



# Help to Claim Adviser Job pack

Thanks for your interest in working at Citizens Advice West Somerset. This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work at Citizens Advice.

In this pack you'll find:

- Our values
- 3 things you should know about us
- Overview of Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice West Somerset
- The role profile and personal specification
- Terms and conditions
- What we give our staff

## Want to chat about this role?

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact Ian Atkinson by emailing [Ian.Atkinson@citizensadvicewestsomerset.org.uk](mailto:Ian.Atkinson@citizensadvicewestsomerset.org.uk) or calling 01643 700244.

## How Citizens Advice West Somerset works

The 5 Citizens Advice in West Somerset work closely together to provide a quality advice service across the County of Somerset. Citizens Advice West Somerset (formerly West Somerset Advice) is an independent charity registered with the Charity Commission and provides advice and support to West Somerset and surrounding areas. The office is in Minehead and services are delivered from outreach venues, the Job Centre being the key focus of this role.



## Our values

**We're inventive.** We're not afraid of trying new things and learn by getting things wrong. We question every idea to make it better and we change when things aren't working.

*Modern life can be complicated. We can help you simplify it*



**We're generous.** We work together, sharing knowledge and experience to solve problems. We tell it like it is and respect everyone.

**We're responsible.** We do what we say we'll do and keep our promises. We remember that we work for a charity and use our resources effectively.

## **The role**

This role is funded by the Department of Work and Pensions to provide help and support to people applying for Universal Credit. The post works closely with Minehead Job Centre meeting customers by appointment face to face and by video link. The appointments will be held in the Job Centre when social distancing allows. This is a holistic advice role and help is given to Universal Credit claimants during the first weeks of claim to ensure that we provide as much financial security as possible in the circumstances. Key to the role is the ability to assist people to overcome digital exclusion and improve digital literacy to communicate with work coaches via the Universal Credit journal.

The applicant may also be required to work from home for some sessions.

## **Role profile**

### **Advice giving**

- To provide advice on claiming Universal Credit and related benefits.
- Interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills in order to allow clients to explain their problem(s) and empower them to set their own priorities.
- Use the Citizens Advice AdviserNet website to find, interpret and communicate the relevant information.
- Research and explore options and implications so that clients can make informed decisions.
- Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning.
- Negotiate with third parties such as statutory and non-statutory bodies as appropriate.
- Ensure that all work conforms to the organisation's office manual and the Advice Quality standard / Legal Aid Agency's Quality Mark / other funding requirements, as appropriate.
- Ensure that work reflects and supports the Citizens Advice service's equality and diversity strategy.

- Maintain detailed case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation.

## **Research and Campaigns**

- Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information as appropriate.
- Alert clients to research and campaign options.
- Professional Development
- Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training.

## **Administration**

- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with line manager.
- Prepare for and attend supervisor session/team meetings/staff meetings as appropriate.
- Use IT for statistical recording of information relating to research and campaigns and funding requirements, record keeping and document production.
- Ensure all work conforms to the organisation's systems and procedures.

## **Other**

- Complete required training to comply with quality assurance processes.
- Carry out any task that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.



# **Person specification**

## **Essential Criteria**

- Ability to commit and work within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service.
- Proven understanding of equality and diversity and its application to the provision of advice.
- Proven ability to interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills to get to the root of issues and empower clients, whilst maintaining structure and control of meetings.
- Understanding of the issues affecting society and their implications for the client and service provision.
- Proven ability to research, analyse and interpret complex information

- Excellent communication skills and the ability to keep accurate notes of contact with clients
- Excellent IT skills and the ability to guide other to use cloud based sites, email and online application forms.
- Ability to undertake benefit checks and review the accuracy of calculations.

### Desirable Criteria

- An understanding of welfare benefits and in particular Universal Credit.
- Advice experience and knowledge general advice including; money, housing, employment and debt advice.

In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy the successful candidate will need to be screened by the DBS to work in the Job Centre. However, a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your being able to take up the job.



## Terms and conditions

Fixed term contract: 1 June 2021 to 31 March 2022

Hours: 22.5 per week

Annual leave: 28 days including public and bank holidays

Pay: £19,500 - 21,450 pro rata

Working day: 7.5 hrs + 30min unpaid lunch break

Travel Expenses: .45p per mile for approved travel



## What we give our staff

**Training** is available via Citizens Advice on line eLearning platform (Docebo), webinars from specialist providers and a training budget is available to access specialist external training ie CPAG.

**Employee Assistance Programme** is available to all employees to offer support in times of need 0800 030 5182.

**Time in Lieu** we operate flexible working and additional time worked may be booked in the TOIL system in Bright HR. This time may be taken

back at a time to suit the employee with the prior authorisation of the line manager.

## **3 things you should know about us**

- 1. We're local and we're national.** We have 6 national offices and offer direct support to people in around 300 independent local Citizens Advice services across England and Wales.
- 2. We're here for everyone.** Our advice helps people solve problems and our advocacy helps fix problems in society. Whatever the problem, we won't turn people away.
- 3. We're listened to - and we make a difference.** Our trusted brand and the quality of our research mean we make a real impact on behalf of the people who rely on us.

*Modern life can be complicated. We can help you simplify it*



# Overview of Citizens Advice

The Citizens Advice service is made up of Citizens Advice - the national charity - and a network of around 300 local Citizens Advice members.

This role sits our network of independent charities, delivering services from

- over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets
- over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons

They do this with:

- 6,500 local staff
- over 23,000 trained volunteers

Our reach means 99% of people in England and Wales can access a local Citizens Advice within a 30 minute drive of where they live.

