make sure you get any information about changes to your eligibility. To learn more, visit HealthCare.gov or call the Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596. TTY users can call 1-855-889-4325.

What about Alternatives to Marketplace Health Insurance Coverage?

If you or your family are eligible for coverage in an employment-based health plan (such as an employer-sponsored health plan), you or your family may also be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period to enroll in that health plan in certain circumstances, including if you or your dependents were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP coverage and lost that coverage. Generally, you have 60 days after the loss of Medicaid or CHIP coverage to enroll in an employment-based health plan, but if you and your family lost eligibility for Medicaid or CHIP coverage between March 31, 2023 and July 10, 2023, you can request this special enrollment in the employment-based health plan through September 8, 2023. Confirm the deadline with your employer or your employment-based health plan.

Alternatively, you can enroll in Medicaid or CHIP coverage at any time by filling out an application through the Marketplace or applying directly through your state Medicaid agency. Visit <https://www.healthcare.gov/medicaid-chip/getting-medicaid-chip/> for more details.

How Can I Get More Information?

For more information about your coverage offered through your employment, please check your health plan's summary plan description or contact pam.lang@bellingshamschools.org.

The Marketplace can help you evaluate your coverage options, including your eligibility for coverage through the Marketplace and its cost. Please visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) for more information, including an online application for health insurance coverage and contact information for a Health Insurance Marketplace in your area.

PART B: Information About Health Coverage Offered by Your Employer

This section contains information about any health coverage offered by your employer. If you decide to complete an application for coverage in the Marketplace, you will be asked to provide this information. This information is numbered to correspond to the Marketplace application.

3. Employer name Bellingham Public Schools		4. Employer Identification Number (EIN) 91-6001648	
5. Employer address 1985 Barkley Blvd		6. Employer phone number 360-676-6401	
7. City Bellingham	8. State WA	9. ZIP code 98226	
10. Who can we contact about employee health coverage at this job? Pam Lang			
11. Phone number (if different from above)		12. Email address pam.lang@bellingshamschools.org	

Here is some basic information about health coverage offered by this employer:

- As your employer, we offer a health plan to:
☐ All employees. Eligible employees are:

- ☒ Some employees. Eligible employees are:

All employees who meet SEBB eligibility. Eligibility is subject to Washington State Health Care Authority rules. In general, we must anticipate the employee will work a minimum of 630 hours during the school year (September to August.)

- With respect to dependents:
☒ We do offer coverage. Eligible dependents are:

All dependents up to age 26.

- ☐ We do not offer coverage.

- ☒ If checked, this coverage meets the minimum value standard, and the cost of this coverage to you is intended to be affordable, based on employee wages.

** Even if your employer intends your coverage to be affordable, you may still be eligible for a premium discount through the Marketplace. The Marketplace will use your household income, along with other factors, to determine whether you may be eligible for a premium discount. If, for example, your wages vary from week to week (perhaps you are an hourly employee or you work on a commission basis), if you are newly employed mid-year, or if you have other income losses, you may still qualify for a premium discount.

If you decide to shop for coverage in the Marketplace, [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) will guide you through the process. Here's the employer information you'll enter when you visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) to find out if you can get a tax credit to lower your monthly premiums.

The information below corresponds to the Marketplace Employer Coverage Tool. Completing this section is optional for employers, but will help ensure employees understand their coverage choices.

13. Is the employee currently eligible for coverage offered by this employer, or will the employee be eligible in the next 3 months?

☐ **Yes** (Continue)

13a. If the employee is not eligible today, including as a result of a waiting or probationary period, when is the employee eligible for coverage? _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) (Continue)

☒ **No** (STOP and return this form to employee)

14. Does the employer offer a health plan that meets the minimum value standard*?

☐ Yes (Go to question 15) ☐ No (STOP and return form to employee)

15. For the lowest-cost plan that meets the minimum value standard* offered only to the employee (don't include family plans): If the employer has wellness programs, provide the premium that the employee would pay if he/ she received the maximum discount for any tobacco cessation programs, and didn't receive any other discounts based on wellness programs.

a. How much would the employee have to pay in premiums for this plan? \$ _____

b. How often? ☐ Weekly ☐ Every 2 weeks ☐ Twice a month ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Yearly

If the plan year will end soon and you know that the health plans offered will change, go to question 16. If you don't know, STOP and return form to employee.

16. What change will the employer make for the new plan year? _____

☐ Employer won't offer health coverage

☐ Employer will start offering health coverage to employees or change the premium for the lowest-cost plan available only to the employee that meets the minimum value standard.* (Premium should reflect the discount for wellness programs. See question 15.)

a. How much would the employee have to pay in premiums for this plan? \$ _____

b. How often? ☐ Weekly ☐ Every 2 weeks ☐ Twice a month ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Yearly

* An employer-sponsored health plan meets the "minimum value standard" if the plan's share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60 percent of such costs (Section 36B(c)(2)(C)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986)