

Generalist Adviser Volunteer

Citizens Advice Plymouth depends on its volunteers to deliver face to face and telephone advice, advocacy and information to the clients who need us. We helped over 11,000 people across the city last year, dealing with nearly 78,000 enquiries and helping our client's access over a £1 million of income.

We are looking for people who are passionate, positive, organised and effective communicators who want to play a key role in helping us deliver our much-needed service across Plymouth.

The role of a Generalist Adviser is to give people the advice they need for the problems they face, to help them examine all their available options and decide on an informed course of action. Some clients are more capable than others and your role will include supporting vulnerable clients when necessary. The role of a Generalist Adviser can be demanding, but is rewarding and worthwhile. Full training and support will be given and always available.



What will you do?

- Complete an introduction to Citizens Advice
- Complete comprehensive training for your role on a number of enquiry areas; benefits, housing, employment and debt,
- Develop effective communication and interview skills to help identify key details of a client's enquiry, in order to research and present advice and options to help clients make informed choices.
- Complete observations of experienced advisers, undertake mock and assisted appointments to complete your on the role training (*Approx 3-6 months depending on commitment*).
- Interview clients face-to-face or via the telephone to identify their needs and expectations
- Help clients to set their priorities and agree an action plan, supporting vulnerable clients in this where necessary. (For example

referral, signposting and/or advocating on their behalf (in writing or phone calls)

- Interpret and communicate options and appropriate information to the clients
- Complete detailed computer-based case-recording to meet Citizens Advice Quality Standards.
- Keep up to date with legislation and sources of information.
- Keep an eye on, and report, problems which are common or unfair, and write a short report on these issues



What's in it for you?

- Make a real difference to people's lives
- Learn about a range of issues such as benefits, debt, employment and housing.
- Build on valuable skills such as communication, listening and problem solving, and increase your employability
- Work with a range of different people, independently and in a team.
- Gain a meaningful qualification- Recognised Competency Certificate
- Have a positive impact in your community.
- And we'll reimburse expenses too.



What do you need to have?

- Demonstrate commitment towards the aims, values and principles of Citizens Advice
- Be friendly, approachable and respectful of values or cultures different to your own
- Good communication skills, both written and oral – listening and relating to people on different levels.
- Be competent with computers
- Have basic numeracy skills

- Have a desire to aid others in the community
- Be sensitive towards the individual needs of our clients
- Ability to understand and interpret key information to provide effective advice
- Show willingness to learn throughout the training and the role



How much time do you need to give?

Expectation for volunteers in this role is at least one full day a week working towards your Generalist Advice Competency Certificate.

This would consist of 8 hours per week; ideally at least one full day, but can be spread over spread over two days, for at least 12 months.



Valuing inclusion

Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds and we particularly welcome applications from people with physical or mental health conditions, LGBT+ and non-binary people, and people from Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.