

Current COVID-19 regulations by the federal government and the state of Brandenburg – Employees-list-mail from Karsten Gerlof, 18 February 2021

Dear university employees,

The new, sixth coronavirus containment ordinance that came into effect this week brings hardly any changes for the university. For the most part, regulations have been extended until March 7, 2021. I would therefore like to remind you of the regulations in force and merely provide some additional information:

You can find the **hygiene concept** of the university at the following link: www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin/projects/presse/docs/Corona-Webseiten/Hygienekonzept_ab_Feb.2021-LE_GPR-6EindV.pdf. This is to ensure safe university operations during the pandemic. However, this will only succeed with the help of all of you. Please follow all of the rules laid down in the concept as far as they pertain to your work environment. Essential key points such as the minimum distance of 1.50m and contact reductions must also be observed during work breaks and when moving about in order to keep the risk of infection to a minimum.

The ordinance of the Federal Ministry of Labor (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales) on the so-called “home office obligation” (Corona-Arbeitsschutzverordnung) will remain valid until March 15, 2021. It calls on employers to **offer employees the possibility**, in the case of office jobs or comparable activities, **to carry out these activities from their home offices**. However, this does not apply if there are any compelling operational reasons preventing this. For employees in our technical and administrative services, the following will apply: Whether it is possible for you to work from home depends on the concept of the UP department in which you work. In principle, academic staff members have the possibility to work from home. However, there are exceptions such as laboratory work or certain examinations that require on-site attendance. In my e-mail from January 8, 2021, I already referred to the university-wide framework regulations on remote work for academic employees and for employees in the administrative and technical services. If you have any questions about this, please contact your supervisor or the Human Resources division.

The ordinance also stipulates that meetings may not be held if the requirement of a minimum area of 10m² per person in the room cannot be met. **In-person meetings should therefore only be scheduled if urgently necessary** and, of course, in compliance with this rule.

Since the end of January, a so-called **medical mask** must be worn in all university buildings, i.e. a surgical mask, FFP2 mask, or equivalent. This must be observed, as before, in the corridors, hallways, elevators and stairwells. Inside your office, the medical mask can be removed once you are at your desk or seat, provided that you can keep a distance of at least 1.50 meters to other people. Some employees are provided with such masks by the university, e.g. if the 10m² rule or the minimum distance of 1.50m cannot be observed for operational reasons, as well as for a number of other specific activities identified after a risk assessment. If you are part of this group of people, your supervisor will

ensure that you receive the respective masks.

The UP would like to support its employees who have to care for children. In the current situation, it is often difficult to balance childcare and work commitments, especially because of the restrictions for school and daycare facilities. In these cases, it is now possible to apply for **child sick days** (Kinderkrankentage) under certain conditions.

You can find extensive, continuously updated information on all COVID-19 regulations on the websites: <https://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/presse/press/latest-news/coronavirus>. We all hope to see the number of infections decrease statewide, so that some restrictions can be eased in the months to come. That is why I urge you to continue to abide by the established rules. University management is in regular contact with the Ministry for Science, Research and Culture and other competent bodies. As soon as we know more about possible plans for the summer semester 2021, you will be informed.

Thank you for your commitment.

Kind regards,

Karsten Gerlof