

NCAN Members & Partners Policy

If you are an organisation that either directly provides advice in a social welfare law category or sub-contracts an advice giving service in a social welfare law category, then you are eligible to apply to become a member of NCAN. Advice services must be free at the point of use.

If you are an organisation that does not offer social welfare legal advice but offers a different form of advice then you may be eligible to apply to become a partner of NCAN. Advice services must be free at the point of use. Please contact NCAN on ncan@ncls.co.uk to discuss.

NCAN members and partners could include:

- 3rd Sector bodies involved in giving advice
- Local Authority departments/services that give advice
- Private solicitors' firms offering limited free advice e.g. an initial half hour and/or Legal Aid
- Organisations that sub-contract free advice services

Benefits of becoming an NCAN member

- Quality check (see below for further details)
- Publicity and marketing – promote your organisation, events and updates through NCAN newsletters and website.
- The opportunity to attend the bi-monthly NCAN Strategic Partnership meetings.
- The ability to make and receive referrals through the NCAN common referral system.
- Free or subsidised training opportunities – with the chance to influence topics.
- Support with quality standard issues through workshops and information.
- Practitioners' forums and networking meetings – the opportunity to meet with others working in your field and exchange information, ideas and good practice.

Benefits of becoming an NCAN partner

- Publicity and marketing – promote events and updates relevant to the network through NCAN newsletters and website.
- The ability to make and receive referrals through the NCAN common referral system.
- Subsidised training opportunities
- Practitioners' forums and networking meetings – the opportunity to meet with others working in the advice field and exchange information, ideas and good practice.

Responsibilities of NCAN members and partners

- To refer and signpost clients appropriately, making use of the NCAN Common Referral System where possible.
- Act on training and support provided.
- Input evidence to NCAN for campaigning and research purposes.
- Communicate experience of NCAN and the benefits of partnership working to other organisations.
- Regular attendance at NCAN Strategic Partnership meetings (NCAN members only).

Quality marks – NCAN members

If you wish to apply to become an NCAN member, some relevant externally awarded quality marks are:

- **Advice Quality Standard**
- **Specialist Quality Mark**
- **Lexcel** (for law firms)
- **Matrix Quality Standard**

If your organisation does not have a relevant quality mark you can still become an NCAN member but additional information must be provided:

- Strategy or Development Plan for your service for the next three years
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Policies that ensure advice given is impartial, independent and confidential
- A procedure for recording the advice given and action taken
- A procedure for checking the quality of the advice
- A Training and Development policy

- A procedure to ensure advisors have access to the information they need and this is kept up to date
- Details of Professional Indemnity Insurance

Contact us

For more information or an application form go to www.norfolkcan.org.uk or contact us on 01603 216481 or ncan@ncls.co.uk.