

CITIZENS ADVICE REIGATE AND BANSTEAD: POLITICAL IMPARTIALITY POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Purpose and scope

1.1. Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead asks its volunteers not to engage in political activity which might harm its reputation for independence and impartiality. Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead, however, does not discourage any volunteer from seeking political office or from engaging in political activity, providing it is done in a way which does not conflict with the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service.

1.3. This policy provides a general outline of how this principle is to be applied in practice. Further advice in specific cases can be obtained from Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead Managers and CEO.

2. Display of political symbols

2.1. We ask volunteers not to display any badges, symbols or other material which is party political in content whilst undertaking duties on behalf of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead.

2.2. Volunteers should take care when displaying badges or symbols in support of other causes or campaigns, to avoid causing offence to others with whom you work. Such badges or symbols should not be displayed when meeting with clients or any other external stakeholders such as journalists, funders, government civil servants or other officials.

3. Standing for party political office

3.1. For these purposes, party political office includes standing as a Member of the UK Parliament (MP), European Parliament (MEP), Scottish Parliament (MSP), National Assembly for Wales (AM) or as a local authority councillor (including co-option onto a local authority).

3.2. The CAB supports the right of any citizen to seek elected office, but recognises that this may cause a conflict of interest for volunteers. If you wish to stand for any party political office you must discuss your intentions with your supervisor at the earliest possible opportunity. A decision will then be taken as to any conflict between your role at Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead and your efforts to seek election and, in the light of this, an appropriate course of action.

3.3. If you are seeking election to a party political office, we ask that you do the following:

3.3.1 Discuss with your supervisor, at the earliest opportunity, any time you need to spend away from your normal volunteer duties during the campaigning period ing:

3.3.2. You must conduct your campaign in a manner which does not compromise the party political impartiality of the service. This means, for example, that you must not use your experience as a Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead employee to further your campaign or endorse a political message.

3.3.3 Ensure that no part of your campaign (for example, a media interview) takes place at Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead premises, nor may such premises or

corporate material be included in any election photographs. You must not use any Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead resources (for example, office equipment) for political work.

3.3.4 If you are subsequently elected as an MP, MEP, MSP, or AM, it would normally be expected that you leave your volunteer role with Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead. If you are elected as a local authority councillor you would not normally be expected to leave your role, although full consideration would need to be given to any potential conflict of interest and how this can be managed.

4. Other personal party political activities

4.1. All volunteers have the right to take part in other political activities in their own time. However, you should discuss your involvement in these activities with your supervisor, so that any potential conflicts can be addressed. It will be particularly important to inform your supervisor if your role is likely to be a public one, for example, acting as a political agent or speaking at a party conference. This is likely to have a greater potential for real or perceived conflict of interest than other types of involvement, such as attending a party conference as a delegate.

4.2. In all cases, we ask that your political activity or involvement is kept completely separate from your role as a volunteer of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead, and that it does not imply the commitment of the Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead to the principles behind those activities, and that it is undertaken in such a way as not to compromise Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead's political impartiality.

5. Representing Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead at party political events

5.1. If you attend a party conference or other party political event as a representative of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead, you are required to represent Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead and its policies in an impartial manner, irrespective of your personal political allegiance