



Housing Caseworker

Job pack

Thank you for your interest in working at Citizens Advice Bromley. 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 Bromley
- The role profile and personal specification

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.

How Citizens Advice Bromley works

Our main focus of activity is around the needs for advice and representation of people who live or work in Bromley, and our services are geared to reflect what they want from us.

Feedback from our existing clients suggests that they value the professionalism of our service, the depth and expertise of the advice available and the accessibility of the service once initial contact has been made.

Citizens Advice Bromley is working as partners with other organisations such as Bromley Third Sector Enterprise (BTSE), Age UK Bromley & Greenwich, Bromley & Lewisham & Greenwich Mind, Bromley Mencap on our Bromley Well service as well working alongside Bromley Borough Foodbank in Bromley and as partners on the Debt Free London project amongst others.

Generalist Services

In addition to the work on our Bromley Well project we offer a service which consists of information and advice by way of our initial assessment and advice service. Citizens Advice Bromley comprises:

- Remote telephone advice service. Subject areas include: welfare benefits, consumer, money advice, employment, housing, family and personal matters, taxes, immigration and nationality, health, education, and discrimination.
- Online web chat advice service. Subject areas include: welfare benefits, consumer, money advice, employment, housing, family and personal matters, taxes, immigration and nationality, health, education, and discrimination.
- We currently operate outreach services in Orpington and Beckenham & Penge collectively which provide initial assessment and advice service. Subject areas include welfare benefits, consumer, debt, employment, housing, family and personal matters, taxes, immigration and nationality, health, education, and discrimination relating to any of these.

As well as providing additional advice our outreach services also work with the foodbanks and Job Centre plus services in Bromley.

- In addition we subcontract a Forms Completion Service to Age UK Bromley & Greenwich which provides assistance with form filling for those who are unable to attend the local office or outreaches due to ill health. Referrals to this service are taken from a number of organisations in Bromley.
- We champion research and campaign and actively challenge poor social injustices.

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.

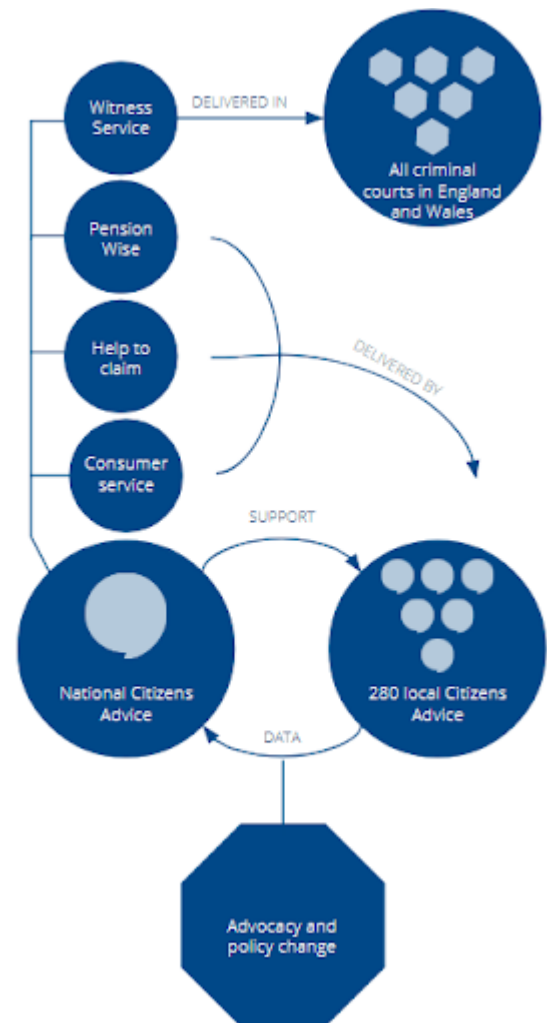
This role sits our network of independent charities, delivering services from

- over 420 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

Citizens Advice Bromley is looking for an experienced Housing Caseworker to work with our dynamic team providing and supporting our community with housing advice in our main office and at our outreaches across the Borough.



Role profile

Casework

1. Provide efficient and effective specialist advice and casework on the full range of housing issues (including homelessness, allocations and landlord issues) that meet funder requirements, quality standards and achieves performance targets.
2. Identify key information about the problem presented including time limits, key dates and requirement for urgent advice or action.
3. Interviewing clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills to allow clients to explain their problems(s) and empower them to make informed decisions.
4. Research and explore options and implications so that the client can make an informed decision
5. Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters, telephoning and using other appropriate channels
6. Assist and advice clients on negotiating with creditors, third parties or exercising formal appeal rights as appropriate.
7. Prepare and present cases to the appropriate statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as appropriate.
8. 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.
9. Provide advice and assistance to other staff and volunteers providing information and support as needed.
10. Ensure that all casework conforms to Citizens Advice Bromley's Office Manual and the Advice Quality Standard and/or the Specialist Quality Mark as appropriate.
11. Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework,

- information retrieval, and statistical monitoring and report preparation.
12. Ensure that all work conforms to Citizens Advice Bromley's systems and procedures.

Planning and Organising

13. The post holder is required to manage their own workload and time effectively and efficiently to ensure that the objectives of the role and services to clients are delivered on time and agreed targets are met.

Research and campaigns

14. Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances.
15. Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to management.
16. Monitor service provision to ensure that it reaches the widest possible client group.
17. Alert other staff to local and national issues.

Professional development

18. Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to housing and undertake appropriate training.
19. Read relevant publications.
20. Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
21. Prepare for and attend caseworker meetings/staff meetings and other meetings as appropriate.
22. Assist with Service initiatives for the improvement of services.

Administration

23. Review and make recommendations for improvements to services.
24. Maintain local information systems.
25. Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
26. Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to bureau work and undertake appropriate training.
27. Attend internal and external meetings as agreed with the manager.
28. Maintain close liaison with relevant external agencies.
29. Maintain a library of reference material and case law.

Public relations

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

Other duties and responsibilities

31. Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
32. Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the CAB service.
33. Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.



Person specification

Essential

1. At least 2 years' experience in delivering good quality specialist housing advice, casework and representation on a full range of housing matters.
2. Willingness to develop knowledge and experience of Housing advice to casework level
3. An ordered approach to casework and an ability to follow set procedures concerning casework and file management to achieve the expected standard required of the role
4. Effective oral communication skills with particular emphasis on negotiating and representing.
5. Effective writing skills with particular emphasis on negotiating, representing and preparing reviews, reports and correspondence.
6. Understand the issues involved in interviewing clients and deal impartially and courteously with people from different backgrounds.
7. Numerate to the level required in the tasks.
8. Ability to prioritise own work, work on your own initiative, meet deadlines and manage caseload.
9. Ability to use IT in the provision of advice and the preparation of reports and submissions.
10. Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.
11. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team.
12. Ability to maintain professional standards and provide professional support to colleagues

13. Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision.

14. Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of Citizens Advice Bromley and its equality and diversity policies.

Desirable

15. Experience of tribunal representation or willingness to develop this area