

Dear families and Nannies,

We wish to provide some guidelines on how to imagine your work together during these strange times. Please know that the information and guidance in this message is accurate and appropriate to the best of our knowledge, but it is important that you always check the guidance we provide against official guidelines provided by the government (<https://www.berlin.de/corona/en/measures/>) and World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/>).

At the time of writing, to the best of our knowledge, no ordinances specifically forbid private childcare arrangements, and the mixing of two households, as well as indoor meetings with under 10 people are allowed. We take this to mean that, with a great deal of care, Nannies and families can continue working together.

If you find inaccuracies in the text below, or have additional information and advice that should be shared, please do not hesitate to let us know!

Working safely

We wish to encourage you to call a meeting and discuss what precautions you need each other to take in order to feel as safe as possible in your work together. Some examples of precautions Nannies and families have taken include:

- Nannies can keep a few changes of “indoor clothing” at the family's home, and change into them upon arriving, if commuting on public transport – ensure you leave your outerwear at the door, and thoroughly wash hands before and after changing.
- Families and Nannies can plan together and pool resources to avoid or minimize use of public transport. The families can allow use of the family car, offer to pick up and take the Nanny home when possible, and share costs of car-sharing services. Nannies can bike whenever distance and weather allow, or drive to work when possible. If transport cannot be avoided, wearing gloves and/or sanitizing hands after alight is always helpful.
- Families can ensure they provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers, disinfect-and surface sprays and soap at every sink (prefer dispensers or separate soap bars, to all sharing the same bar).
- Families can provide the Nanny with a separate set of cutlery, glasses, cups and dishes, and/or ensure all kitchenware is washed in a dishwasher.
- Wearing masks around young children can be difficult as well as uncomfortable. However, we encourage adults to wear masks indoors whenever anyone is displaying symptoms that could be consistent with COVID 19 but are mild enough not to cause immediate, excessive worries.
- Ensure you ventilate regularly and thoroughly, especially when the Nanny and parents are sharing indoor spaces: at the office, we crack all windows to create a draft for at least five minutes every hour or so.
- Ensure that adults working in the same home use separate spaces whenever possible, and that Nannies and their charges have chances to spend time outdoors.

Sharing information

- It is fundamental that both Nannies and families are completely transparent with each other with regards to their risk factors, both in the case of children and in that of adults. Any instance of significant contact (sharing of indoor spaces for over 30 minutes or outdoor meetings involving conversations and proximity for over 30 minutes) with a person who has tested positive, and/or with a person who came down with symptoms that are consistent with COVID19 must be shared immediately. These include: dry coughs, sore throats, fevers, bouts of diarrhea, loss of taste/smell, difficulty breathing, fatigue.
- Every time you an instance of risk is communicated, assess together. Direct contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID19 requires, in our view, that care be suspended and everyone is tested. Whenever adults or children have been present in an environment where another person has tested positive (perhaps at an office, an event or at school) we encourage you to contact your doctor, wear masks indoors and, whenever possible, take a test (<https://www.berlin.de/corona/en/testing-facilities/>).
- We are all under a lot of stress, as we each try our best to protect ourselves and our loved ones, whilst also preserving our social lives and our work. Families and Nannies are finding that more information needs to be shared about how time outside your work together is spent. This can feel like a crossing of boundaries, especially for those who prefer keeping your work together and your private lives separate. Remember that if more questions are asked than usual, it is due to all of our desire to feel safe. We encourage you to discuss general habits and precautions that you feel are important, in an attempt to build trust that means details don't need to be shared as often. If you are worried about a risk factor (a crowded office, or a WG) sit down and communicate your worries, so strategies can be found together.

Working in close quarters

- Assess the space available: can it be divided, and different areas assigned to different people, and/or different activities during the day? Making a plan together in this sense will help the Nanny to know they are not intruding in a space that a parent needs, and parents to know that they will not be disturbed because the Nanny and child have all they need for a given span of time.
- Be mindful of boundaries: children might be used to accessing all spaces of their home at all times, but consider that spaces such as a master bedroom or study might be uncomfortable for a Nanny to spend significant time in – they are private spaces and/or spaces where things that should not be damaged are kept, and reserving these areas as working spaces for the adults during the Nanny's hours might be useful.
- Share your needs: Families should let their Nannies know what they need in order to work: be clear when you need not to be interrupted, when you need the home to be quiet because you are on a call or doing type of work that requires special concentration. Nannies should let their employers know what activities and games they would like to engage the child in that might involve noise, music or a specific space. Plan together so that workable compromises can be reached.
- Aknowledge and manage difficulties: caring for a child in their parents' presence is diffeent to caring in sole charge. The child will usually prefer a parent's company to the

Nanny's and parents might be inclined to intervene more often (in response to a child being upset, in order to instruct regarding activities/meals etc). This will change your working dynamics, and might end up making things harder: when parents are stepping in and out of the child's spaces, this might cause disruption as the child gravitates toward the parents, and the Nanny tries to restore calm when the parents need to get back to work. Sit down and have a conversation about this, negotiate practices again in this new context. Try to ensure that the children are aware that you are all "on the same team", that you have consensus on rules, activities, and that you confirm and support each other's decisions – if you do find you are not in agreement, discuss matters at a time where the children are not present.

Work hours lost to isolation that is not medically mandated

You might find yourselves deciding to take breaks from the routine that are not medically mandated (i.e. no doctor's note, no partial reimbursement from the Krankenkasse), and will be in doubt as to what to do with those lost hours:

- know that it is nobody's fault, the situation is hard for all: the risks of contagion are everywhere, nobody can isolate completely whilst living in a city, and despite all precautions you all will eventually come in contact with people who test positive, have alarming symptoms or will develop symptoms that cause concern.
- Split the annoyances half way: the family might have been exposed to risk, and ask the Nanny to stay home. Technically this is not the employee's fault, remuneration will stay the same and recouping hours should not be expected as a matter of course. The Nanny might have been exposed to risk, and will decide to stay home – this is not the employer's fault, it is not mandated sick leave and the expectation will be that all hours are "caught up", which, depending on the Nanny's other commitments might be difficult to do. We encourage to split hours lost down the middle, forgiving half and recouping half whenever possible. There is no way to know who will need to request a break to minimize risks, it is in everyone's interest that risks are communicated: creating a situation of mutual solidarity will ensure that nobody puts others at risk because they feel that asking for a break will cause conflict.
- We encourage you to take a break whenever in doubt: dealing with lost hours might be annoying, but becoming ill or spreading Covid19 is worse. Err on the side of caution.
- If your Nanny has to isolate because of a positive contact, consider offering to cover or share the cost of a test so they can come back to work sooner.

We will strive to keep up to date with developments, and to support all of you in the coming months. Stay safe, be well,

The Extra Arms Team

