



Volunteer Application Pack

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Information on Citizens Advice Waverley

Citizens Advice Waverley is an independent registered charity and company limited by guarantee. This single strategic service delivers effective advice services to a population of nearly 116,000 people across the towns, villages and rural areas of Waverley. This service is delivered from our four offices, located at Cranleigh, Farnham, Godalming and Haslemere as well as through our outreach surgeries and home visiting.

Citizens Advice Waverley is one of only 3 Bureaux in the country chosen for a very exciting Access Strategy Pilot Project back in 2006. This project is enabling us to streamline our advice delivery so that more people can use our services by:

- A short assessment interview for all our callers quickly identifying the best advice option for their enquiry
- A dedicated telephone advice line providing quick and direct access to an adviser
- An electronic diary system allowing for instant appointment booking at a time and place convenient to the client
- A Kiosk in each reception area enabling clients access to advice websites
- An Information Assistant to help clients in their search for leaflets and advice websites

Citizens Advice Waverley is governed by the Board of Trustees, who is ultimately responsible for the quality and range of service. The senior management team comprises a District Manager responsible for the strategic development of the service and an Operations Manager responsible for the overall delivery and quality of the advice service and the development of the advice service. Advisers at each of our bureaux are supported by an Advice Manager and an administrator. Our Guidance Tutor is responsible for new volunteer training. All our posts are part-time.

Citizens Advice Waverley receives financial support from Waverley Borough Council (WBC) and the local Town and Parish Councils. However this support does not cover all of the core costs. The resultant shortfall together with any project work is funded through donations and grants.

Please read this guide BEFORE completing the application form

What do advisers do?

- **Interviewing**
All kinds of people come into the bureau with all kinds of problems. The adviser helps clients to explain their problems and asks questions to clarify the situation.
- **Giving information**
Advisers have access to a comprehensive information system to help clients. A supervisor is on hand to help out with difficult problems.
- **Giving advice and practical help**
The adviser has to explain the choices that the client has, so that the client can decide what to do. Advisers help clients by filling in forms, drafting letters, making phone calls and calculating benefits.
- **Case recording**
It is very important that all clients' cases are recorded so that the bureau can offer an efficient service if the client comes back or the case gets more difficult. Your supervisor will show you how the case recording is done in your bureau.
- **Preventing problems**
Bureaux collect a lot of information on the different problems that clients have. This information is used to influence government policy or a company practice.
- **Administration**
Advisers may be asked to help out with some basic office work, for example keeping the information files or local information up to date, amending stocks of leaflets, typing letters etc.

What support and training do I get?

All CAB advisers complete a comprehensive four-stage training Programme. This can last from 4 weeks (full time) to 18 months (part time) depending upon the amount of time you can give. The Certificate programme includes:

- Training packs and observation on the advice process (interviewing)
- Training packs on the main enquiry areas (debt, employment, benefits etc.)
- A training course to explore and practice aspects of advising clients
- Interviewing clients with close support and supervision and attending further courses as needed.

What we want from Volunteers

- **Impartiality**
Whatever your views are, you will be expected to advise all kinds of clients on any kind of problem they have. You will need to be prepared to examine your own views and feelings to make sure that you are able to give an equally good service to everyone.
- **Equal opportunities**
All advisers are expected to carry out the CABx policy of equal opportunities. This means actively opposing all forms of discrimination and ensuring that the service is equally available to all people.

- **Confidentiality**

Everything that you see and hear in the bureau is private. Every adviser must sign an agreement to observe a strict rule of confidentiality before they start volunteering.

- **A commitment to training**

A willingness to learn and develop is central to being an effective adviser. Learning to be a generalist adviser involves a great deal of commitment to training and learning. All advisers periodically assess how they are performing via a set of competences specifically adapted for the role of adviser. This helps identify training and development needs.

Things are always changing and you will need to spend some time reading in order to keep yourself up to date. All kinds of training courses, sessions and self-study material are available for advisers to develop their skills and knowledge.

- **Bureau staff meetings**

As part of your continuing development it is a priority to attend the bureau staff meetings. They provide a forum for training, case discussion, explanation of policy and practice, and mutual support. Each bureau has a schedule of monthly meetings, advertised in advance. During the year, some staff meetings will be combined across the District to facilitate learning or the opportunity to hear an interesting speaker. These are also a good opportunity to meet Volunteers from the other bureaux in Waverley.

All bureau workers are requested to attend the Annual General Meeting.

- **Time**

To run an effective service we generally need **advisers** to volunteer in the bureau a minimum of 1 day (average 6-8hrs) per week. We ask you to arrive about 30 minutes before the start of their session to enable time to prepare and attend the pre-shift briefing session.

A regular weekly commitment for **Administrators** is agreed with the appropriate Advice Manager.

There is an expectation that all volunteers will be flexible to the changing needs of the bureau and may from time to time be asked to change their day or work or to do an extra session to cover holidays and sickness.

All volunteers are recommended to take a half-hour break for lunch when doing a full day's session.

- **Do I get expenses?**

It is CAB policy that bureau volunteers should get out-of-pocket expenses. Mileage is paid at 40p per mile and is paid for each trip to the bureau (max return journey 12 miles) and for each training event (no limit). Receipts are required for expenses such as car-parks, bus journeys, etc.

Expenses are normally paid monthly by BACS, ask your Advice Manager for guidance on this.

Volunteers driving their own cars on bureau business are reminded to ensure they have the correct insurance policy to cover them for personal and business use.

- **What happens after I have filled in the application form?**

Return the form to the Advice Manager, Citizens Advice Waverley, Montrose House, 50 South Street, Farnham, GU9 7RN

If you are applying to be an **Adviser**, you will be invited to attend an Assessment Day, where you will be asked to perform some activities such as researching and interpreting complex information. You will also get an opportunity to meet with other potential Volunteer Advisers and people already working in Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Following this assessment day, you will be invited to an interview at the Bureau where you wish to train and work from. You will be asked to complete a short and basic maths test on this occasion also. This will give you a taster of the typical calculations you would be expected to perform with clients.

Our aim is to inform you of the results of your application as quickly as possible after your interview. Any invitation to join us as a Trainee Adviser will be subject to satisfactory references.

Note: The following applies only to advisers, and not to other roles.

Sections 25 and 26 (1) (d) or (g) of the Immigration Act 1971 are concerned with the following offences: assisting illegal entry, falsifying documentation or obstructing the authorities investigating immigration offences. If you have committed one of the offences above you may still be able to become an adviser; however, we would have to contact the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner in order to discuss the issues.

If you are applying as an Administrator or an Advice Support Worker, you will not need to attend an assessment day. All other aspects of the recruitment process outlined above apply.

Please keep these notes



Application form to become a CAB volunteer

Please read the accompanying information before completing this form.

If you find the form difficult to understand or complete, please contact your local bureau.

1. **Name:** Mr/Ms/other (please state)

2. **Address:**

..... **Postcode:**

3. **Telephone:**

4. **Email (if you have access):**

5. **Are you interested in any particular type of volunteer role(s)?**

eg adviser, administrator, social policy co-ordinator, trustee

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6. **Describe any skills you have that would be useful for the role you wish to do.**

Some we have thought of include dealing with people face-to-face or on the phone, speaking/writing a language other than English, sign language, filing, research, using a computer, helping people to learn

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7. **Is there anything you have done over the past few years that you would like to tell us about?**

eg employment, work experience, volunteering, community activity (involvement in tenants' associations, school activities, support groups, etc), caring for children, other relatives or a friend, classes, training courses

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8. Why do you want to volunteer for the CAB? What do you hope to get from the experience?

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9. What do you think are some of the main problems facing your community?

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10. It is useful to know when you will be available to volunteer. Please indicate below the times when you are generally available:

Monday

am.....
pm.....

Thursday

am.....
pm.....

Tuesday

am.....
pm.....

Friday

am.....
pm.....

Wednesday

am.....
pm.....

Saturday

am.....
pm.....

Please indicate approximately how many hours or days per week you would like to volunteer for:

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Are there any times that you are unlikely to be available, eg school holidays?

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11. Is there anything else you would like to say about yourself?

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12. References

Please give the names and addresses of two people, other than your family, who can tell us about you – eg an employer, teacher or someone who knows you well.

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Postcode:	Postcode:

13. Please tell us about any specific needs you would like us to take into account, either at the interview or if we offer you a volunteer role eg mobility.

This information will be treated as strictly confidential.

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Please note: To ensure the safety of our clients, the Citizens Advice service requires that all volunteers who have access to clients have their criminal records checked. However, the Citizens Advice service is committed to the promotion and delivery of equal opportunities to volunteers and so has a policy to ensure ex-offenders are not discriminated against.

All offences, other than sexual crimes against a child or vulnerable adult, will be treated on an individual basis taking into account issues such as the risk to the client, the circumstances of the offence (eg what it was, is it relevant to the volunteer role, how long ago it was) and the reputation of the bureau.

Signed:

Date:

**Please return this erley
Montrose House
South Street
Farnham
Surrey
GU9 7RN**

Or email to bureau@farnhamcab.cabnet.org.uk

Monitoring information

The CAB service aims to provide equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people applying to be volunteers regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual identity or marital status.

In order to achieve these aims we have a policy of monitoring the recruitment and composition of bureau staff and volunteers. All information will be treated confidentially. **This information will not affect your application.**

Age

- <25 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

Gender

- Female Male

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes No

Ethnic Origin

- Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi Indian Pakistani
 Other (please specify)

- Black or Black British African Caribbean
 Other (please specify)

- Chinese Any Chinese Background (please specify)
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- White British Irish
 Other (please specify)

Any other background (please specify)

What made you apply to be volunteer? eg newspaper article, poster, through a friend

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Data Protection Act 1998

As part of the recruitment procedure we may collect and store sensitive personal data about you. We are required by law to obtain your consent to such data being recorded. It is our policy to store data relating to recruitment procedures for up to a year after the date on which it is submitted. Any information of this nature will be treated confidentially. Sensitive personal data is defined as information relating to any of the following: racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, health, sexuality or sex life, offences and/or convictions.

For the purposes of the Act the Data Controller is CAB.

I give my consent to sensitive personal information being recorded and stored.

Signed

Date: