KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

How to Accept or Decline a Substitution

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Overview

When a colleague goes on leave, they can name you as the person who covers their work. Nothing becomes binding until you confirm it: every new substitution starts with the status **Waiting for confirmation**, and only you, as the substitute, can change it to accepted or declined.

This article shows where a substitution that is waiting for your answer appears in the **Substitutions web part**, how to accept or decline it, and what the other people involved see afterwards. It is written for the substitute. If you are the person who is going away, see KB10332. How to Name a Substitute When You Request Time Off.

Before you start

- You need **Member (edit)** access to the **SharePoint site** that holds the absence lists, like every other user of the product. Your administrator sets this up once for the whole company.
- A page with the **Substitutions** web part must be available to you: a SharePoint page or the **Microsoft Teams** app, depending on how your company published it.
- The product does **not** send e-mail or Teams messages when someone names you as a substitute. You find out by opening the web part, so ask your colleague or your manager where it is published and check it from time to time.

Note

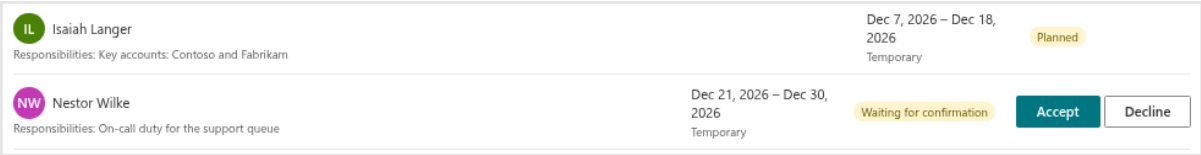
Substitutions come from two sources: a colleague can name you in an absence request (see KB10350. How Absence Requests and Substitutions Work Together), or a manager or the absent person can assign you directly (see KB10337. How to Assign a Substitute to Your Direct Report). You respond to both in the same way.

Find the substitutions waiting for your answer

1 Open the page with the **Substitutions** web part.
2 Select the **I cover** tab. It lists everyone you cover now or will cover later. If the **I cover** tab is the default tab of the web part, it opens by itself.
3 Look for rows with the status **Waiting for confirmation**.

The number on the **I cover** tab is a badge: it counts the substitutions that are waiting for **your** confirmation, so you can see at a glance that something needs your attention.

Each row shows who you are asked to cover (with the caption "You cover this person"), the tasks the absent person has handed over after **Responsibilities** (if they entered any), the period, the kind of substitution (**Temporary** or **Handover of duties**) and the status. An open-ended handover shows "from" and the start date instead of a period.



The I cover tab with a substitution waiting for confirmation

Accept a substitution

1 On the **I cover** tab, find the row with the status **Waiting for confirmation**.
2 Check the person, the period and the **Responsibilities**. If the responsibilities are empty, agree the details with your colleague outside the product.
3 Select **Accept**.

The message "You accepted the substitution." appears above the tabs and the row status changes from **Waiting for confirmation** to a phase that depends on the dates: **Planned** if the period has not started yet, or **In progress** if it has. The badge on the **I cover** tab decreases by one. No comment is requested.

Decline a substitution

1 On the **I cover** tab, find the row with the status **Waiting for confirmation**.
2 Select **Decline**.

The message "You declined the substitution." appears and the row status changes to **Declined**. The product does not ask for a reason, so tell your colleague or manager why you cannot help; otherwise they will not know until they look at the web part.

Warning

The answer cannot be changed from your side. After you decline, the **Accept** and **Decline** buttons disappear from the row, and an accepted substitution can only be cancelled by the absent person. If you declined by mistake, ask your colleague or manager to assign the substitution again. Manual cancellation is available only before the substitution has ended.

You can also accept or decline from the **Who covers whom** tab: the same buttons

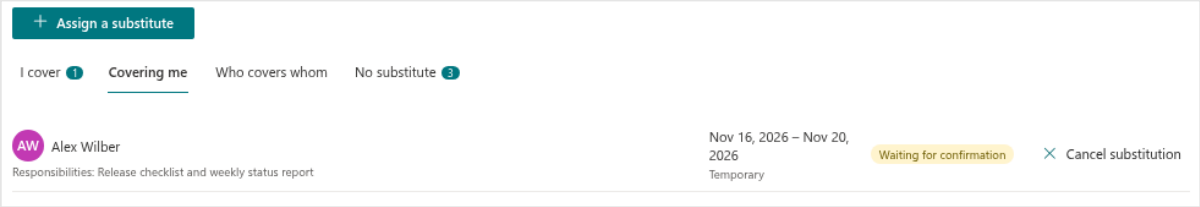
appear on the rows where you are the substitute. See KB10348. How to Find Out Who Covers Whom.

What the others see afterwards

Your action	Status of the substitution	What you see	What the absent person sees	What the manager sees
None yet	**Waiting for confirmation**	A row with **Accept** and **Decline**, and a badge on the **I cover** tab	A row on the **Covering me** tab with the status **Waiting for confirmation**	For a substitution tied to the absence, the absence stays on the **No substitute** tab with the status "Waiting for" followed by your name
Accept	**Accepted**, shown as **Planned** or **In progress**	The row stays on the **I cover** tab until the period ends, without buttons	The same row with the status **Planned** or **In progress**	An absence tied to this substitution leaves the **No substitute** tab: it is now covered
Decline	**Declined**	The row stays with the status **Declined** until the period ends, without buttons	The row stays on the **Covering me** tab with the status **Declined**	An absence tied to this substitution appears on the **No substitute** tab with the status "declined" preceded by your name, with an **Assign**

Your action	Status of the substitution	What you see	What the absent person sees	What the manager sees
				button to choose someone else

The **No substitute** tab is available to managers who have direct reports in **Microsoft Entra ID**, and it is covered in KB10338. How to Find Absences Without a Substitute.



The absent person sees the answers of their substitutes on the Covering me tab

When the period ends

A substitution leaves the **I cover** and **Covering me** tabs after its end date. Pending and accepted substitutions remain available for 30 days on **Who covers whom** with the **Ended** filter; declined and cancelled substitutions are excluded. An accepted handover without an end date remains in progress from its start date until cancelled.

If you do not answer, the substitution simply stays **Waiting for confirmation**. The manager keeps seeing the absence as not covered, so answer as soon as you know whether you can help.

Note

Accepting a substitution does not change the absence itself. The absence request keeps its own status, and it is shown in the Team Absence Calendar with the text "Covered by" next to your name while it is running. See KB10342. How to See Who Is Away Today and Who Covers Them.

Terms

Microsoft Entra ID
Microsoft Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory) is a cloud-based identity and access management service offered by Microsoft. It allows organizations to efficiently manage and secure their users' identities and access to a variety of resources, both internal and external. These resources include Microsoft 365, the Azure platform, and thousands of other software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications.

Microsoft Teams
Microsoft Teams is a chat-based collaboration platform for business communications with features for online meetings, live events, and document sharing.

SharePoint
SharePoint is a web-based collaboration platform that provides content management, document management, workflow applications, search, and other tools that empower employees and teams to work together. SharePoint is also a secure place to store, organize, and access shared information.

Site
A SharePoint site is a container for information within the SharePoint platform. Sites typically offer features such as document libraries, lists, calendars, discussion boards, and workflows, facilitating collaboration, communication, and document management within teams or across departments. Sites can be customized and configured to suit the specific needs and workflows of an organization.

Web Part
A web part is a primary building block of functionality or content placed on a SharePoint page. Some web parts support customization, such as configuring the web part or changing its appearance.