



Volunteer role description and attributes

Adviser (phone or face to face)

Citizens Advice Sheffield provides generic and specialist advice services at 11 main sites and numerous smaller outreach sites, and via our telephone advice line. We seek to empower our clients and support them to improve their confidence and capability, including in relation to finance. We advise mainly on welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment, immigration and consumer. We provide advice in numerous languages. We offer bespoke services for people with mental health problems, the Deaf community, people in hospital, and refugees and asylum seekers. We provide mental health advocacy services. We undertake specialist casework, including debt services and that undertaken by our legal service. We have well established partnerships and referral pathways including with social landlords and statutory services.

We aim for excellence. Our ambition is to be among the best advice services in the country, and one of the leading voluntary and community organisations in Sheffield. We campaign for change to social policy to improve the well-being of the people and communities we support.

Purpose

Our volunteer advisers work alongside our paid advisers and are responsible for providing front line advice to our clients, including advice about financial matters, welfare benefits, debt housing, employment, immigration, discrimination and other areas of public and social welfare law. We seek to support and empower clients to resolve their problems and gather evidence to campaign for change to improve services. Volunteer advisers who gain sufficient experience may progress to do case work or representation.

Volunteer advisers provide advice on our telephone Advice Line or at our drop in and appointment services across the city or a combination of both . We will provide you with a warm welcome, training and on-going support so that you

can carry out your role effectively. Volunteer advisers complete a 12 week training course one day a week, on-line self instruction packs and receive on-the-job mentoring. Volunteers are required to work in line with all our policies and procedures.

Tasks

Our volunteer advisers:

- Complete either our 12 week training course or on-line learning modules and associated learning activities. All trainees have to complete some “taught courses”
- Interview clients to assess their needs and advise on options available to them.
- Research information on our database and elsewhere and explain this to the client.
- Identify how much help the client may need to carry out the next steps and support them appropriately to do this.
- Record actions on our client database and keep this up to date.
- Consult with the supervisor to ensure that advice and actions are accurate and appropriate.
- Participate in supervision sessions to develop skills and contribute to service development.

Attributes

Our volunteer advisers are expected to be:

- Punctual and reliable.
- Willing to learn and attend training and supervision.
- Able to communicate effectively with clients.
- Able to work constructively as part of a team.
- Maintain boundaries
- Keep confidentiality.
- Have basic computer skills.
- Community language skills are very useful, though not essential

Time commitment

Volunteer advisers need to be available for two days for approximately a year. It may be possible to reduce this to one day a week after you have been fully trained.