OfficeMax – Auto-substitution Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Why has this auto-substitution program been implemented?
The CSU has been exploring various synergy projects designed to reduce expenses. It has been determined that collectively the CSU could save several hundred thousand dollars annually by engaging in the OfficeMax auto-substitution program. This program has been implemented throughout the CSU and requires full participation by all campuses.

How will this affect my OM online ordering?
The ordering process will remain the same. However, on select products that have a lower-cost equivalent, the system will automatically substitute your selection with the alternative item that has the same fit, form and function but at a lower cost to you.

Will I know if my preferred item has been substituted?
Yes. If an item is substituted, the system will display the Auto-Sub name, number, and cost.

May I “opt” out of this auto-substitution program or limit the items that may be substituted?
No. An online user may not override the product substitution. In order to reduce state expenditures and benefit from this auto-substitution program, full participation is required of all campuses.

May I override an auto-substitution?
No. There is no system provision to override the product substitution at the time of placing an order.

What if the auto-sub product is not of the same quality as the product I originally requested?
Should the product substituted be of a substantially inferior quality or not usable for its intended purpose, the product may be returned to OfficeMax for a refund. Additionally, the product should be reported to the campus procurement office. Products that are reported as such will be considered and the Chancellor’s Office will determine if the item should be removed from the auto-substitution list for all campuses.

What is my recourse if I receive an auto-subbed product and find that is inferior to the original requested item?
Contact the procurement office to report inferior quality. Products that are reported as such will be considered and the Chancellor’s Office will determine if the item should be removed from the auto-substitution list for all campuses.
Have the auto-substituted items been reviewed and approved for quality and intended use?
Auto-substituted items have been reviewed and determined to meet the same expectations as the higher-priced product, and have the same fit, form and function as the originally requested item.

Will auto-substituted items require longer ship times?
No. OfficeMax is required to provide next day delivery on items typically in stock. If consistent shipping delays are encountered, the campus procurement office should be notified. Arrangements will be made for that product to be stocked in greater supply, or removed from the auto-substitution list.

My manager insists on a specific brand/item and our department has the money to purchase this item. How can I ensure it is not substituted?
If your requested item is on the auto-sub list, there is no provision to override the substitution. Efforts have been made to ensure that substituted items are of the same quality and intended for the same use as original requested items.

Does this new auto-substitution program affect or change the Ktek toner program?
No. That program will continue to be separately managed and monitored.

Can I go elsewhere to obtain office products to preclude substitution?
No. OfficeMax is the CSU’s primary contracted source for office supplies. The competitively bid contract provides the greatest overall discounts and pricing on office products available to the CSU.

Will auto-substitution change the packaging/quantities I want to order? For example, can they substitute a 12-pkg for a 6-pkg of pens?
In some instances, the auto-subbed program may allow for auto-subbing of items where the units being received do not exceed 1-1/3 times the original quantity. You will not receive two packages of an item when ordering one, but you could receive 16 items instead of 12, if the auto-subbed item is packaged that way. The packaged price of an item may cost more, but the unit price per item will be less.