



## FAQ for Counsellors

### **COVID-19 (last updated: 28.11.22)**

***There are currently no requirements in place in Germany which would affect camp counsellors working at our campsites and schools.***

### **GENERAL**

#### ***Who is LEOlingo?***

LEOlingo is a small, family-owned company founded in 2006 by Andrea Baer ([baer@leo-lingo.de](mailto:baer@leo-lingo.de)) and Sabine Goerner. LEOlingo Süddeutschland, based in Bavaria, southern Germany, offers both day and overnight English and French language camps to German children between the ages of 7 and 15. The camps are not about overloading the children with grammar and vocabulary, but about helping the children to speak and understand the language in everyday situations through games and fun activities lead in the target language.

To find out more, click [here](#) to see some of our past and present counsellors talk about their experience at LEOlingo.

#### ***How does the application process work?***

The first step in the application process is to complete our detailed application form and send it back to Anne-Marie Albone ([albone@leo-lingo.de](mailto:albone@leo-lingo.de)) together with a photograph of yourself, either by email, fax or post. Added reference letters from former employers are always helpful. If we believe you would be a good fit for our LEOlingo programme, the next step is to complete a video interview. We aim to let all applicants know results of the interview within approximately 3 weeks.

#### ***Do we need a permit/visa and which other documents do we need to send in?***

If you are successful, you will need to send us a copy of your passport, a police check (not older than one year), a valid first aid certificate, a copy of your visa or work permits (if you already have one), and a copy of your international health insurance. Once we have all the necessary documents from you, we will send you your contract for the summer, which will need to be signed and sent back to Anne-Marie Albone.

If you are a non-EU citizen, it is important that your passport is valid for at least 3-6 months after the end of your employment with LEOlingo - you should check the exact specifications with your local authorities. You will also need to apply for a work permit, a working holiday visa or a residence permit with work permit ('Aufenthaltstitel'). In 2022, the cost for this was 56 Euro. LEOlingo is happy to cover half of this cost. As some consulates or employees abroad are not familiar with the necessary documents or the specific work/visa we require, we have come to an agreement with our local foreigners' office in which we will prepare and hand in all necessary documents for the work permit before your arrival. Once you have arrived in Germany, we will go to the office together to show your



original passport and to complete the registration. More detailed information will be provided once you have accepted your job offer.

British applicants should be aware that they now also require a work permit following Brexit.

### ***What happens if I don't pass the training week?***

Almost everybody passes the training week - you are there to learn our programme and how to deal with certain situations that may or may not arise. If you are willing to learn and to do the job and if we can see a development of your skills, there is absolutely no need to worry. Nevertheless, if you behave in an unacceptable way, if you are not able to take appropriate responsibility for the safety of the children, or if you confront us with a disruptive attitude, we cannot take the risk of employing you further.

In this unlikely case, you would be responsible for covering the costs of board and lodging on your own for the rest of your time in Germany, as well as the costs for your trip home. We can, however, help you to organise a host family to stay with until your flight home. If you are dismissed directly after training, you will receive one week's salary of a Day Camp.

### ***Are we insured?***

As most counsellors have/require their own health insurance, we don't have a general health insurance policy for all counsellors. If you need a work permit (non-EU citizens), you are required to provide proof of health insurance for the duration of your stay in Germany. Even if health insurance is not required (EU citizens), we still recommend taking out extra coverage in case you need to see a doctor here, or if you have to go to a hospital, as the costs can be quite high.

LEOlingo has standard liability insurance for the campsites, which will cover things that get damaged. In the case of a child breaking something, the child's family normally has insurance for themselves and we use this insurance (as we have to pay a certain sum on our own).

### ***What are the working hours?***

The working hours for a day counsellor (at Day Camps and at Overnight Camps) are from 9am to 5pm, plus any time needed for preparation and cleaning up at the end of the day/camp.

If you are a night counsellor at an Overnight Camp, you are responsible for the children from 5pm to 9am the next day. Each evening, the night counsellor(s) runs a 2 ½ hour evening programme (7 - 9:30pm). During the rest of your working hours you are responsible for general supervision of the kids, getting them ready for bed/breakfast, caring for them in case of illness or homesickness, etc. Night counsellors are also responsible for organising the Happyning, our end of week show. Every counsellor is generally a night counsellor only once during each 6-week working period.

Preparation before and after the actual working hours will be necessary, as well as travel times to the next campsite. We also expect team members to help each other out when they are not working, especially at overnight camps.

### ***Do we work every week?***

In general, you will get one week (in special cases, two weeks) off during a working period of about six weeks. Many of the counsellors use this opportunity to travel. During this week off, you will not get paid and will have to organise your own accommodation and food. If you don't want to travel during that week and you have asked us in advance, it may be possible for you to stay with a host family.

The work can be very exhausting. At the start you may think that you don't need a week off but, from our past experience, the counsellors are happy after 3 or 4 intensive weeks to have a break. As we can never anticipate all changes/illnesses of counsellors that can happen during our holiday programme, we cannot give a definite answer in advance as to exactly which week you will have free.

### ***What information do I get before a camp starts?***

Before you come to Germany, you will receive an arrival information pack (with all addresses, dates, telephone numbers, an organisational overview, etc) and a shortened version of our training handbook.

A few days before each camp each week, you will receive information on your exact place of work, lodging, travel plans from camp to camp, children's names, ages, etc. and an explanation of some mandatory tasks that will need to be done during the week, such as filling out the feedback forms, etc.

### ***Where do the other counsellors come from?***

They mostly come from English-speaking countries like USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, but also from French-speaking countries.

### ***I am a native French speaker. Can I work for the whole period?***

We only offer French camps for two weeks. Those camps take place at the same time and campsite as the English camps. Before and after these French camp weeks, there will be only English camps. All French counsellors will have to be prepared to work as English counsellors before and after the two French weeks. Besides this, it should be noted that the training and the communication in the team will be in English.

### ***Do we work at the weekend?***

Normally you don't - although some Overnight Camps do start on Sunday afternoon/evening and you will need time to travel to your next campsite and to prepare for the next camp. The campsites can be 1-2 hours away from each other. On the weekends, LEOlingo will cover work-related transportation costs that may occur between the assigned campsites.

During one weekend - after the second week of camp - we organise a mandatory training and feedback weekend where counsellors have the opportunity to give feedback on how the first 2 weeks have gone for them and get feedback from us, as well as learn anything new that they feel they were lacking to make the final weeks at camp run as smoothly as possible.



### ***Where do we stay at the weekends?***

LEOlingo provides accommodation for the entire week, either at our campsites themselves (in the case of overnight camps) or with German host families. For weekends included in the “week off”, counsellors are responsible for their own accommodation and food.

If you would prefer to go travelling on your weekends, you are welcome to! These weekends should be funded solely by the counsellor.

### ***What is there to do in our free time?***

There are beautiful towns and areas located around the campsites, such as Munich, Regensburg, Nuremberg, Salzburg, the “Fraenkische Schweiz”, the “Fraenkische Seenland” (lake area) and many small, medieval towns. Prague is also only approximately 3 hours away from Nuremberg by bus. Many counsellors like to just “hang out” and others go hiking or head for the museums.

### ***How old are the other counsellors?***

The counsellors are generally between 19 and 29 years old.

### ***Will I be working with the same people or do the teams change often?***

Weekly changes between campsites, as well as work partners, can be expected. All counsellors, even those with no German abilities, are expected to be able to work completely alone with their group of 12 children - however we do try to place at least one German-speaker at each campsite in case of emergencies.

### ***Which airport should we arrive at?***

The closest airport to where the training will take place (Neumarkt in der Oberpfalz) is Nürnberg (Nuremberg), followed by München (Munich) and Frankfurt. You can also ask for flight and rail combination offers or connection flights from Frankfurt or München to Nürnberg.

### ***Will we be picked up at the airport?***

As every counsellor is arriving at different times and places, we are unfortunately not able to pick everyone up. You will receive information on how to arrive at the station where the training week will take place. Once you have arrived at the station, you will be picked up and brought to the training school by LEOlingo.

### ***Are the flight costs covered?***

No. We suggest that you take out flight insurance. In the case of accident, illness or death in the family, as well as unforeseen changes in plans, we cannot cover any tickets that have to be cancelled. Most counsellors “shop” around for their tickets. Many travel before they start to work and come via various routes. It can often be much cheaper to book a flight to London and then use Ryanair ([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)) or Easyjet ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)) to fly to Germany.



### ***How is the train travel?***

The German train system is generally pretty good and reliable - but it can be expensive. If you are planning on buying a ticket for the fast ICE trains, you should book in advance because they are a lot more expensive on the day (the website is [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de)). There are however also special offers that run constantly and can be bought on the day. For example, in Bavaria the Bayern-Ticket can be used to travel anywhere within Bavaria on the regional trains and is valid for one day, any day of the week from 9am to 3am. It can be bought as a single ticket or for up to five people. A single ticket costs 25 Euros - each extra person costs an additional 7 Euro on top of that.

If you are travelling between the different states of Germany, you can use the "Quer-Durchs-Land-Ticket". This is valid on all regional transportation for one whole day, Monday to Friday, for up to 5 people and can be used throughout the country. It costs 42 Euros for a single person and 7 Euros for each additional person.

### ***Where and how does the training take place?***

Our one-week intensive training in summer usually takes place in a school in Neumarkt (Oberpfalz) and consists of both theoretical work and practical work with groups of local German school children. [Click here](#) to see some of our past and present counsellors talk about their experience at one of our LEOlingo training weeks.

### ***What other meetings are required?***

We run a follow-up training weekend after the second week of camp. This is a good chance to clear up any problems that might have cropped up and learn new things to make your time at camp more enjoyable.

### ***How much will I get paid?***

If you are responsible for the *day* programme, you will get 220 Euro per week, increasing to 250 Euro per week after the second work week, plus board and lodging (valued at approximately 250 Euro per week). If you are responsible only for the *evening* programme at an Overnight Camp you will get 170 Euro, increasing to 200 Euro per week after the second work week, plus board and lodging (valued at approximately 250 Euro per week). In general, each counsellor will be responsible for the evening programme for just one week over the summer period. In case of starting earlier on a Sunday afternoon, each counsellor will get 30 Euro extra.

The in-house training week is not paid but board and lodging are free.

### ***Am I responsible for my own meals?***

At Day Camps you will normally stay with a host family and get breakfast there. Most of the host families also like to have dinner together with their guests each day. If they don't, you can buy your supplies and ask them politely if you could use their kitchen to prepare your own food (in this case, please make sure that everything is cleaned up and left how it was). At all Day Camps you and the kids will get lunch together. It might be that you have to prepare tables, hand out food to the kids or clean dishes with the kids.



At Overnight Camps, you will eat all of your meals together with the kids. In case you have specific dietary requirements (e.g. vegetarian, lactose-intolerant, etc.), please inform us in advance. Normally it is no problem for campsites/host families to prepare vegetarian or lactose-free meals for example, but please be aware that this may not always be the case and you may have to prepare your own meal once in a while.

### ***When will I get paid?***

Payment will be made after every week of work in cash (you don't need a German bank account). Alternatively we will be happy to transfer the money, if you have an account within the EU.

### ***What happens if I cannot work for the whole duration of the German summer break?***

It is possible to arrange an earlier departure date right from the beginning, but you should be aware that in general you are expected to be able to work until the end of the season (beginning of September). Our counsellor positions are sought after by many university students. We have had the experience that some have to return home by the end of August and nevertheless state that they will be able to work the full period. If suddenly 20% of the counsellors leave earlier than expected, the whole team would suffer. It is very difficult to find last minute replacements, expensive to cancel camps and it puts pressure on team members having to take over a double workload in the last week or work with an insufficient partner. In the case of a family emergency, illness etc. it is possible to leave earlier without any penalty.

### ***Am I required to follow an exact programme?***

LEOlingo has a set programme with certain core points/goals, which are mandatory. All counsellors will be provided with a detailed LEOlingo handbook full of activities and programme parts, which will all be taught and discussed in detail during training.

### ***Do I have a choice as to where or with whom I work?***

LEOlingo will try to take any personal preferences into account, but it is important to create teams with different skills - for example, one should be able to speak German, one should be male/female, one should be good with sports, etc. It takes a lot of time and thought to prepare the working schedules for the summer. We can't always put everyone with everyone. Some people are better with older children/younger children, some are better at sports/arts and crafts, some are better at overnight camps/day camps, etc. This is why it is not always possible to make last-minute changes or fulfil every counsellor's wish for every week. One change might lead to some others.

### ***Can I choose between Day and Overnight Camps or between day and night programme?***

You can tell us your preference. We will try to fulfil everybody's wishes as best we can, but the skills of our whole team need to be taken into consideration to create optimal teams. Everyone is required to work at least once as a night counsellor.

### ***Can I choose my accommodation?***

LEOlingo organises accommodation on behalf of counsellors for the entire week and generally we do so according to what is possible in the town where you will be working.

If you would like to travel independently on the weekends, we ask you to tell us by Wednesday latest. Counsellors are then responsible for their own accommodation and meals.

### ***What if I can't speak German?***

For the camp itself, you don't need to speak German. However, LEOlingo will only accept counsellors who feel secure enough to 'survive' in a foreign country - alone and together with a group of children. In general, Germans speak some English.

### ***What's different about Germans or Germany?***

This is difficult to say as it depends on the person who is asking this question. There are some stereotypes that contain some truth. Examples:

- Germans are very punctual. For working conditions, German punctuality means at least 15-20 minutes in advance.
- For German host families and landlords, cleanliness is very important. They expect you to return rooms and things in the way they have given them to you. They won't understand if you don't and they would be very upset. The landlords might also check during the day how tidy you are. You should be sure to leave everything neat and tidy before you go outside or have a break.
- You will be expected to ask before using things of your host family family, e.g. using their computer/phone or helping yourself to food and drink.
- Germans are very straightforward. Don't expect a German to swallow his criticism or to say it in a roundabout polite way. They will tell you straight and directly if they do not agree with something you are doing or saying. They will also tell you positive things when they really mean it.
- Germans are not used to and tend not to use extravagant compliments. They are at times more reserved and can appear cooler towards you, however you will also find that a German befriended is a friend for life and a very warm friendship can follow.
- Germans are not prudish. Open showers are normal. In schools, sports centres, swimming halls, there generally won't be a "view protection". Male and female sections are separated so that nobody of the other sex will see you naked.
- It is no problem to embrace a little kid and comfort them when they are hurt or crying. In Germany, people would be surprised if you did not comfort the kid in such a situation.
- Germans are very ecological and separate their garbage into many different categories. Please make sure you are respectful and do the same during your stay. If you are unsure, please ask either your host family or one of us to clarify how their rubbish system works. There are different rubbish bins; 1. for glass, 2. for paper, 3. for packaging and cartons with a certain sign (the "green point", almost every packing has this sign, so it is quite simple) 4. for organic rubbish, and 5. for materials that cannot be recycled (for example ashes, cigarettes).
- Germans are also energy conscious. Lights, heating and water are only turned on during use. Some examples: As soon as they exit the room or the house, lights, radios, TV etc. are turned off. They try to not leave the water running unnecessarily whilst they are showering or brushing their teeth, and they do not take long showers. In a traffic jam Germans often turn off the car motor. So please be aware and careful of what you are doing during your stay in Germany.