

**Job title: In Court Adviser**

Reporting to: Mark Carter (Projects Manager)

Location: Edinburgh Sheriff Court, 27 Chambers Street, EH1 1LB, or any other location in Edinburgh as required by the organisation’s needs.

N.B. Home working will be required during periods when face to face services are suspended as a result of COVID-19

Employer: Citizens Advice Edinburgh

Salary: £26,650

Benefits: 35 days annual leave (including public holidays) and a 7% employers contribution pension

Hours: 35 hours per week

Work Pattern Flexible but must include coverage of food banks (currently Tuesday and Thursday)

Term: 31st March 2021 (with the possibility of extension)

**Application Process:**

* Applications must be submitted by Midnight on Sunday 2nd August
* Interviews will take place on Thursday 6th/Friday 7th August (VIA ZOOM)
* Appointment in August, date TBC

**Background:**

Citizens Advice Edinburgh is an independent charity delivering free, confidential and impartial advice and support to people living and working in Edinburgh. Every year, we deal with over 25,000 enquiries for advice, from over 13,000 individual clients.

The Citizens Advice network is a source of free advice and support for many clients who have issues and questions about legal matters. For over 10 years Citizens Advice Edinburgh has delivered an In Court Advice Service at Edinburgh Sheriff Court, helping clients to navigate the court system and ensure that they achieve access to justice.

**Summary of Role**

Citizens Advice Edinburgh has a vacancy within its **In Court Advice Project**, funded by the Scottish Government, via the Scottish legal Aid Board. Funding is currently committed until 31st March 2021.

The In Court Advice Project (INCA) provides lay assistance to clients with civil matters. Clients include individuals, small charities and limited companies which are unable to afford legal representation thereby restricting their ability to access justice.

The Project provides casework assistance to clients with Simple Procedure matters.

The Project assists clients to negotiate with their opposing party to reach settlements both prior to court action and during the court process, corresponding with the opposing party on behalf of clients if required. Where appropriate the Project provides representation on clients’ behalf at Preliminary Hearings.

The Project does not offer any advice relating to criminal matters and provides only signposting regarding repossession matters.

The Project refers clients to the Civil Legal Assistance Office or the Law Society of Scotland in cases where an extensive degree of research is required to effectively support a client, exceeding the resources of the project. Referrals are also made if a client requires ongoing representation, if their enquiry is extremely complex in nature, or if there is a significant risk that they will be found liable for the expenses of the opposing party.

The INCA team is comprised of the In Court Adviser (FT), a Project Caseworker (PT), and an Administrator (PT). The In Court Adviser is the senior role within the service and is expected to carry a larger caseload and manage more complex enquiries than the Project Caseworker. The In Court Adviser also takes a lead role in developing the service, by forging and maintaining links with other agencies, and in the production of reports. They retain responsibility for the recruitment of volunteers to the service (when required) and in ensuring that the quality and accuracy of advice is maintained across the project.

INCA shares an office within the Sheriff Court with CAE’s Mediation Service, which is comprised of a Mediation Coordinator and Administrator.

All staff are currently home working and will be reintroduced to the Court as and when it is safe to do so. Court business is now resuming in phases and the project workload is expected to gradually return to a normal level.

**Responsibilities**

**1. Advice work and support**

* Deliver advice and representation to clients
* Provide information on the Civil Justice System in Scotland
* Provide casework support for Simple Procedure cases
* Provide second tier support and training to CAE volunteers
* Maintain current knowledge of legislation and to welfare system, where relevant
* Ensure accurate information and advice is given
* Ensure that accurate, legible and comprehensive case records are kept
* Assist in audit processes
* Ensure that accurate statistics are available for reports

**2. Referrals and complementary advice services**

* Ensure clients access complementary advice, for example debt, employment, welfare advice or financial education
* Refer clients internally or to other voluntary or statutory external agencies as required
* Liaise with external agencies and other partners to provide appropriate assistance to clients following their immediate advice and representation
* Develop and promote links with external agencies to publicise the service and encourage referrals

**3. Other duties**

* Provide line management support to the Project Caseworker, with support of Project Manager
* Take responsibility for completing reports on work and activities as required for funders, auditors or publications
* Implement organisational Equality Policies
* Any other reasonable tasks as requested by the senior management team

**Person Specification**

Essential criteria

Technical:

* Solid understanding of the Civil Justice System in Scotland, with particular reference to Simple Procedure
* Demonstrable experience of providing advice and representation in relation to legal matters
* Awareness of related advice issues (welfare benefits, budgeting, etc.)
* Ability to advocate for and represent clients in asserting their rights
* Experience of designing and delivering training using a range of learning methods such as presentation, facilitation, coaching, peer and social learning techniques
* Ability to coach and develop others in providing advice
* An evidenced commitment to continuous professional development
* Proficient in use of IT systems and Microsoft Office programs including Outlook word and Powerpoint with a willingness to learn new systems
* Research skills
* Ability to complete case recording accurately and promptly
* Ability to provide high quality reports against project targets and outcomes

Values and Behaviours:

* Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
* Persuasive and diplomatic with strong influencing skills, able to adapt personal style to different situations and individuals
* Approachable and friendly; able to build strong working relationships with a range of stakeholders, based on trust and respect
* Ability to maintain confidentiality at all times
* Ability to work under pressure with limited resources
* Strong stakeholder management experience
* Demonstrable commitment to the aims and principles of CAE

Disclosure: In accordance with our Policy and Procedure for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups, offers of employment may be subject to disclosure checks

Desirable Criteria

* Law Degree and/or relevant experience
* Understanding and previous experience of the political and social policy context in UK and Scottish Governments
* Experience and understanding of the voluntary sector
* Experience in working effectively in outreach settings