

KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

How to Name a Substitute When You Request Time Off



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Overview

When you go on leave, someone usually has to pick up your work. The **New absence request** panel of the **My Absences** web part lets you name that person while you request the time off. You choose one colleague in the **Substitute** field; the web part then creates a substitution for the same dates, and your colleague confirms it in the **Substitutions** web part.

Naming a substitute is optional. You can also leave the field empty and let your manager assign a substitute later, or assign one yourself in the Substitutions web part.

Choose a substitute in the request

- 1 In **My Absences**, click **New request**.
- 2 Select the **Absence type** and the dates as usual ([KB10325. How to Request Time Off in My Absences](#)).
- 3 In the **Substitute** field, start typing a name and pick the colleague from the suggestions. The field accepts one person only.
- 4 Add a **Comment** if the approver or the substitute needs context, and click **Submit request**.

New absence request ✕

Absence type *

Vacation ▼

Start date *

Nov 23, 2026 📅

End date *

Nov 27, 2026 📅

☒ Starts at midday (the first day counts as half a day)

☐ Ends at midday (the last day counts as half a day)

4.5 working day(s): Nov 23, 2026 – Nov 27, 2026

Remaining after this request: 9.5 day(s)

Substitute

Alex Wilber

Comment

Family trip, handover agreed.

The Substitute field in the New absence request panel

You cannot name yourself: the panel shows *You cannot be your own substitute.* and does not save the request ([KB10331. Why You Cannot Submit an Absence Request: Messages and Solutions](#)).

When the substitution is created

The substitute is stored on your request. The substitution itself, a **Temporary** substitution for the dates of the request, is created at the moment your request is approved:

Your request	When the substitution appears	Its status
The absence type needs approval	When the approver clicks Approve	Waiting for confirmation
The type needs no approval, or you are your own approver	Immediately, when you submit	Waiting for confirmation

Until then, the request is **Pending approval** and the substitution does not exist. The approver sees your choice in the **Approvals** tab, in the line *Substitute: ...*, and can approve or reject the request with that in mind ([KB10334. How to Approve or Reject an Absence Request](#)).

The substitute has to confirm

A substitution is not active until the colleague accepts it. In the **Substitutions** web part the colleague sees the new row on the **I cover** tab, with a number in the tab badge, and the buttons **Accept** and **Decline**. No e-mail or Teams message is sent, so tell your colleague that the request is waiting for them ([KB10347. How to Accept or Decline a Substitution](#)).

What the colleague does	What happens
Clicks Accept	The status becomes Accepted . Before the first day it is shown as Planned , during the absence as In progress .
Clicks Decline	The status becomes Declined . Your absence stays approved, but it has no confirmed substitute.
Does nothing	The substitution stays Waiting for confirmation .

Warning

An unconfirmed substitute is still shown as covering you in the **Covered by** line of the *Away today* block of the Team Absence Calendar. Make sure that your colleague really accepts.

If the request is rejected or cancelled

The substitution is tied to your request. If the approver clicks **Reject**, the request ends and no substitution is created, because it would only have been created at approval. If you use **Cancel request**, every substitution tied to the request gets the status **Cancelled**, including one that has already been accepted. The colleague no longer sees

it in the **I cover** tab. See [KB10330. How to Cancel an Absence Request](#).

Who sees the substitute

Who	Where
You	In the row of your request: <i>Substitute: ...</i> ; on the Covering me tab of the Substitutions web part once the substitution exists
The approver	In the Approvals tab: <i>Substitute: ...</i>
The substitute	On the I cover tab of the Substitutions web part
Your manager	On the No substitute tab, an absence of a direct report shows the pill Waiting for or declined until a substitute accepts
Colleagues	In the Team Absence Calendar: <i>Substitute: ...</i> in the tooltip and Covered by in the <i>Away today</i> block

Naming a substitute in the request and assigning one separately

You can also create a substitution without a request, with the **Assign a substitute** button in the Substitutions web part ([KB10337. How to Assign a Substitute to Your Direct Report](#)). The two ways differ:

	In the absence request	Assign a substitute
Dates	Taken from the request	Entered by you
Kind	Temporary	Temporary or Handover of duties
Responsibilities text	Not available in the request panel	Available
Link to the request	Tied to the request:	Independent, unless

	In the absence request	Assign a substitute
	rejected or cancelled together with it	started from the No substitute tab with Assign
Who can create it	The employee who requests the time off	Anyone, for any absent person

Note

If your colleague declines, or you forgot to name a substitute, your manager sees the absence on the **No substitute** tab and can use **Assign** there ([KB10338. How to Find Absences Without a Substitute](#)).

+ Assign a substitute

I cover 1
Covering me
Who covers whom
No substitute 3

GA
Grady Archie
Responsibilities: All duties of the Marketing team lead (handover)

from Nov 2, 2026
Handover of duties
Planned

IL
Isaiah Langer
Responsibilities: Key accounts: Contoso and Fabrikam

Dec 7, 2026 – Dec 18, 2026
Temporary
Planned

NW
Nestor Wilke
Responsibilities: On-call duty for the support queue

Dec 21, 2026 – Dec 30, 2026
Temporary
Waiting for confirmation
Accept
Decline

A substitution waiting for confirmation on the I cover tab