

CITIZENS ADVICE REIGATE AND BANSTEAD: POLITICAL IMPARTIALITY POLICY FOR STAFF

1. Purpose and scope

1.1. It is a condition of employment at Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead that all paid staff remain politically impartial in the course of their work, and do not engage in any political activity outside of their employment which would conflict with the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service.

1.2. All employees are expected to adhere to the policy.

Deliberate and serious breaches of the policy statements in this section will lead to disciplinary measures, which may include dismissal.

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 CEO.

2. Display of political symbols

2.1. You must not display any badges, symbols or other material which is party political in content whilst you are at work or undertaking duties on behalf of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead.

2.2. You 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, 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 employees. If you wish to stand for any party political office you must discuss your intentions with your line manager 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 you must agree with your manager the most appropriate arrangements for taking time off during the campaigning period. In most cases this is likely to be a period of unpaid special leave.

3.4. 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.

3.5. No part of your campaign (for example, a media interview) may take 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.

3.6. If you are subsequently elected as an MP, MEP, MSP, or AM, it would normally be expected that you resign your employment with Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead. If you are elected as a local authority councillor you would not normally be expected to resign your employment, 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 employees 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 manager, so that any potential conflicts can be addressed. It will be particularly important to inform your manager 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, your political activity or involvement must be completely separate from your role as an employee of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead, must not imply the commitment of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead to the principles behind those activities, and must be 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.