



## Hillingdon and Ealing Citizens Advice

UXBRIDGE CAB OFFICE, Colonnade, Civic Centre, Uxbridge UB8 1UW

Your ref:

Our ref: Vol Job App Pack

Phone:

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

Volunteer Job Applicant

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with Hillingdon & Ealing Citizens Advice (HECA).

We currently have offices in Hayes, Ruislip and Uxbridge in the Borough of Hillingdon.

The enclosed information refers to gateway assessors, advisers, receptionist/admin assistants, information assistants, helping with social policy reports and assisting clients to complete forms. There are other possible opportunities such as applying to sit on our management committee, interpreting and others.

If you wish to offer your services to HECA please read the enclosed information and complete the application and equal opportunities forms in as much detail as possible.

We are sure that you will find working with HECA rewarding, exciting and challenging and look forward to receiving your application.

Thank you for your interest.

Yours sincerely

Celeste Lovis  
Advice Services Manager



## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE**



### **THE AIMS OF THE SERVICE**

To ensure that individuals do not suffer through lack of knowledge ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available, or through an inability to express their needs effectively.

and equally

To exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies and services, both locally and nationally.

### **THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF THE SERVICE**

✦ Free ✦ Confidential ✦ Impartial ✦ Independent

### **ANTI-RACISM POLICY**

Citizens Advice Bureaux Service, in compliance with its aims and principles:

- ✦ Is opposed to all forms of racism and discrimination and is committed to ensuring that all services are equally available to all people.
- ✦ Will resist and challenge acts of discrimination and support its clients and staff when confronted with racial harassment.
- ✦ Seeks actively to conform to the 1976 Race Relations Act and the 1984 Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) Code of Practice.
- ✦ Is an Equal Opportunities Employer and encourages participation of black and other ethnic minority communities at all levels of the Service.

### **POLICY AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LESBIANS AND GAY MEN**

This Association resolves, in compliance with its aims and principles, and its Equal Opportunities Policy:

- a) to actively oppose acts of discrimination against lesbians and gay staff;
- b) to challenge acts of discrimination and harassment against lesbians and gay men and to support its clients and staff when confronted with such acts;
- c) to adopt practices to eliminate discrimination against lesbians and gay men;
- d) to fully incorporate into its training, awareness of issues affecting lesbians and gay men;
- e) to make positive efforts to ensure that the service is available to lesbians and gay men and that the specific advice and information needs of lesbians and gay men are met;
- f) to contribute information and support efforts of other groups within the community to make discrimination against lesbians and gay men on the grounds of their sexuality illegal.

- g) to continue to incorporate into its information system items in all subject areas of relevance to lesbians and gay men;
- h) to seek representation from lesbian and gay groups on local Management Committees, Area Committees and Council.

### **POLICY WITH REGARD TO POSITIVE ACTION TOWARD WOMEN IN THE SERVICE**

This Association resolves, in compliance with its aims and principles and its Equal Opportunities Policy to undertake, resource and monitor a programme of positive action to ensure that at all levels and in all aspects of its work, the service:

- a) actively conforms to the Sex Discrimination Act and to the 1985 Equal Opportunities Commission Code of Practice:
- b) actively opposes acts of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment against women:
- c) challenges acts of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment against women and supports its clients and staff when confronted with such acts:
- d) adopts practices to eliminate discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment against women staff:
- e) adapts terms and conditions of employment which eliminate discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment against women staff:
- f) incorporates fully into its training for all staff, awareness of issues affecting women and of their advice needs:
- g) ensures that the training needs of women in the service are met:
- h) seeks specific representation from Womens Groups on all local Management Committees, Area Committees and Council:
- l) identifies levels at which women are under-represented and takes positive steps to ensure full participation of women at all levels of the Service.

# HILLINGDON CITIZENS ADVICE



APPLICATION FORM TO BE A CAB VOLUNTEER – CONFIDENTIAL

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: Uxbridge CAB, The Colonnade, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1UW**

1 .FIRST NAME(S) :

SURNAME/FAMILY NAME:

TITLE (e.g. Mr / Ms / Other - please state):

2. ADDRESS :

TELEPHONE NUMBER :

EMAIL:

3. What type of role(s) are you interested in?

Adviser	Yes/No/Maybe
Gateway Assessor	Yes/No/Maybe
Assisting clients to complete forms	Yes/No/Maybe
Reception / Administrative	Yes/No /Maybe
Money Support Worker	Yes/No /Maybe
Management Committee/Trustee	Yes/No/Maybe
Social Policy Co-ordinator	Yes/No /Maybe
Other (please state).....	Yes/No/Maybe

4. Describe any skills/training/qualifications that you have which could be useful for the work you wish to apply for. All sorts of skills and work experience are useful e.g. speaking and writing languages other than English, sign language, interviewing, filing, using a calculator, dealing with people on the telephone, typing, computer skills etc.

5. Please tell us about any formal or informal community activities/ voluntary work you have done in the past or you are doing now that may be relevant to your application.

6. What do you think are some of the main problems facing your community?

7. Why do you want to be a C.A.B. volunteer?

**8 Please note:** To ensure the safety of our clients, the Citizens Advice service requires that all staff who have direct access to clients, where any part of the work is primarily targeted at legally defined vulnerable adults or children, have their criminal records checked. However, the Citizens Advice service is committed to the promotion and delivery of equal opportunities to staff and so has a policy to ensure ex-offenders are not discriminated against.

All offences, other than sexual crimes against a child or vulnerable adult, will be treated on an individual basis taking into account issues such as the risk to the client, the circumstances of the offence (e.g. what it was, is it relevant to role, how long ago it was) and the reputation of the bureau.

**9. REFERENCES**

Please give the names and addresses (**and Email address if available**) of two people who are not related to you who can tell us about you. (It is our policy to request references for all voluntary and paid staff selected).

1.

2.

We may wish to contact them **before** an interview. May we have your permission to do this? (Your application will not be affected if you say no).

**YES/NO**

**Please tell us about any specific needs you would like us to take into account, either at the interview or if we offer you a volunteer role e.g. mobility.**  
This information will be treated as strictly confidential.

.....

.....

.....

**Signature.....Date.....**

## VOLUNTEER APPLICATION ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. In order to organise a rota it is useful to know when you can work at CAB. Volunteers normally work 9:30 to 4.00 for one or two days per week.

Gateway Assessors and Advisors must commit to a minimum of **2 days** per week.

Non advice staff must commit to a minimum of **1 day** per week.

We may be able to offer some flexibility with hours for applicants with care responsibilities or in other similar circumstances.

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	

2. Are there any specific offices you would like to work in?

Hayes.....Yes/No/Maybe

Ruislip.....Yes/No/Maybe

Uxbridge.....Yes/No/Maybe

Yiewsley (Admin only)... Yes/No/Maybe

We allocate volunteers according to their preference, where possible, but we also have to take into account current staffing needs in each office.

3. Please tell us below how you found out about voluntary work with the Citizens Advice Bureau. (Please tick relevant box)

Website		Friend/Relative	
HAVS		Called into a Bureau	
Brunel University		Other (please state)	

4. Is there anything else you would like us to know which could effect your ability or availability to be a volunteer (e.g. disability or special needs)?

**HILLINGDON CITIZENS ADVICE**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING INFORMATION**

THIS FORM WILL NOT BE SEEN BY THE SHORTLISTING/INTERVIEWING PANEL.

The CAB Service aims to provide equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people applying to be bureau workers, regardless of race, sex, disability or whether they are lesbians or gay men.

The Service is also committed to ensuring that bureau workers reflect the community that they serve. In order to monitor the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policies, we would be grateful if you would complete this monitoring form.

We assure you that:

- ◆ The information provided will not be seen by the shortlisting/interviewing panel or form the basis of any part of recruitment and selection.
- ◆ The information from the application form is confidential and will only be used for statistics.
- ◆ Should you choose not to complete this section, this will not affect your application.

**DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998**

As part of the recruitment procedure we may collect and store sensitive personal data about you. We are required by law to obtain your consent to such data being recorded. It is our policy to store data relating to recruitment procedures for up to a year after the date on which it is submitted. Any information of this nature will be treated confidentially.

Sensitive personal data is defined as information relating to any of the following: racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, health, sexuality or sex life, offences and/or convictions.

For the purpose of the Act the Data Controller is Hillingdon Citizens Advice.

I declare the information given on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge and acknowledge that by signing this form I have given consent to sensitive personal information being recorded and stored.

**Signature**.....**Date**.....  
...

**(Continued Overleaf)**

A. Please tick FEMALE  MALE

B. Please indicate your age group.

Under 25                      25 – 34                      35 – 44                      45 – 59                      60 - 64  
65+

C. Do you have a responsibility for the care of the following:-  
e.g. Children: YES  NO  Elderly: YES  NO  Disabled:  
YES  NO

D. Please indicate which ethnic group you belong to (N.B. these categories are recommended by the Commission for Racial Equality).

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| A. White <input type="checkbox"/>                              | F. Indian               |
| B. Irish (white) <input type="checkbox"/>                      | G. Pakistani            |
| C. Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>                    | H. Bangladeshi          |
| D. Black African <input type="checkbox"/>                      | I. Chinese              |
| E. Black Other (please specify) ..... <input type="checkbox"/> | Z. Other (please spec). |

E. Would you describe yourself as having a disability? YES/NO

Are you registered disabled? YES/NO

F. The Citizens Advice Bureau Service has a specific equal opportunities policy for Lesbians and gay men, and is committed to positive action to implement the policy.

Due to the nature of discrimination against lesbians and gay men, the service has decided, after extensive discussions, not to conduct quantitative monitoring of lesbians and gay men.

Would you like to make any comments about our monitoring form?

.....

.....

.....

.....

## **HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE (HECA)**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS**

#### **Commitment :**

HECA aims to provide full support and training for all staff. As this uses much of our resources, we require volunteers to commit themselves to working with HECA for a minimum of 6 months (18 months for Advisers).

In addition, we require that advisers attend at least 2 days per week and other volunteers at least 1 day per week. The core hours are between 9.30a.m. and 4.00p.m. (although this can be negotiable due to personal circumstances such as child care commitments).

#### **Training :**

Training is provided at no charge where it is necessary for your development as a member of the bureau team.

All advisers must undertake a standard training programme coordinated nationally and common to all CAB advisers. This programme leads to an award of the Certificate in General Advice and the details are on the enclosed information sheet.

All other training may be held locally or in London and may be provided by Citizens Advice, other recognised agencies or "in house" tutors.

All new staff receive training on aims & principles, equal opportunities and undertake an induction programme appropriate to their role.

#### **Travel Expenses:**

Reasonable travel expenses are paid to volunteers for travel to the office, training, meetings etc.

Travel expenses are paid by an auto-pay system direct into volunteers' bank accounts at the end of each month.

#### **Selection Interviews/References:**

All potential staff have a selection interview to confirm their suitability to become a volunteer with HECA. This will be arranged on receipt of a completed application form after attending an office for an initial visit and a pre-selection day.

Two written references will be requested after a volunteer has been selected.

### **Opportunities for Paid Work :**

Volunteering with HECA does not guarantee a paid job.

However, our staff find the experience invaluable and many former volunteers are now in paid jobs either with HECA or other organisations.

Volunteer work with the CAB is widely regarded by employers as quality experience and many people use it as a stepping stone to paid employment.

### **Availability and Offices:**

Where possible HECA takes into account the preferences of potential volunteers with the days and office that they wish to work.

However, each of the offices have different staff compliments and preferences may not be met where, for example, there are no vacancies for a particular role in a given office.

### **Other Volunteering Opportunities**

If you decide not to apply to join HECA, you may wish to contact Hillingdon Volunteers Bureau (01895 442730) or Ealing Volunteers Bureau (020 8579 6273) to discuss other voluntary opportunities are available.

## **HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE (HECA)**

### **ADVISER**

#### **Purpose:**

To provide a high quality generalist advice service to the public and to participate in Social Policy activities.

#### **Experience:**

No formal experience or qualifications are necessary although candidates suitability will be assessed at a selection interview, including written and numeracy skills tests.

#### **Working with clients:**

Interviewing clients in order to find out the nature of the enquiry, provide information and advice, negotiate with other agencies and write letters as appropriate, calculate benefit entitlement and to keep accurate case records.

#### **Social Policy:**

Help prevent future problems by identifying enquiries that have wider implications so that evidence can be submitted.

Undertake monitoring of clients and enquiries to provide statistics for HECA and Citizens Advice.

#### **Training:**

Undertake the Citizens Advice Certificate in General Advice Work training programme (please see information sheet attached), identify training needs and attend further training, keep up to date with information by reading monthly mailings and attend staff meetings.

#### **Expenses:**

All reasonable travel expenses to the office and to training are paid. No charge is made for any training undertaken with the agreement of your manager.

#### **Aims, Principles & Policies:**

All HECA staff must understand and comply with the aims, principles and policies as outlined on the attached sheet.

# HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE

## INFORMATION ASSISTANT

### **Purpose of Role:**

To provide a high quality, effective and efficient information service to members of the public in accordance with the aims and principles of Citizens Advice and the requirements of its Membership Scheme.

### **Main Duties:**

#### **1) Information Assistance**

- 1.1 To offer appropriate guidance and assistance to clients seeking information on a wide range of issues. To assist and enable clients to research relevant information based upon client identified issues through the use of Citizens Advice (CitA) Advice Guide Website, leaflets and factsheets, and other relevant sources of information.
- 1.2 To have good communication skills and the ability to provide an appropriate information service to a diverse public.
- 1.3 A basic understanding of the main advice subject areas as mentioned in the Advice Guide.
- 1.4 To maintain clear, accurate and concise Day Sheet records that meet the quality standards of the Membership Scheme. To maintain records as required for information retrieval, statistical monitoring, accountability and report preparation.
- 1.5 To be able to identify the limitations of the Information Service and appropriately direct clients to services available within HECA and or other relevant voluntary and statutory agencies.
- 1.6 To co-operate with the arrangements of the Advice Session Supervisor(s) in delivering services.
- 1.7 To have knowledge of other statutory and voluntary organisations websites such as Department of Work and Pensions, Home Office, Consumer Direct, Community Legal Services, Payplan and community organisations as appropriate and to keep in touch with local issues, changes in local and national policies and services.

## **HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE (HECA)**

### **Form Filling Assistant:**

#### **Purpose:**

To promote the twin aims of the CAB Service by assisting clients to accurately and effectively complete Welfare Benefits and other forms.

#### **Experience:**

No formal experience or qualifications are necessary although good interpersonal and communication skills are needed. Candidate's suitability will be assessed at a selection interview.

#### **Forms Completion:**

Completion of benefits claims forms, council tax forms, passport application forms and other forms.

Ensuring that completed forms are checked by the Senior Support Worker, Manager or other designated person before they are submitted by the client.

Discussing any issues arising from the completion of a form with the designated support worker,

Recording completion of form(s) and any other arising matters on the client's case record,  
and completion of client contact and monitoring information on a daily record sheet.

#### **Training:**

Attend local form filling training including reading of benefits training packs and observation of interviews.

Undertake local and regional training on Welfare Benefits, the Aims and Principles of the CAB Service and any subject areas relevant to the completion of forms.

Read monthly mailings in sent by Citizens Advice and other organisations.

**Meetings:** Attend meetings as appropriate.

#### **Expenses:**

All reasonable travel expenses to the office and to training are paid. Training is provided free of charge when authorised by the Line Manager and/or Training Manager.

#### **Aims and Principles:**

All HECA staff must understand and comply with the aims, principles and policies of the organisation.

**HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE (HECA)**  
**CERTIFICATE IN GENERALIST ADVICE WORK**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

## **Introduction**

The Certificate in General Advice Work (CGAW) is an evidence based qualification awarded by the National Association of Citizens Advice (CitA). The course has been accredited by the Open College Network (OCN), and completion of the different "Learning Journals" used in the course can lead to nationally recognised credits from the OCN.

Hillingdon Citizens Advice Bureau Service (HECA) uses the nationally supplied materials, local tutors, regional training courses (usually in Central London), work experience and full support to enable trainees to work their way through the programme in order to achieve the standard required for award of the certificate.

## **Training Packs**

The first half of the course uses modular training packs and internet based e-learning which cover subjects such as the Aims, Principles and Policies of the CAB, Social Policy, Interview Skills, Case Recording and the main subject areas such as Welfare Benefits, Employment, Debt and Housing. Trainees work their way through the modules, answer exercises to confirm their understanding and relate this to observation of experienced advisers.

## **Learning Journals and Tutor Groups**

Trainees complete Learning Journals as they work their way through the training modules and have regular learning reviews with their Guidance Tutor to check and confirm understanding of the materials. Trainees are also required to attend regular tutor groups sessions and will need to be available on pre-determined dates to participate in these group sessions.

## **Course Sessions**

Trainees are required to attend 3 days Certificate Course training held at our London Region training department in Central London. The course sessions enable trainees to interact with other trainees and offer an opportunity to develop and practice skills in a safe environment.

## **Interviewing Clients**

Trainee Advisers conduct supervised and assessed interviews with clients after attendance at the first 2 days of the Certificate Course training sessions before moving on to solo interviewing.

## **Further Training**

Trainee advisers undertake further training on Benefits, Housing, Employment and Debt as part of the Certificate programme and attend day 3 of the Certificate Course training sessions, before they become trained advisors.

Advisers are expected to continue to update their knowledge and skills after the award of the CGAW and will continue to have the opportunity to attend additional training on different subject areas, specialist courses and skills based courses.

## **Award of Certificate**

On completion of the training programme HECA apply for the award of the CGAW. (CitA can require to see all completed Learning Journals for moderation purposes).

## **Timing**

The time taken to complete the necessary course work depends on the individual trainee, whether they are used to these methods of learning and whether they have any previous related experience.

Generally, trainees commence training in-bureau for 2 -3 months before attending the first 2 days of the Certificate course, after which they will be interviewing clients for approximately 3 months before attending day 3 of the Certificate course.

Trainees will then require a further 3 - 6 months to attend further training and gain experience, taking a total of approximately 12 months to achieve the CGAW award. This is based on attendance in Bureau of 12-14 hours over 2 days each week.

## **Support and Assessment**

The course allows for a high level of support and for continual assessment. HECA emphasises the importance of teamwork and there should always be support available and/or someone to talk to if a trainee is having any difficulties. Assessment is based on learning reviews, observation, supervised interviews and is undertaken by a range of Senior/Experienced members of staff.

## **HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE**

### **Gateway Assessor**

#### **Purpose:**

To provide a high quality, effective and efficient service to members of the public in accordance with the aims and principles of Citizens Advice and the requirements of its Membership Scheme.

#### **Main Duties:**

1. To interview clients, both face-to-face and on the telephone, exploring the client's problems to identify the issues and ensure that the client is directed to the most appropriate advice or information service.
2. To have good communication skills and the ability to provide an appropriate service to a diverse public.
3. A basic understanding of the main advice subject areas as mentioned in the Advice Guide.
4. To maintain clear, accurate and concise client records that meet the quality standards of the Membership Scheme. To maintain records as required for information retrieval, statistical monitoring, accountability and report preparation.
5. To be able to identify when it is necessary to seek guidance from the Advice Session Supervisor to appropriately identify advice needs and direct clients to services available within HECA and or other relevant voluntary and statutory agencies.
6. To co-operate with the arrangements of the Advice Session Supervisor(s) in delivering services.

#### **Training and Development**

- ◆ To undertake training to achieve the required level of competence as a Gateway Assessor.
- ◆ Keep informed of new and changing legislation and of local issues/policies.
- ◆ Read the regular Citizens Advice circulars and information items.
- ◆ Attend regular training to develop knowledge, skills and expertise.
- ◆ Participate constructively in team meetings.
- ◆ Use computers in areas relevant to the role.

## HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE (HECA)

### Administrative Volunteer & Volunteer Receptionist

(N.B. These roles can be combined or undertaken separately)

#### **Purpose:**

Admin: To provide administrative support to the offices of Hillingdon & Ealing Citizens Advice.

Receptionist: To act as a first point of contact for clients by telephone and/or face to face in order to make appointments and/or signpost clients to alternative sources of advice.

#### **Experience:**

No formal experience or qualifications are necessary although candidates' suitability will be assessed at a selection interview.

#### **Abilities:**

Admin: Knowledge of a word processing package and ability to type accurately from a written manuscript at 30 wpm are desirable but not essential as many admin tasks do not require the use of a word processor.

Admin/Receptionist: Be able to work in a busy office as part of a team, sharing tasks.

Admin/Receptionist: Capable of communicating effectively in writing, in person and on the telephone; able to look up information; able to write notes clearly and legibly.

#### **Training:**

Most training is done within the Bureau. Some skills training i.e. word processing, Excel etc. are available at NACAB and local training centres.

#### **Expenses:**

All reasonable travel expenses to the office and to training are paid.

#### **Aims, Principles & Policies:**

All HECA staff must understand and comply with the aims, principles and policies as outlined on the attached sheet.

## **HILLINGDON & EALING CITIZENS ADVICE (HECA)**

### **Social Policy Assistant:**

(Ref: SPVOL)

#### **Purpose:**

To promote the twin aims of the CAB Service by submitting evidence reports based on client enquiries and to co-ordinate Social Policy activities in the Offices and projects of HECA.

#### **Experience:**

No formal experience or qualifications are necessary although candidates suitability will be assessed at a selection interview.

#### **Social Policy Work:**

- Completion of Bureau Evidence Forms which are sent to the National Association in order to raise awareness of problems experienced by clients in their dealings with government departments, local authorities and non governmental agencies,
- Conducting statistical surveys to identify common problems, client groups etc.
- Liaising with other offices to gather evidence in order to influence local decision makers (e.g. local authority housing policies).

#### **Training:**

Undertake local and regional training on both Social Policy and the Aims and Principles of the CAB Service.

Read monthly mailings in connection with Social Policy such as the NACAB Social Policy Bulletin.

#### **Meetings:**

Attend local, regional and national Social Policy meetings as appropriate.

#### **Expenses:**

All reasonable travel expenses to the office and to training are paid. Training is provided free of charge when authorised by the Line Manager and/or Training Manager.

#### **Aims and Principles:**

All HECA staff must understand and comply with the aims, principles and policies of the organisation.