**Citizens Advice Antrim & Newtownabbey**

**Job description**

**Context of role: Trainee Advisor**   
  
**Key work areas and tasks:**  
  
**Advice giving**

* Interview clients over the phone or face to face using sensitive listening and questioning skills in order to identify query and present solutions
* Use Advisernet to find, interpret and communicate the relevant information.
* Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning.
* Negotiate with third parties such as statutory and non-statutory bodies as appropriate.
* Refer internally or to other specialist agencies as appropriate.
* Ensure that all work conforms to the bureau's Office Manual and the Legal Services Commission's Quality Mark at the appropriate level.
* Maintain detailed case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation.
* Assist with social policy work by providing information about clients’ specific circumstances, and ensuring recording of same.
* Attend Outreaches if required

**Professional development**

* Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training.
* Read relevant publications.
* Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
* Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings/staff meetings as appropriate.

**Administration**

* Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
* Ensure that all work conforms to the bureau's systems and procedures.

**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.
* Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the Citizens Advice service.
* Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Essential**

1. Citizens Advice Advisor Training Programme or Law Centre NI WRAP qualification
2. Working knowledge of social security benefits
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 for Benefit Entitlement Checks
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, 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 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. A minimum of 6 months’ experience advising on Social Security benefits or part time equivalent gained in past 3 years.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

**Contract type:** Maternity Cover - Fixed Term Contract to 31st January 2018

**Location:** Citizens Advice Antrim & Newtownabbey

**Hours of work:** 37.5 hours (negotiable)

**Leave Entitlement:** 31 days including statutory days (pro rata)

**Pension Entitlement:** We are currently enrolled in a Pension Scheme with NEST.

Other conditions of service shall be those applying to employees as set out in the Citizens Advice Antrim & Newtownabbey Employee Handbook.

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