

Volunteer Advice Guide Role description

Citizens Advice Merton & Lambeth (CAML) provides information, advice and casework across the London Boroughs of Merton & Lambeth. It does so at its three offices in Streatham Hill, Mitcham and Morden as well as community locations, over the phone and internet.

CAML deploys volunteers to and employs paid staff in a range of different roles. It is committed to ensuring that all volunteers and staff are properly supported and supervised.

About this role

Volunteer advice guides help people to find and use the information and services that they need to help themselves and will usually be the first point of contact for people who would otherwise not have sought help. They are proactive and dynamic and make a real difference to people's lives.

They are based at our three offices and may also work in other community locations. They have access to the internet and phones which they support customers to use in accessing information and services.

Volunteer advice guides work with the Office Managers and Advice Session Supervisors, as well as other volunteers to help manage the office during the opening hours.

It is a varied role providing the opportunity to be involved in different elements of the service's work.

Location: Our offices are in Mitcham, Morden and Streatham Hill. Volunteers may need to work across all 3 offices and those based in Lambeth will also work from other community locations.

Please note CAML will carry out an enhanced DBS check for Advice Guides based in any of our outreach locations

Hours: 9.45am – 4.15pm (with some limited flexibility)

Days: 2 week days (Monday – Friday) each week (with some limited flexibility)

Length of commitment: Due to the time invested in training we ask that people try to volunteer with us for at least a year

Main tasks include

- Meeting and greeting people, and explaining the services we provide
- Encouraging people and giving them confidence
- Helping people find and use the information they need (including on the internet)

- Helping people make phone calls
- Helping people access other services
- Acknowledging children and / or customers with any special needs and taking appropriate action
- Ensuring information and waiting areas are ready for customers
- Answering the telephone and referring calls or taking messages
- Identifying appropriate cases for our Research and Campaigns work and submitting evidence

Volunteer advice guides are expected to

- Keep up to date, and manage their own further training and learning
- Attend team meetings and support and supervision sessions
- Turn up on time and honour their commitment
- Let us know if they can't come in
- Follow procedures, protocols and a few simple dos and don'ts
- Commit to CAB policies and principles
- Wear an advice guide t-shirt or suitable alternative as provided

What we are looking for

- Familiarity with using the internet in order to help others to access the information they need.
- Friendly and approachable, with an interest in helping people to solve their own problems and working with members of the public
- Good understanding of how to deliver excellent customer care
- Dynamic, engaging, energetic and quick thinking
- Awareness of the needs of vulnerable people
- Flexibility, cooperation and the ability to work well with others and to contribute effectively as a member of a team
- Good standard of written and spoken English
- Punctuality and good time-management
- Understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and principles of the CAB service

What we offer

- A full induction into the service and your role
- Initial and ongoing training appropriate to your role
- Support and supervision throughout your volunteering
- Reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket travel expenses whilst volunteering
- Valuable exposure to the work of Citizens Advice, the UK's largest advice service