



# Help Through Hardship Adviser

## Job pack

Thanks for your interest in working at Citizens Advice Mid Mercia. 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 CORE values
- 3 things you should know about us
- Overview of Citizens Advice
- The role profile and personal specification
- Terms and conditions

### **Want to chat about this role?**

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact Sneeta Binning by emailing [sbinning@citizensadvicemidmercia.org.uk](mailto:sbinning@citizensadvicemidmercia.org.uk) or by calling 07808 775475



## Our CORE values

**Communicate:** We will be consistent, positive, passionate, and listen

**Ownership:** We will be accountable, make a difference, meet deadlines, keep promises and have solutions

**Respect:** We will be honest, work with integrity, trust each other, be fair, tolerant and stand for equality

**Effective:** We will deliver quality, focus on detail and be professional



## 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.

# 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.

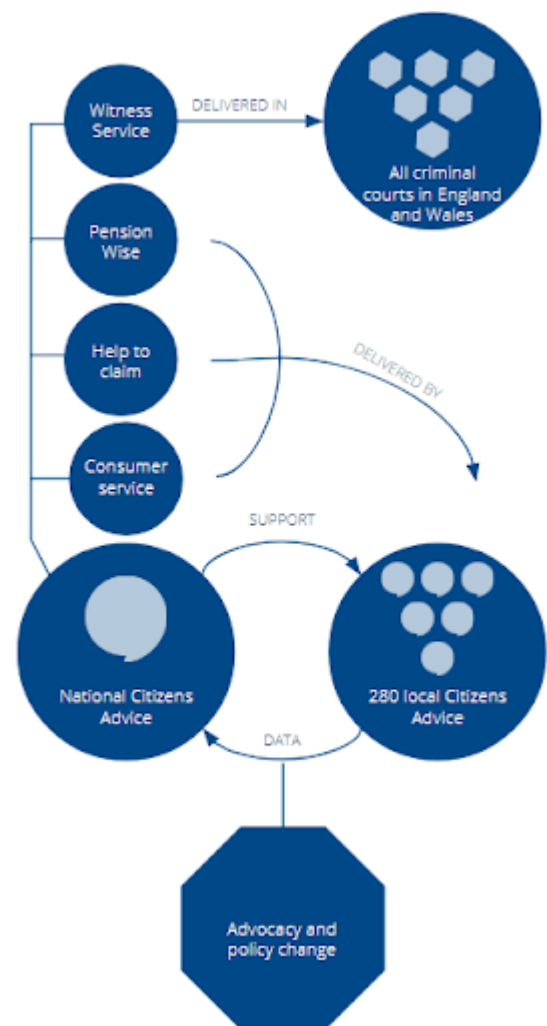
This role sits within our network of independent charities, delivering services from

- 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.



# The project

Citizens Advice, in partnership with The Trussell Trust, provides a freephone helpline for people who cannot afford food and help them obtain an e-voucher for a local food parcel. It also provides information & advice on the issues that are causing financial hardship in order to move the client forward.

## **Purpose of the helpline:**

- A freephone helpline for people who cannot afford food, to obtain an e-voucher to present at their local food bank for a food parcel
- To provide information & advice on the issues that are causing financial hardship in order to move the client forward

## **What the helpline advisers can do:**

- Establish that the client cannot afford food
- Establish if there is a local foodbank in their area accepting e-vouchers.
  - Signpost to local services if there is no local foodbank in their area accepting e-vouchers
- Issue foodbank e-voucher if there is a local foodbank in their area accepting e-vouchers
- Carry out a full exploration of the cause of financial hardship and give information (Tier1) and or advice (Tier2) on the issues identified

## **What the helpline advisers cannot do:**

- Accept third party referrals - unless the client is present
- Issue e-vouchers to people who live in an area where their local foodbank is not signed up to accept e-vouchers via the Trussell Trust e referral scheme
- Tier 3 - Casework - If following advice it is established that the client needs casework support such as appealing benefit decisions or debt then advisers will signpost or refer to their local citizens advice office for further support



## The role

We're looking for experienced generalist advisers, with a focus on delivering benefits advice, to answer telephone calls from the public and to help them access food parcels from their local food banks, and to provide information and advice on the issues that are causing them financial hardship in order to move the client forward.

The role can be part time or full time, but must cover the core hours of the service which will be 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (closed on public holidays), and the adviser must have the willingness and ability to commit to a rota.



## Role profile

### Information gathering

- Answering telephone calls into a central helpline from members of the public in a sensitive and sympathetic manner
- Ensuring GDPR and that consent is gathered from the client
- Establishing a client's eligibility for food bank vouchers
- Completion of the Trussell Trust e-voucher referral system
- Providing clients with the e-voucher and information on where they can obtain a food package
- Establishing the crisis that has resulted in the client having a need for a foodbank voucher

### Advice giving

- 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 Citizens Advice resources to find, interpret and communicate relevant information to clients
- Complete benefits checks when appropriate
- Research and explore options and implications so that clients can make informed decisions

- Act for the client where necessary using appropriate communication skills and channels
- Refer internally or to other specialist agencies as appropriate
- Ensure all work meets quality standards and the requirements of the funder and Citizens Advice
- Ensure work reflects and supports Citizens Advice's equality and diversity strategy
- Maintain detailed case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation
- Complete the required training to comply with quality assurance processes

### **Professional development**

- Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training
- Read relevant publications
- Attend relevant meetings
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings/staff meetings as appropriate

### **Administration**

- Use of telephone and IT equipment for the delivery of the service in a confidential environment
- Use of IT software for statistical recording of information relating to research and campaigns and funding requirements, record keeping and document production
- Ensure GDPR compliant training is completed on an annual basis
- Ensure all work conforms to your organisation's systems and procedures

### **Other duties and responsibilities**

- Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service
- Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of Citizens Advice
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues



# Person specification

## Essential

- Experienced Generalist adviser with up to date knowledge of the wider benefit landscape
- Ability to be able to work in a sensitive environment with minimal supervision
- Ability to carry out accurate benefit check calculations
- Basic knowledge of multiple enquiry areas to aid with identifying emergencies and making referrals where appropriate
- Ability to use sensitive listening and questioning skills to get to the root of the issues and empower clients, whilst maintaining structure and control of the calls with them
- Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively
- Good IT knowledge and the ability to use IT systems and packages, and resources in the provision of advice, record keeping and document production
- Ability to work in a confidential environment with an understanding of information assurance and safety in those settings
- Willingness and ability to commit to a rota within the core hours of the service
- Ability to commit to and work with the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service
- A good up to date understanding of equality and diversity and its application to the provision of advice
- Ability to monitor and maintain standards for advice provision and quality assurance.



# Terms and conditions

## **Location**

Remote working with occasional work across Citizens Advice Mid Mercia offices – including Church Gresley and Derby City

## **Pay scale**

£19,048pa (FTE)

## **Reports to**

Advice Project Lead

## **Work Pattern**

37.5 hours per week – Monday to Friday 9:00 – 17:00

## **Start date**

As soon as possible - Fixed Term Until 31 March 2023 with the possibility of extension subject to continued funding

## **Probation Period**

6 months – with possible extension if performance review is required

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