



## **CITIZENS ADVICE BRENT**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Advice Worker</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Head of Service</b>
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>£31,000 - £33,000 (subject to experience)</b>
<b>Hours:</b>	<b>Full time, permanent, 37.5 hours per week</b>
<b>Working arrangements:</b>	<b>A minimum of 4 days in the office.</b>

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#### **Main duties and responsibilities:**

1. To provide Brent residents with free advice that is accurate, effective, and tailored to individuals' circumstances. This could be face-to-face advice, or by telephone or other digital media.

This includes:

- Interviewing those that access our service using sensitive listening and questioning skills to allow them to explain their problem(s) and empower them to set their own priorities
- Researching using appropriate information sources and exploring options so that those accessing our service can make informed decisions
- Ensuring income maximisation through the appropriate take up of income, including those relating to universal credits, welfare benefits, bursary/grants and discretionary payments or reliefs.
- Acting on behalf of the client where necessary by calculating, making applications, making oral or written representation, and negotiating with third parties such as statutory and non-statutory bodies as appropriate.
- Providing in-depth quality advice and casework, including acting for the client where necessary using appropriate communication skills and channels
- Ensuring that your work reflect and support the Citizens Advice service's equality and diversity strategy.
- Maintaining detailed case records, ensuring that all work meets all auditing, quality standards and the requirements of CAB funders

2. To maintain detailed case records.

This includes:

- Ensuring that all work meets our membership and funders' requirements, and quality standards.
- Ensuring all case records are written up in a timely manner
- Maintaining clear and accurate case records that meet the quality standards of the Citizens Advice Membership Scheme.
- Maintaining records as required for continuity and consistency between different advice workers, information retrieval, statistical monitoring, accountability, and report preparation.
- Seeking support as necessary to ensure high quality of advice, best practice, and appropriateness of the degree of casework being undertaken.
- Liaising with statutory and voluntary organisations such as Department of Work and Pensions, local authority departments, and community organisations as appropriate and to keep in touch with local issues, changes in local and national policies and services.

3. Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training.

This includes:

- Ensuring you complete the required training or qualifying activity set to develop your knowledge, skills and expertise and maintaining an up-to-date record of all training sessions using the relevant platforms
- Keeping informed of new and changing legislation relevant to the post and of local issues/policies e.g., provision of services to people newly arrived in the UK.
- Reading the regular Citizens Advice news, circulars, information items, the Expert Advice Team's, and other relevant organisations' legal updates, bulletins, and other similar publications
- Participating constructively in team meetings.
- Using computers in areas relevant to the post. The post holder must be willing to undergo training in Information & Communication Technology and case management software and apply it as needed to carry out the tasks of the post.

4. Research and campaign work

- Recognise the root causes of problems and alert clients to research and campaign options.
- Submit evidence forms to Citizens Advice regularly either in response to national or local calls for evidence, or to highlight emerging social policy issues concerning disadvantaged groups and clients in general.
- Participate in local and regional research and campaign initiatives developed by CAB, its projects and partner organisations.
- Participate in the ongoing review of the organisation's policy to keep it accountable to changing local needs.
- Liaise with Citizens Advice and/or other agencies to take concerted action on research and campaign issues.
- Give talks on the work of the CAB to the other organisations for training purposes.

## 5. Administration

- Ensure that the information sources in use are up to date.
- Maintain statistics and analysis of work in accordance with CAB procedures and funding conditions.

## 6. Contribute to team

- Work to an agreed work-plan, meeting personal targets and milestones
- Work collaboratively to meet team's targets and other key performance indicators
- Be an active member of the team, identifying opportunities for your own development
- Prioritise and manage your own workload
- Demonstrate financial efficiency and value for money throughout work

## 7. Other

### Policies of the CAB Service:

- The post holder must understand and be committed to the aims, principles and policies of Citizens Advice
- Compliance with CAB policies and procedures, including health and safety
- The post holder must always have due regard in the planning and execution of their duties to the Aims, Principles, Values, and Behaviours - Working for Citizens Advice Brent, and of the Citizens Advice in general.
- Ensure that all services comply with equal opportunities and other relevant policies and quality standards and good practice

### Special Features (as required):

- The post holder will be expected to deputise for the Advice Supervisor-providing technical guidance to advisers, signing letters, making final decisions on casework and case administration, etc., if the Advice Supervisor is temporarily unavailable.
- Represent CAB on external committees/events.
- Observe all Security and Health and Safety procedures within CAB.
- Adhere to all CAB procedures and policies as set out in the office manual and any subsequent updates.
- Participate in the preparation of reports.
- Attend meetings within CAB and represent CAB as required within Citizens Advice and other organisations both during the day and occasionally in the evenings and at weekends.
- The post holder will be based at CAB main office and may be required to work at any of its service outlets and/or other outreach venues as directed.
- In addition to the above tasks and duties, the post holder will be required to undertake such other tasks and duties which may be identified as being generally compatible with the post and to the aims of CAB.
- The postholder must always have due regard in the planning and execution of their duties to the Citizens Advice Equal Opportunities Policy.
- **Note (for Information):** 'Citizens Advice' is the public name for the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux.

## Person specification: Adviser

### Essential

#### Attributes and Behaviours

1. Awareness of, and ability to, understand and empathise with clients from a diverse range of backgrounds and disadvantaged groups living in the community
2. Ability to remaining non-judgmental and impartial

#### Advice Experience:

3. Experience of using sensitive listening and questioning skills to get to the root of and fully understand a presenting legal problem, whilst maintaining the structure and control of the advice interview
4. Experience of researching legal information and caselaw using appropriate sources, and providing advice and options tailored to the clients' circumstances, relaying this in a way that is understandable to the client
5. Experience of identifying relevant next steps for clients to progress their enquiries, and empowering clients as appropriate considering the complexity of the issues, their capability, and availability of resources or support.
6. Experience of identifying and taking on appropriate casework, by acting on behalf of clients, with appropriate skills and diligence to progress their enquiry
7. Experience of case recording advice interviews, contacts with clients and relevant third parties.

#### Case Administration and teamwork:

8. Ability to work as part of a team as well as independently and be open to learning from others.
9. Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively
10. Ability to manage own time and meet deadlines
11. Awareness of GDPR provisions and ability to reflect these in case administration

#### Knowledge and Experience

12. A minimum of 2 years post-qualification as a generalist adviser or equivalent qualification with particular emphasis in welfare benefits, debt, housing and employment.
13. A commitment to continuous professional development, including a willingness to self-develop own knowledge and skills.
14. Experience of meeting targets and collecting data to support funder's monitoring and reporting requirements
15. Have essential IT and telephone skills and experience of using an online based Client Management System (CMS) to deliver advice across multiple channels