

Generalist Adviser Role Volunteer Position

Reports to: Session Supervisor

Responsible for: Provide an effective and efficient generalist advice service. To help influence government and other organisations by informing them of the effect of their actions on the lives of clients through Research and Campaign work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Ways of working

- Give a service that complies with Citizens Advice principles.
- Actively support Citizens Advice equal opportunities and anti discrimination policies.
- Contribute towards a safe and positive working environment.
- Give a service which meets the need to maintain quality.

Working with clients

In response to enquiries, to interview clients in a way that is both confidential and impartial:

- Enabling the client to explain, explore and clarify the problem.
- Research and explain information and consider options.
- Assist clients in taking action by giving them support to plan and take action and by acting on their behalf including where appropriate:
Putting forward the client's case by negotiating, either by telephone or by drafting or writing a letter;
Making calculations of entitlements.
- Concluding the interview in a positive manner by making appropriate referrals, agreements and case records.

Working to influence Research and Campaign change

Contribute to the Citizens Advice Colchester's work of exercising a responsible influence on Research and Campaigns, both local and national, which affect the lives of clients by:

- Identifying enquiries which have policy implications for a number of clients.
- Raising issues of concern with colleagues.
- Participating in exercises undertaken by the Citizens Advice Colchester.
- Identifying national and local research and campaign policy issues likely to affect clients.

Equal opportunities

Contribute towards the Association's Equal Opportunities and Positive Action policies by providing an impartial and non-judgemental service to all clients:

- Identifying possible breaches of Equal Opportunities legislation, policy and practice and advising the client accordingly.
- Taking part in Research and Campaigns policy exercises focused on Equal Opportunities issues.
- Challenging behaviour which indicates discrimination
- Assisting in making the service accessible to all clients irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation and disabilities.

Developing your own practice

- Accessing own practice to identify own training and development needs
- Being assessed by the manager, advice session supervisor or bureau tutor
- Learning through training and reflection on practice
- Keeping up-to-date with the information resources, including changes and additions

- Keeping informed about the local community, local and national issues, developments and changes

Development of the Service

Contribute to the development of the team by

- Participating in staff meetings
- Contributing to the discussions about the overall planning and policy of the service, both nationally and locally

Administration

Share in the necessary administration (e.g. ordering leaflets) and domestic tasks

Further Opportunities within the service

The adviser has the opportunity to develop in ways that may include any of the following:

- Developing a wider or deeper level of advice skills for a particular enquiry area
- Research and Campaign work e.g. writing reports, letters or articles, working with other organisations and individuals, including councillors, MPs and the media
- Helping with training, e.g. tutoring, in-bureau training, supervising trainees
- Representing the service, e.g. publicity, giving talks on the work of Citizens Advice Colchester, working with local community groups, representing Citizens Advice workers on committees