



**Position: Citizens Advice Welfare Reform Advisor**

**Date:** January 2017

**Term:** Fixed term to 31 March 2018 (with possible extension)

**Location:** Greater Belfast area

**Salary:** NJC Scale 5 (£20,253 - £22,212)

<b>Reporting to:</b>	Service Manager, Citizens Advice Belfast
<b>Role purpose:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To work within the Citizens Advice family to provide high quality advice and support to clients in all areas of Welfare Reform and Welfare Reform mitigations.</li><li>• To assist clients with applications for all benefits introduced under Welfare Reform, including digitally where possible</li><li>• To provide advice and assistance to clients on sanctions</li><li>• To provide information to clients on available help with employability where appropriate</li><li>• To assist clients to improve their financial capability, including referral to expert debt and money advice help within Citizens Advice</li><li>• To provide support to clients to improve their digital capability</li><li>• To work within Citizens Advice and with partners to ensure clients receive help and support to resolve their problems</li><li>• To contribute to the delivery of the Welfare Reform Support project, commensurate with the role of Welfare Reform Adviser</li></ul>

Key Accountabilities	Elements/Tasks	
<p><b>Advice Giving</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise and support clients with all aspects of Welfare Reform related issues</li> <li>• Interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills in order to allow clients to explain their problem(s)</li> <li>• Research and explore options and implications so that clients can make informed decisions</li> <li>• Ensure income maximisation through the take up of all appropriate benefits</li> <li>• Provide assistance to clients with their financial capability, digital capability and signposting to employability support as appropriate</li> <li>• Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case, referring them to other advisors or specialist agencies as appropriate</li> <li>• Respond proactively to client demand, working to agreed service delivery standards</li> <li>• Use the Citizens Advice AdviserNet platform to find, interpret and communicate relevant information.</li> <li>• Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters, completing forms (including online forms) and telephoning.</li> <li>• Negotiate with third parties, including statutory bodies.</li> <li>• Maintain Case records to the standard required by the Citizens Advice Quality Scheme for the purpose of continuity of casework, information, retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation</li> <li>• Refer internally within Citizens Advice and its projects or to other specialist agencies as appropriate, to include the other resource teams within the WRSP project</li> <li>• Ensure that all work conforms to the Citizens Advice Quality Standard</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Research and campaigns</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist with research and campaign work by providing information about clients' circumstances as appropriate</li> <li>• Assist in monitoring of service provision to ensure that it reaches the widest possible client group</li> <li>• Comply with the Social Policy requirements of Citizens Advice</li> <li>• Alert other staff to local issues relevant to the role and wider organisation</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Professional Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures and undertake all appropriate training</li> <li>• Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with line manager and those relevant to the project</li> <li>• Prepare for and attend supervision sessions and team meetings as appropriate</li> </ul>	
<p><b>General</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Citizens Advice IT systems for statistical recording of information relating to funding requirements, research &amp; campaigns, record keeping and document production</li> <li>• Promotion of the Welfare Reform Support Project, to include presentations to local groups</li> <li>• Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to the role and office location</li> <li>• Keep up to date with Citizens Advice aims, policies and procedures and ensure these are followed.</li> <li>• Ensure that work reflects and supports the Citizens Advice service equality and diversity policies.</li> <li>• Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own health and safety and that of colleagues</li> <li>• Carry out any other tasks within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service</li> <li>• Undertake any additional activities that are consistent with the general duties of this post</li> </ul>	

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Essential**

1. Citizens Advice Advisor Training Programme or Law Centre NI WRAP qualification
2. Experience advising on Social Security benefits, applicants will be tested on their benefit knowledge as part of the interview process
3. Effective oral and written skills
4. Ordered approach to casework and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures
5. Understand the issues involved in interviewing clients
6. Numerate to the level required of a Benefits Advisor
7. Ability to prioritise own work, meet deadlines and manage caseload
8. Ability to use IT packages, including Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) or similar in the provision of advice, the preparation of reports and submissions as well as the ability to use email and to maintain an electronic diary.
9. Proven ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.
10. Ability to contribute to the work of a team and use standardised systems and processes
11. Ability to monitor and maintain own standards within a quality framework
12. Understand social trends and their implications for clients and service provision
13. Ability to be inventive, responsible and generous, and to commit to and work within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service and its equality and diversity policies
14. Flexibility to work evenings and weekends dependent upon business requirements
15. A commitment to continuing professional development, primarily aimed at keeping abreast of developments relevant to the role.

### **Desirable**

1. 2 years' experience advising on Social Security benefits
2. Third Level or degree standard qualification in a relevant area

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

<b>Contract type:</b>	Fixed Term Contract to 31 March 2018 (with possible extension)
<b>Location:</b>	Greater Belfast
<b>Hours of work:</b>	35 per week
<b>Leave Entitlement:</b>	33 days inclusive of bank and public holidays
<b>Pension Entitlement:</b>	There is a pension scheme applicable to your employment and further details can be provided by the Finance Manager.

Other conditions of service shall be those applying to employees as set out in the Citizens Advice Belfast Staff Conditions of Service.

Citizens Advice Belfast is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applications from all sections of the community.