

CITIZENS INFORMATION PHONE SERVICE

Candidates for the role of

Information Officer

1 Full-Time Permanent Information Officer & 1 Part-Time Permanent Information Officer

And creation of a Panel (Full-time, Part-time, Temporary & Permanent)

Applicant Information Pack

September 2024

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Citizens Information Phone Service - Service Offer

The Citizens Information Phone Service (**CIPS**) was established in 2001 as a national **Citizens Information** call centre. This centre is located in Blackrock, Co Cork. CIPS aims to provide a comprehensive and confidential information service to people throughout the country, mainly via the phone but also through a variety of other access routes more suited to the particular needs of customers with disabilities. The service strives to offer equality of access to accurate and high-quality information on civil and social rights and entitlements.

CIPS is one core strand of an integrated approach to the delivery of **Citizens Information**. Information delivery is coordinated and resourced by the Citizens Information Board (**CIB**) - a statutory body - and designed to ensure that all members of the population have ready access to **Citizens Information** through a channel most appropriate to their needs. The other core delivery channels are www.citizensinformation.ie, and a national network of Citizens Information Centres.

Information and Advice

Our Information Officers assist people with queries in relation to a broad spectrum of public and social services, including social welfare entitlements, income tax calculations, housing supports and access to health services. Our staff receive regular training and social policy updates to ensure that the information and advice that we provide is up-to-date and relevant for CIPS service-users.

Social Policy

Our staff also engage in social policy reporting, highlighting issues that affect our clients in accessing public services, which in turn feeds into the work of the Citizens Information Board in the development of policy papers and recommendations to government. Through this process, CIPS Information Officers capture social policy issues in real-time, facilitating the development of responsive and evidence-based policy reporting.

Applicants

If you are interested in working within a dynamic, information service environment, engaging with people from diverse backgrounds and life-experiences, while contributing to social policy development to support those most in need of overcoming barriers to accessing their rights, we welcome your application for this Information Officer's role and Panel.

Information Officer - Job Description

Responsible to:

Reporting to a Team Supervisor on a day-to-day basis.

Purpose of the job:

The provision of information, advice and referral services to members of the public and assisting the Team Supervisors in the work of the information service.

Main Duties:

- The direct delivery of information, advice and referral services as determined by the Board of Directors and in line with the Citizens Information Board guidelines for the provision of Citizens Information.
- Provide independent, confidential and high-quality information and advice to clients, primarily by telephone, web chat and any other communication channels that might be incorporated into the CIPS service.
- Follow up work arising from information and/advice sessions with clients.
- Participate in reviews, support, supervision and individual and team development processes (including one-to-one and call coaching meetings with Team Supervisor and staff meetings).
- Participate in training and coaching, in the context of CIPS Training Policy and annual Training Plans, and individual/team training needs analyses.
- Assisting the Team Supervisors in the development of innovative processes for the provision of quality information to clients in various formats using the Citizens Information Board Citizens Information website www.citizensinformation.ie as an information tool, supplemented by other relevant information sources.
- Participate in customer service/access initiatives developed jointly with other organisations.
- Assist and cooperate with the management of CIPS in the development of practices and systems that will enhance customer service and maintenance of the highest standards of honesty and integrity.
- Operation of query management and data collection/statistical analysis systems.
- Participate in quality assurance systems and practices.
- Undertaking publicity and promotional initiatives appropriate to the development of the service as required.
- Assisting in any research and/or social policy initiatives appropriate to the development of the service as required.
- Identifying and feeding back to the management team, issues that have social policy implications.
- Representing CIPS at conferences etc. as decided by the management team.
- Such duties (including administrative duties) as may be assigned from time to time by the Team Supervisor.

Information Officer - Person Specifications

Minimum Education Qualifications and Attainments

- Educated to Leaving Certificate standard, or equivalent, with a minimum of one year's experience of working in an information, advice, or advocacy setting.
- or**
- Less formal academic qualifications with a minimum of three years' experience of working in an information, advice, or advocacy.

Essential Knowledge and Experience

- An understanding of the issues around the provision of, and access to information, advice and advocacy/referral services.
- Working knowledge and understanding of how the social welfare, health and income tax systems operate in general and a working knowledge of at least one of the following subject areas: employment, housing, immigration, consumer rights, education.
- Excellent organisational, administrative and IT skills.

Desirable Skills, Abilities and Experience

- Demonstrated ability to absorb, analyse and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
- Strong communication skills, both orally and in writing.
- Previous experience in a call Centre setting.
- Ability to work on own initiative and as a member of a team, working effectively within the support and supervision structures operated by CIPS.
- Ability to interpret and implement organisational policy.
- Have previous experience in the information or voluntary sector.

Successful Candidate will be

- Committed to the provision of free, confidential, impartial, and independent information advice and referral services.
- Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of information, advice and referral services provided by the Citizens Information Phone Service supported by the Citizens Information Board.
- Flexible to work alternative shifts as CIPS lines open from 9am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.
- Open to work unsocial hours as may be required from time to time and willing to attend evening and occasional week-ends. Time off In-Lieu (TOIL) arrangements apply in all such circumstances.

Information Officer – Required Competencies

Competency	Definition
Research	<p>Conducts research across a wide variety of information sources.</p> <p>Skilled in accessing, eliciting, exploring and categorising relevant information in a timely manner.</p> <p>Manages personal / sensitive information in a manner compliant with Data Protection regulations.</p>
Expert Knowledge	<p>Familiar with Irish social welfare, employment law, housing and/or other relevant public service systems in Ireland.</p> <p>Knowledgeable of at least one of the following systems: social welfare, employment, housing, consumer affairs, health, education, immigration, equality, disability rights.</p> <p>Understands how interactions between these various systems may affect the general public in accessing services.</p>
Delivery of information and advice in a call centre setting	<p>Identifies and understands issues of concern for the client.</p> <p>Analyses information and situations accurately, evaluates options comprehensively and comes to well-informed and balanced conclusions.</p> <p>Communicates complex information and advice clearly and understandably to clients.</p>
ICT and Information Management	<p>Organises, uses, records and manages information in a careful methodical and regulatory compliant manner.</p> <p>Plans and organises activities and schedules in a structured, efficient and timely manner using IT systems as appropriate.</p> <p>Uses email, file storage systems, data collection and case management systems effectively.</p>

Information Officer – Required Competencies (cont.)

Communication	<p>Imparts information knowledgeably and clearly, ensuring that their message is understood</p> <p>Communicates clearly, concisely and confidently both verbally and in writing.</p>
Customer Service	<p>Demonstrates a customer oriented approach to all work. Committed to meeting the expectations and requirements of service-users.</p> <p>Engages with people from diverse backgrounds, demonstrating knowledge and sensitivity to issues of disability, diversity, equality and cultural difference.</p> <p>Engages positively with performance and service review processes relevant to quality of customer service delivery.</p>
Team Working	<p>Builds strong working relationships characterised by respect, trust and cooperation. Deals constructively with conflict.</p> <p>Demonstrates an openness to support, supervision and feedback and adapts approach accordingly.</p>

Information Officer – Terms and Conditions

All positions are subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period. The period of probation may be extended at the discretion of the Team Supervisor/Manager. The successful candidate will be available to work 35 hours (full-time) or 17.5 hours (part-time) per week. There will be a requirement to work alternative shifts between the hours of 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday.

Full Time Salary: Scale range of €29,821, €31,996, €34,193, €35,828, €37,411, €39,544, €41,096, €42,659 (max), €44,080 (LSI1), €45,498 (LSI2). Salaries pro-rata for part-time work.

Incremental Credit: It is expected that all new entrants to the Citizens Information Phone Service will be appointed at point one of the salary scale. However, the Citizens Information Phone Service operates an incremental credit process for appointments higher than point one of the salary scale. This process is applicable to new entrants into the CIPS. Incremental credit criteria, based on the competencies for the role, are assessed against employment history as laid out in the application form only. A request for incremental credit from a successful candidate must be made within the first 3 months of employment. The decision on whether or not to award an incremental credit is a decision made by the Board and is subject to the availability of funding.

Pension: A company pension scheme is in place, and membership is obligatory upon commencement. Employee contribution; 5% of salary, Employer contribution; 7% of salary. Please note the Citizens Information Service has established a normal retirement age in line with the state pension age (currently 66).

Annual Leave: Calculated on a pro-rata basis for part year service as follows:

- 23 days
- 24 days (upon completion of 2 years' service)
- 25 days (upon completion of 5 years' service)

Full terms and conditions are contained in a Staff Handbook, which is issued with and forms part of the Employee Contract at CIPS.

Information Officer – How to Apply

- A relevant application form can be accessed at www.citizensinformationboard.ie
- Applicants must possess all required competencies for the role and will be shortlisted solely on the basis of information provided in their completed application form.
- Curriculum Vitae (CVs), late, incomplete or hand-written applications ***will not*** be considered.
- Please contact cips.jobs@citinfo.ie if you have any special requirements in relation to completing the application form.
- **Closing date: 5pm, Monday 30th September 2024**
- **Please email application form to: cips.jobs@citinfo.ie**
- If you require any reasonable accommodation to your application due to your circumstances (e.g. disability), please contact the above email address and we will try and facilitate you where reasonably practicable.
- Interviews will take place in person.
- For information on how your personal data will be used as part of this process please refer to our Data Protection Notice for Job Applicants, available at the following link: https://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/en/data_protection/cips.html

Citizens Information Phone Service is an equal opportunities employer.