



### Pre-Employment Guide For Families & Nannies

This guide is to be used by both nannies and families so that each knows the issues that need to be worked out before employment actually begins. Perhaps surprisingly child-related issues are a very small percentage of the problems that come up between nannies and families. Most of the issues that arise and result in either the nanny leaving, or the family letting her go, have to do with problems between the adults. Many of these problems could be avoided if they had been discussed in advance. We recommend that both the family and the nanny put in writing what they have agreed to. This guide is comprised of three sections: General issues; Live-out job issues; Live-in job issues.

#### **General Issues**

This guide is not meant to cover interviewing questions and how a nanny and family can make a good choice. It covers only specific, concrete employment issues that should be discussed prior to hiring.

- Salary. What is the weekly rate of pay? Is it gross or net? What taxes will the family be paying for the nanny? The major taxes are income, Social Security and Medicare. When does the family pay? Weekly is typical. Household help are employees, not independent contractors. Please consult your accountant or [www.breedlove-online.com](http://www.breedlove-online.com) (888)273-3356.
- What are the nanny's responsibilities? Professional nannies normally are responsible for all the child-related cleaning, laundry, tidying the kitchen and cooking for the children. Tasks that some nannies will do and others will not are: the family laundry; lite cooking for the family; grocery shopping; making the beds. Adding housekeeping chores to the job is a major cause of nannies leaving their positions.
- What does the family expect the nanny to do with the children? For example, will she be taking the child to the park, play dates, etc. Will she help potty train the child? How much TV can be watched daily? What programs?
- How detailed a "debriefing" is expected at the end of the day? Does either the nanny, or family want to keep a diary of what happened?
- Vacations and holidays. Most families give the nanny one to two weeks paid vacation at the end of the first year. All major legal holidays are paid days off. We suggest Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday & Friday), Christmas and New Years Day.
- When the family travels. When the family travels without the nanny, she should be paid for this time since it wasn't her choice and she needs to count on a set income. This issue is another major cause of nannies quitting. With mutual agreement it's OK for the nanny to take her vacation at the same time as the family's.

- Travelling with nanny. Families tend to think of travel as a perk for the nanny, and nannies think of travel as particularly difficult and stressful. As most parents know, children do best with the familiar, and travelling can very much upset a child's schedule. Nannies also often feel very isolated and lonely when travelling because they're away from their friends and family. It's important to remember to define in advance what hours and days the nanny will be working when travelling. If she is going to be working more hours, her compensation should be agreed to before the trip. When interviewing the family should be as clear as possible about their travel schedule so that the nanny can decide if it fits her needs.
- Use of the nanny's car. How often will the nanny need to use her car? How far will she be driving? If the driving is for more than a mile or two, the family should pay mileage at the prevailing rate of 44.5 cents per mile. Visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
- Raises. Families generally give at least a 10% raise after each year of service. Holiday bonuses are given by a high percentage of families.
- All of these issues apply to part-time as well as full-time nannies.

### **Live-Out Positions**

- What will her starting and ending time be? When does an hourly rate for overtime begin? Most nannies are paid \$13-\$25 per hour for time worked after the regular schedule.
- How flexible is the nanny's schedule? Is she available for babysitting or overnight stays? How much will she be compensated for this work?

### **Live-In Positions**

- Live-in jobs have a starting and ending time. Normally it is up to a 12 hour day. The hours are consecutive and any "downtime" during the day for napping children, etc. count towards the 12 consecutive hours.
- Live-in nannies don't expect schedules to be real rigid, so if you arrive home 30 minutes late most live-ins will accept that. However, it is very important to be respectful of the nanny's time.
- Live-in nannies normally have several evenings off per week. How many nights of babysitting will she be expected to work?
- Live-ins are not normally expected to get up at night or to sleep with the children.
- A private bedroom and preferably a private bath are given.
- The nanny's food is provided. Try to be sensitive to her diet--e.g. if you are vegetarians and she is a meat eater her diet needs to be considered.
- Is the family providing the phone? This is commonly done. However, only local calls are paid for.
- Car. Is the family providing one? The majority of live-in jobs offer a car. Is it for full-time usage or just for work? If full-time how far can the nanny take the car when she's not working?
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## **The Insiders Guide To Choosing A Nanny Agency**

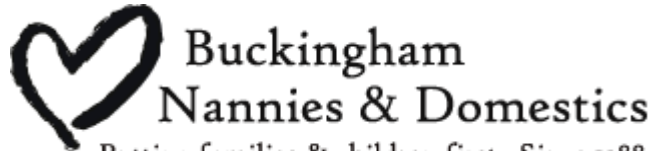
- How long have they been in business? Five years or more is a good place to start. Most of the best agencies have been established at least this amount of time.
- Are they bonded, California law requires it? Ask for proof. If they say they are licensed, beware. There is no such thing in California.
- Are they members of the International Nanny Association and/or any other professional organizations. The INA is the major organization for nanny agencies in the U.S.
- How do they check references? This is one of the most important ways to help protect families from incompetent or dangerous nannies. Many agencies do not fully check references. Does the agency inform you if they have been unable to contact a reference? Ask to see copies of the agency's reference check sheets. If they won't provide them beware. How many questions do they ask? And what do they ask? A good agency has at least a one-page reference check sheet that asks a variety of questions.
- Does the agency look for phony references? Is the staff trained to find them? Twenty percent of our applications contain phony references. Many times a good screener will know a reference is phony before the applicant even leaves the office. Agencies should be asking specific questions on the application and then matching that information when the reference is checked to be sure as possible that a reference is real.
- Does the agency take copies of ID and a photograph of the applicant? Can they tell phony ID when they see it? The better agencies have a complete set of the applicants ID and a photo.
- Does the agency verify California ID cards with the DMV and provide you with a DMV printout of the applicants driving record?
- Does the agency fingerprint each applicant when they are placed and provide the family with a copy of them?

Page Two

- Does the agency send each person placed for CPR, if they do not have a current certificate?
- Does the agency register each person placed with Trustline when there is childcare involved? Law in California requires Trustline, yet most agencies do not use it. Trustline does a criminal background check and checks the Child Abuse Registry. You can call Trustline at [www.trustline.org](http://www.trustline.org) or (800) 822-8490 to find out if the agency regularly registers people with them.
- Does the agency do a criminal background investigation? Trustline takes 4-8 weeks to get the results. A privately done background report, while limited to one county, will show any convictions in Superior and Municipal court.

- Does the agency charge the applicant a fee for the application and/or to get a job? The better agencies would never charge the applicant a fee. The applicants are generally out of work and in no position to pay. A diligent agency may only be able to place one in five applicants and to take money from people you know you can't help isn't right.
- Does the agency transport the nannies to your home or have an office that looks like central casting? The better agencies allow the candidates to get to the job interviews on their own, unless there are extenuating circumstances. They feel if someone is capable of doing the job they should be able to get to an interview on time using their own resources. Reputable agencies do not have offices that are full of waiting job candidates.
- Does the agency tell you about payroll taxes? Do they know that domestic workers are employees, not independent contractors? The agency should be able to calculate what the workers payroll taxes are for you. They should also work with a reputable payroll tax company. Visit [www.breedlove-online.org](http://www.breedlove-online.org) or 888-273-3356.
- Does they agency send you a confirmation letter regarding their terms of engagement? Do they provide you with complete information on all the services they provide such as Trustline and CPR?

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Putting families & children first...Since 1988

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## **On-Call Babysitting Services**

### **Who is Buckingham Nannies?**

Buckingham Nannies was founded in 1988 and is Los Angeles County's most trusted and referred nanny agency. Buckingham Nannies and its sister agency, Buckingham Domestic, place professional nannies, nanny/housekeepers and other in-home help in permanent positions. Our on-call division was started out of a strong need for a professional babysitting agency.

### **Qualifications of our on-call babysitters**

In most cases we are able to use fully qualified nannies that have registered with us for permanent jobs. These nannies often have full-time positions during the week and are looking for additional hours in the evenings or on weekends. Or, they may be out of work at the present time and are doing on-call work until they begin work in a full-time position. Our professional nannies must have two or more year's experience working as a nanny, or a combination of nanny and teaching experience. They are fluent in English and drive. The on-call only babysitters need to have a minimum of two years child-related experience. This experience can be part-time. All candidates need to have excellent references that are carefully checked and verified. We require that nannies that will be working with newborns or infants have prior experience with that age group. We can only assure you that your babysitter will have a valid CPR certification and a CLEARED driving & Criminal Record. Nannies that have been placed with a family in the past with Buckingham nannies will also have what is listed above, plus a cleared Trust Line letter (Child abuse registry). Trust line is not a requirement for our on-call ONLY babysitters.

### **What services do we provide?**

We provide temporary babysitters, companions to the elderly, housekeepers and nanny/housekeepers. These positions can be for one time only, or for up to two weeks full-time. Positions that are more than two weeks full-time are handled as a temporary job. Please ask for rates. You can request the same person for multiple times and we will attempt to satisfy your request.

### **What does it cost?**

We have a \$75 registration fee for three months or \$150 for one year. We charge a daily fee of \$25 per day and overnight stays are an additional \$50 per night, in addition to the regular daily fee. The nannies are paid directly by you and make \$15 and higher per hour.

### **How much notice we need & our cancellation policy**

We need to know as early as possible the day before you need our services. An additional charge of \$15 is charged if we are given less than 24 hours notice. We would like to have two or three day's notice, when possible. If your job is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice you will be charged the full agency fee, plus four hours for the nanny.

### **Miscellaneous**

We will try to accommodate you if you would like to meet the person before they start the job. It is up to the nanny to decide if she can meet you prior to working. In general, we are unable to do overnight stays. Availability is limited during the holidays, therefore on-call babysitters ask for \$20-25 per hour.



# Buckingham Nannies & Domestic

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## Certified Nannies

### Certification Steps:

- 1) Fill out seven-page detailed application
- 2) Copy of ID taken. Preliminary legal status established.
- 3) In-depth interview with two or more staff members. Focus on passion for child-care and love of children.
- 4) References checked by dedicated reference checker. Twenty-three questions asked. Establish references legitimacy and quality. Focus on quality of child-care, character and reliability.
- 5) Must meet Buckingham Nannies criteria for English Fluency, driver's license and minimum two years recent experience.
- 6) All jobs working with a newborn or infant require solid experience with that age group.
- 7) All live-out, full-time candidates must want a minimum two-year commitment.
- 8) The owner-manager approves each application.
- 9) Upon placement a criminal background report and driving report is ordered and each candidate attends a CPR class.
- 10) Upon hire the candidate is registered with TrustLine. She is electronically fingerprinted and a statewide and national criminal background check is done. Child abuse registry is checked. Please visit [www.trustline.org](http://www.trustline.org) 800-822-8490 for more information.



# Buckingham Nannies & Domestics

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## **1. Interview and observe all potential caregivers with your child and:**

- Explore why this caregiver wants to care for your child.
- How does she/he feel about the work?
- Is this person warm, caring, attentive and responsive to your child?
- Take sufficient time to get to know her. Try to make her comfortable so that she can express herself.

### **1. Ask all potential caregivers to provide concrete examples of:**

- What they like to do with children
- What are their feelings about discipline
- How would they handle naps, eating and toilet training
- How would they handle an emergency

### **2. Ask a lot of “what if” questions, for example:**

- What if my child cries all day?
- What if my child refuses to eat? Nap?

### **3. Check references and work history.**

### **4. Be sure that your nanny registers with TrustLine and that you get a criminal background report and driving report on her.**

### **6. Trust your instincts! Hire someone you like. Hire someone your children like.**

### **7. Once you have found a good caregiver, remember to:**

- Set up clear job responsibilities and good business practices.
- Communicate regularly and openly about how the childcare arrangement is working for you and your child.
- Express praise and appreciation when it is deserved.

### **Remember---good childcare is a partnership!**

Please visit [www.trustline.org](http://www.trustline.org) and [www.breedlove-online.com](http://www.breedlove-online.com)

Trust line 800-822-8490 Breedlove 888-273-3356

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## The Nanny's Checklist

- Fire/Police/Paramedics.....911
- Poison Control.....800-876-4766

### Parent's names, address and phone numbers

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Father's  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Our Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Pager \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Pager \_\_\_\_\_

### Children's Names, Birthdates & Medical Information

Name	Birthdate	Weight	Medical conditions, allergies, medications

## Important Phone Numbers

Pediatrician \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbors \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Closest Relative \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Room \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_