

Volunteer Adviser



What will you do?

- complete an introduction to Citizens Advice and training for your role
- talk to clients over the phone, face to face, or online to explore what problems they've come for help with
- find information about the clients' problems and help them to understand their options
- support clients to take action to resolve their problems. This might include drafting or writing letters, making phonecalls, or referring the client to another organisation
- write a summary of the clients' problems and what action you've taken
- look out for problems' that are common, or are unfair, and write a short report about the problem or a letter to an elected official like an MP or local councillor

Some examples of what you could do:

- help client with debts work out a reasonable amount to pay back, and make a phonecall to an organisation they owe money to.
- explore what benefits a client is entitled to and help them to complete a benefit application form.
- help a client who has problems with their landlord to understand their housing rights.



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.
- have a positive impact in your community.

And we'll reimburse expenses too.

No prior experience is necessary in these areas as you'll receive full training. For individuals who are doing advice giving roles, and who are also training to be a solicitor, if you started training to be a solicitor before 1st September 2021, you may be able to get up to six months reduction in your training contract.

If you started training to be a solicitor after 1st September 2021, you may be able to include time spent volunteering (or working) in advice giving roles as part of (or all of) your qualifying work experience. See [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#) for more information.



What do you need to have?

You don't need specific qualifications or skills but you'll need to:

- be friendly and approachable
- be non-judgmental and respect views, values and cultures that are different to your own
- have good listening skills
- have excellent verbal and written communication skills
- have good maths and IT skills
- be able to understand information and explain it to others
- be willing to learn about and follow the Citizens Advice aims, principles and policies, including confidentiality and data protection
- be willing to undertake training in your role



How much time do you need to give?

The Citizens Advice Adviser Learning Programme takes around 18 months to complete. At Esher, training takes place on a Wednesday morning in our office at Elmbridge Civic Centre. The initial training period lasts around six months, during which time you will also sit in on client interviews for half a day a week to observe what we do.

And you will need to be motivated to self-study at home – allow between half to one day per week to do this. After around six months, you will start to interview clients while continuing to study.

Once you have completed your initial training, the time commitment is two half-day sessions a week (or a whole day), as well as attending our monthly staff meetings and ongoing training.

You will appreciate that to train an adviser is quite an investment for us, so we ask for a commitment of two years.

Valuing inclusion

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

Contact details

If you are interested in becoming an adviser and would like to discuss the role further, please email us at bureau@eshercab.org.uk and we will get back in touch with you.