



Acceptable Client Behaviour Policy

Governance forum	Board of Trustees
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Frequency of review	Three yearly
Ownership of the policy	Personnel Committee
Version control	3

Introduction:

Citizens Advice Salford is committed to providing advice that helps our clients find a way forward, whatever problems they are facing.

We are grateful that the majority of our clients are respectful towards our staff and volunteers.

As an organisation, we understand that people often come to us at times of great stress and anxiety in their lives, meaning they may be frustrated, angry or upset.

We try to support our clients through these difficult times in the best way we can, taking into account their difficult circumstances and how it can sometimes affect the way they behave.

However, in order to give the best service we can, it is also essential that our staff and volunteers are able to work in an environment they feel safe in.

That means on some occasions, we must advise our clients that the way they are behaving towards our staff and volunteers cannot be tolerated.

The aim of this policy is to try to help our clients understand what we mean by unacceptable behaviour, so that hopefully it can be avoided.

1. What is classed as Unacceptable Behaviour?

Unacceptable behaviour means acting in a way that is unreasonable, or abusive.

This may involve words, acts or physical gestures that could cause another person distress or discomfort.

2. What do we mean by aggressive or abusive behaviour?

This is behaviour (written or spoken) that could cause our staff or volunteers to feel afraid, threatened, upset or abused.

This includes threatening emails, calls, meetings and comments on social media or within their interview with you.

For example:

1. Derogatory comments including racism, sexism, ageism or homophobia.
2. Raised voices or shouting.
3. Insulting or degrading language, including inappropriate banter, innuendo or malicious allegations.
4. Threats to damage Citizens Advice Salford property.
5. Swearing.
6. Any form of physical violence or threats of physical violence.
7. Comments relating to immigration, disability, perceived gender, religious belief or other personal characteristics.

3. Unreasonable demands:

We will also need to tell you if we believe that you are taking up an unreasonable amount of time, as this could stop us helping other people who need our support, for example if you:

1. Demand things in a short amount of time.
2. Ask to speak to a specific member of staff/volunteer when it's not possible.
3. Contact lots of staff/volunteers to try and get a different outcome.
4. Keep changing issues or raising unrelated ones.
5. Demand help for something outside of our advice areas.
6. Keep raising the same issue when we've already helped you or we can't help more.
7. Make lots of complaints without giving us the chance to resolve them.
8. Make an unreasonable number of data protection requests.

4. What we will do if your behaviour is unacceptable:

We will keep a record of all incidents of unacceptable behaviour experienced by our staff and volunteers.

We'll give you an opportunity to change your behaviour, but if you continue we might have to:

1. End the conversation.
2. Limit how much time we spend on the phone with you.
3. Stop helping you face to face and only help you by phone or email.
4. Not reply to all your communications.
5. Send letters and documents back to you.
6. Only help you with certain situations.
7. In very serious situations we might be forced to stop helping you completely or call the police.

5. If we decide to stop helping you:

If we decide to stop helping you it means you **cannot** access Citizens Advice Salford services, so we might not respond to any contact from you.

We will always try to tell you **why** we have stopped helping you.

We will give you a chance to **change** your behaviour before we stop helping you – **unless** your behaviour threatens the safety of our staff, volunteers or other people.

6. If you think our decision is unfair:

If Citizens Advice Salford decides to stop helping you, you can **appeal within 28 days** of receiving our decision by emailing the Chief Officer complaints@citizensadvice.salford.org.uk

Free, confidential advice. Whoever you are.

We help people overcome their problems and campaign on big issues when their voices need to be heard. We value diversity, champion equality, and challenge discrimination and harassment.

We're here for everyone.