



# Citizens Advice in Somerset

## Volunteer Role

### Telephone Adviser – Home Based

#### What is a Telephone Adviser?

An adviser works 1:1 with their client to explore their problems and identify the client's advice goals. The next phase of advice giving involves researching the issues in order to present facts and information that enable the client to make informed decisions about their options. Advisers deliver advice under the guidance and supervision of our specialist supervisors.

#### What's involved?

- Receive telephone advice enquiries transferred to you through our online phone system and manage the advice interview with the client in a respectful and effective manner
- Encourage and support the client to explain their issue(s) and help the client to identify and set priorities
- Undertake research using our online advice resources to find and pass on to the client the relevant and accurate advice and support
- Enable the client to explore their options and any implications arising from them and assist the client to decide how they will move forward
- Summarise and close the session for the client
- Complete clear and accurate case records using our case management system
- Keep up to date on important issues by attending the appropriate training and by essential reading

#### We will train you to ...

- Engage clients and guide them through their interview over the telephone or by email, enabling them explain their issues and helping the client to focus and set their advice priorities
- Use our online systems and tools (advice resources) and our internet phone platform and client management system
- Research and pass on to the client the relevant advice and assist the client to explore their options and implications so that they can come to a decision about how they wish to move forward
- Complete clear and accurate case records

*This role is purely voluntary and this arrangement is not meant to be a legally binding one or an employment contract*

## **This role will suit people who ....**

- have good communication skills and IT skills
- are able to commit to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice Service and respect views, values and cultures that are different from their own
- understand why confidentiality is important and uphold our standards
- can work with others in an open and approachable manner
- enjoy working as part of a team and have positive attitudes to learning and development
- have an eye for detail and enjoy sifting through information to extract what is relevant

## **Training**

Our training is accredited by National Citizens Advice and once trained advisers will have a qualification that is recognised across the England and Wales.

The training course is free and will be delivered through a mixture of:

- online workshops and webinars
- online discussion groups
- self-study using the National Citizens Advice online learning platform
- online mentoring and observation sessions

## **Expenses**

We also cover out – of – pocket expenses where these may be incurred

## **Home Based Advising**

**Time commitment:** Advisers are invited to give 4 or more hours a week and at the current time this is between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday. One 4 hour session is the minimum volunteer commitment for this role as this gives sufficient time to advise and complete client case notes for at least 2 clients a week. We encourage advisers to offer a full day or 2 sessions (4 hours) a week where at all possible.

For any general enquiries or questions about this role please email:

[ethan@citizensadviceSouthSomerset.org.uk](mailto:ethan@citizensadviceSouthSomerset.org.uk)

**Getting started at the end of your training:** Once you have completed your training and are ready to begin delivering advice we will provide you with all the equipment you need (retained on loan while you are volunteering with us). This will include an encrypted Chromebook, Headset for internet phone calls and a facility to receive phone calls via the Chromebook.

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**The Volunteer Experience:** You will be fully supported throughout your volunteering sessions and you will be able to speak to your supervisor at all times (including if you have put the client on hold). Our supervisors will support you over the phone, on via Microsoft Teams with online chat and video calls (you will be shown how to use these). At the beginning of each session you will join the other advisers by logging into our Volunteer Adviser Portal – this is a one stop shop for all that you will need to advise with confidence.

Alongside home-based volunteering there may be opportunities to come into one of our offices in Somerset to work alongside others as you prefer. This will be confirmed once we are certain that this is permitted (Government Guidance on Covid 19) and will be offered to you alongside your home-based volunteering if this is of interest to you.

### **What our volunteers say ...**

**There is always someone to help me. I feel appreciated and all volunteers are treated equally**

**I like working as part of a professional team. The best bit is when you are able to make a client feel valued and improve their day**

### **This role will suit?**

Candidates with good people skills and IT skills who:

- Commit to the Aims and Principles of the Citizens Advice service and respect views, values and cultures that are different from their own
- Can give at least 4 hours a week to volunteer in one advice session (excluding holidays and your other planned absences)
- Understand why confidentiality is important and uphold our standards
- Are able to sift through information and extract what is relevant
- Type and use a computer with confidence
- Work effectively as part of a team and have a positive attitude to learning and development

### **What's in it for you?**

- Join a friendly and dedicated team, meet new people and make friends
- Support your local community and make a vital difference for people in very vulnerable circumstances
- Use existing skills and develop new ones
- Be treated with respect and dignity and receive great training and support



Citizens Advice in Somerset's Advice Academy is supported by the National Lottery Community Fund (Covid 19 Fund For Partners)

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