



Welfare Benefits Caseworker

Job pack

Thanks for your interest in working at Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall. 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 Sandwell & Walsall
- 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 Geri Taylor by emailing recruitment@citizensadvice-sandwell-walsall.org or calling 07841 599390

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.

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.

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.

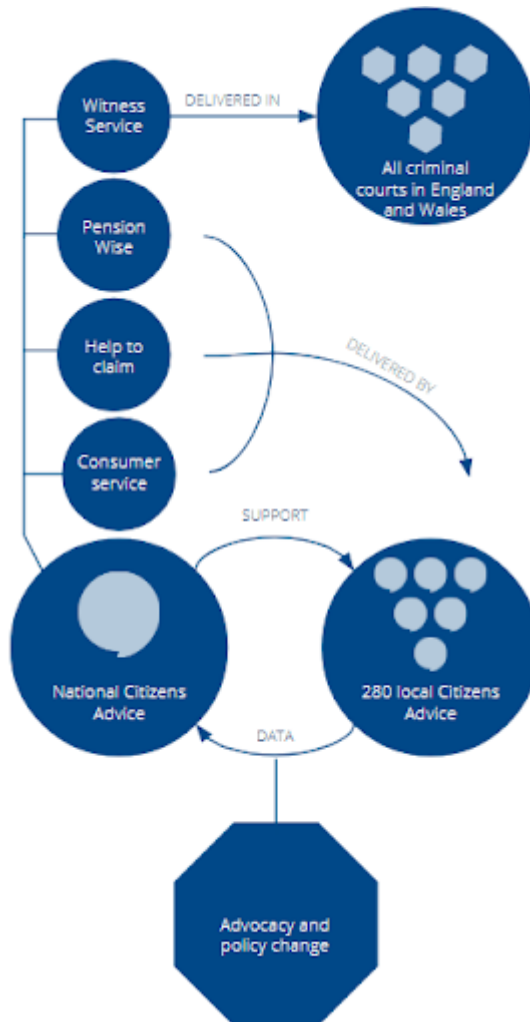
This role sits our network of independent charities, delivering services from

- 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 role

Hours: 18.5 hours per week

Salary: £25,294 pro-rata

Contract: Fixed Term until March 2023

Location: Sandwell & Walsall - main office base Walsall

Closing Date: 11th August 2022

To provide a specialist welfare benefits advice, to clients through various channels available in the locations and dependent on service needs.



Role profile

Case management:

- Where necessary provide casework covering the full range of welfare benefits specialism. This includes form filling, mandatory reconsideration, appeals, submissions and representation.
- To receive clients and determine the nature and details of their enquiry.
- To complete benefit checks.
- To interpret information and present options to clients, including relevant costs and consequences, in a clear, concise and unbiased way, which will allow them to determine an option of their own choice. Ability to assess merit of cases.
- To assist, not serve, clients on the basis of minimum necessary intervention with the clear aim of empowering them, wherever possible, to retain full responsibility for, and control over, the chosen option.
- Prepare and present cases to the appropriate statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as appropriate.
- Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case and refer to other advisers or specialist agencies as appropriate.
- Work closely with Generalist Supervisors and provide resource support to staff and volunteers.
- Meet the Quality Standards for Citizens Advice.

- Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and submitting reports.
- Ensure that all work conforms to the CAS&W systems and procedures.
- Ability to work well under pressure and meet targets.
- Demonstrate good organisation and time management skills.

Research and campaigns:

- Assist with research and campaign work by providing information about client's circumstances, using the electronic evidence forms (as needed). Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to the line manager.
- Monitor service provision to ensure that it reaches the widest possible client group.
- Alert other staff to local and national issues.

Professional development:

- Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to the role and service needs.
- Read relevant publications.
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings and forums as appropriate.
- Assist with Service initiatives for the improvement of services.

Administration:

- Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
- Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to CAS&W work and undertake appropriate training.
- Maintain close liaison with relevant external agencies.

Public relations:

- Liaise with statutory and non-statutory organisations and represent the Service to outside bodies as appropriate.

- Other duties and responsibilities
- Carry out tasks that may be asked of you by your line manager to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service needs.
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues.
- Occasional evening and weekend availability will be required.
- Willingness to provide advice using different platforms such as webchat, adviceline and
- Undertake home visits.



Person specification

	Essential
Knowledge and Experience of Benefits Advice	Comprehensive knowledge of welfare benefits enquiry areas. Experience of completion of the various welfare benefit forms - for example Personal Independence payments, DLA and ESA Experience of completing detailed Mandatory Reconsideration, Appeals and submissions in all areas of welfare benefits. Ability to carry out benefit checks, income maximisation.
I.T	Competence in using I.T. across a range of platforms, including providing advice, case recording, the preparation of reports and submissions.
Detailed advice Casework and case recording	Ability to manage caseload and assess merit in clients cases. Ability to understand information and research where necessary. Have an ordered approach to casework. Ability as well as willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures. Ability to monitor and maintain high standards of client records and all other paperwork.

	Ability to empower clients through self-help.
Excellent communication skills	Effective oral communication skills with particular emphasis on advising clients and speaking to third parties Effective writing skills including preparing mandatory reconsideration, appeals and submissions. Ability to deal appropriately with a range of people both face to face, by email and over the telephone. Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively.
Skills	Deliver excellent customer service. Able to deal with difficult situations effectively. Ability to prioritise own work and meet deadlines. Ability to maintain high levels of accuracy in all aspects of work. Ability to meet contract targets . Able to work well under pressure. Ability to work alone using your own initiative and as part of a wider team. Excellent organisation, planning and time management skills.
Training	To keep up to date with the company's mandatory training requirements. Positive attitude towards self-development.
Other requirements	Flexible approach to work. Demonstrate understanding of social trends - their implications for clients and service provision.

	Willingness to provide advice using a variety of platforms. Respect different views, values and cultures. Prepared to travel to other offices, as required and venues as required.
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In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy we will may the successful candidate to be screened by the DBS. However, a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your being able to take up the job.



Terms and conditions

To apply for this vacancy please visit our website

www.citizensadviceandwell-walsall.org and complete the application form highlighting your suitability for the role.

Please note on occasions where we receive a large number of applications, we may close the advert ahead of the publicised closing date.

If you require a reasonable adjustment or other assistance to apply for this role please contact the Recruitment Team at recruitment@citizensadviceandwell-walsall.org or call 07841 599390. Please note CV's will not be accepted.



What we give our staff

We value all our people and can offer a **supportive culture** within a charity setting that is committed to social justice. All of the roles below attract a rewarding remuneration package with excellent terms including:

- A flexible 37 hour working week

- Pension scheme
- Generous holiday entitlement (26 days per year in addition to bank holidays)