



# Outline of the role for a Volunteer Disability Form Filler

**The Disability Form Filler is a member of a team of voluntary and paid local office staff who provide a free, confidential, impartial and independent service to the public.**

## **Purpose of the role:**

Working within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice Service:

- to support clients to fill in forms for key benefits such as Personal Independence Payments, Employment Support Allowance, UC50 and Attendance Allowance
- to help influence government and other organisations by informing them of the effect of their actions on the lives of clients (Research & Campaigns)

## **Ways of working:**

- Give a service that complies with Citizens Advice principles
- Actively support Citizens Advice equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies
- Contribute towards a safe and positive working environment
- Give a service which meets the need to maintain quality

## **Working with Clients:**

Volunteers will undertake appointments with clients who have been assessed as eligible for the relevant benefit:

- Engage with the client to build rapport and trust
- 'Observe' the client throughout in order to gather additional relevant evidence if appropriate
- Empower the client to fill in any parts of the form which can be done by the client themselves
- Work through the form with the client to help them understand how the questions relate to them and their conditions and how it affects their life
- Match the questions with the relevant descriptors and ensure the form is completed appropriately to ensure best chance of success
- Include with the form any necessary medical or supporting evidence

- Ensure the client is clear on next steps including who is to send the form, what happens next, and what further support can/cannot be provided
- Record the appointment appropriately on Casebook including uploading the relevant scanned documents.
- Seek support from the advice session supervisor as needed
- Raise any additional issues which may arise with the advice session supervisor as needed

### **Working to influence change (Research & Campaigns):**

Contribute to the Citizen Advice service's work of exercising a responsible influence on policies, both local and national, which affect the lives of clients by:

- Identifying enquiries which have policy implications for a number of clients
- Raising issues following appropriate procedures
- Assist with local Research & Campaigns work such as surveys and local campaigns

### **Equal Opportunities:**

Contribute towards the Citizens Advice Equal Opportunities and Positive Action policies by providing an impartial and non-judgemental service to all clients:

- Identifying possible breaches of Equal Opportunities legislation, policy and practice and advising the client accordingly
- Taking part in Research & Campaigns exercises focused on Equal Opportunities issues
- Challenging behaviour which indicates discrimination
- Assisting Citizens Advice Shropshire in making the service accessible to all clients irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation and disabilities

### **Developing your own practice:**

- Assessing own practice to identify own training and development needs
- Being assessed by the manager, advice session supervisor or trainer
- Learning through training and reflecting on practice
- Keeping up to date with the information resources, including changes and additions, legislation and policies and procedures
- Keeping informed about the local community, local and national issues, developments and changes
- Using and keeping up to date with relevant IT systems

### **Person Specification:**

You don't need specific qualifications but you'll need to:

- be non-judgmental and respect views, values and cultures that are different to your own
- be able to build trust and rapport
- have good sensitive questioning and listening skills
- have excellent verbal and written communication skills
- be able to analyse symptoms/impact and match to the relevant descriptors/criteria

- have good IT skills
- be able to understand information and explain it to others
- be willing to learn about and follow the Citizens Advice aims, principles and policies, including confidentiality and data protection
- be willing to undertake training in your role
- be prepared to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively

**Full training will be given including a blend of self-study, group sessions and observations, with a minimum commitment of 2 days per week during training.**