



Approval Date	
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## Benefits Adviser - Food Banks

Thank you for your interest in joining Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove's (CABH) growing Advice Projects team. This document should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work for Citizens Advice.

**Responsible to:** Senior Caseworker

**Salary:** £27,172 per annum (£29,245 for a qualified debt caseworker)

**Contract:** Fixed term until September 2025 with possibility of extension

**Hours:** 37 hours per week

**Role purpose:** Provide high quality advice to casework level to food bank users and support the activities of The Whitehawk and Hollingdean Food Banks.

**Place of work:** The post holder will work primarily from Whitehawk and/ Hollingdean Food banks, as well as CABH offices in Hove.

**Context of the Role:** The project will focus on providing a drop in service and follow up advice and support on income maximisation to users of Trussell Trust partners Whitehawk and Hollingdean food banks

### Overview:

Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove is seeking a dedicated adviser to establish and deliver our outreach project with Trussell Trust Partners Whitehawk and Hollingdean food banks. The postholder will be primarily based within the two food banks providing drop in services and one-to-one appointments for advice on benefits and income maximisation. They will need to deliver services in line with funder requirements, maintain our high quality of advice and make sure clients get the best advice and outcomes available.

We are looking for an experienced benefits adviser with a commitment to tackling food poverty. The ideal candidate will also be trained to deliver full debt casework to FCA standards. We will provide training to fully equip the adviser to deliver high quality advice and casework, as well as an ongoing focus on continual professional development.

We're here to give advice to everyone, and understand that diversity in our workforce is the best way of understanding the varying needs of the city around us, so we welcome applications from all communities.

In this pack you'll find:

- Our aims
- 3 things you should know about us
- Our approach to equality and diversity
- Overview of the role
- Person Specification



Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove has two aims:

1. **to provide the advice people need for the problems they face** – this means helping people understand their rights and responsibilities so that they can make informed choices
2. **to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives** – this means we listen to our client's problems and provide evidence to policy makers on the impact of legislation on real people's lives.



## 3 things you should know about us

1. **We're local and we're national.** Citizens Advice is a membership organisation consisting of 6 national offices and 279 independent local Citizens Advice services across England and Wales. Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove sits within the local network and is an independent charity in its own right.
2. **We're here for everyone.** Our advice helps people find a way forward. 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 work means we make a real impact on behalf of the people who rely on us. Our research and Campaigns team work to raise key issues both locally and nationally



# Equality and inclusion

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is a priority for us and we have a collective responsibility to build an equitable and inclusive service that reflects our values. Citizens Advice is open to everyone living or working in Brighton and Hove. Our service is free, independent, confidential and impartial. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.



## The Role Outline

### Advice and Casework

- Provide advice on income maximisation to users of two local Trussell Trust partner services, the Whitehawk Food bank and Hollingdean Food Bank
- Identify client needs and refer or signpost to other local services where appropriate
- Ensure that all advice meets quality standards.
- Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation in line with organisation and funder requirements.
- Prioritise caseload and work flexibly.
- Ensure that all work conforms to CABH systems and procedures.

### Service specific activity

- Run drop in advice services at Hollingdean and Whitehawk food banks
- Offering a full benefits service including entitlement checks, form filling and appeals
- Support with income maximisation including identifying and applying for grants where appropriate
- Identifying debt advice needs and referring as appropriate to specialist services
- Work closely with food bank staff and volunteers, attending quarterly reviews and other service meetings as required
- Provide training and support to food bank volunteers to ensure a well-integrated service

### Research & Campaigns

- Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances.

### Professional Development

- Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to specified areas and undertaking appropriate training.

- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
- Prepare to attend supervision sessions/team meetings/management team meetings as appropriate

### **Administration**

- Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
- Attend internal and external meetings as agreed with the manager.
- Maintain a library of reference material and case law.
- Liaise with statutory and non-statutory services and present the service to outside bodies as appropriate.

### **Other duties and responsibilities**

- Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
- Be alert to funding opportunities and contribute to funding bids and proposals.
- Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of CABH and.
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues

### **Person specification - Essential criteria**

1. A commitment to the vision of ending the need for food banks
2. Knowledge and experience of the UK welfare system
3. Effective communication skills (oral & written) including the ability to explain complex information to others in an accessible way, and an adaptable style suitable for working with clients, partner agencies and official bodies.
4. Emotional resilience to deal with clients in vulnerable or difficult circumstances, and the ability to work with them in a sensitive manner
5. Reflective approach to professional boundaries and rapport building in the client-adviser relationship
6. An ability to demonstrate a high level of commitment to training, identify own training needs and participate in continued personal development opportunities
7. The ability to prioritise tasks, manage a varied workload and work to deadlines using own initiative
8. Have an ordered approach to casework and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures and work within the advice framework
9. Utilising IT including case recording platforms and cloud-based applications in the provision of advice and the preparation of reports and submissions.
10. Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the organisation's service and its equality and diversity policies.

### **Desirable criteria**

1. Recent experience (in last 3 years ) of delivering advice

2. Qualified debt caseworker with up to date certification
3. Awareness of the local community and social challenges in the area and their implications for clients and service provision

Thank you for your interest in this role