

NCAN Four Tier Model of Advice

The NCAN Four Tier Model of Advice sets out some key distinctions between types of information and advice and also includes categories of related support. It is hoped this model will facilitate a consistent approach to understanding and mapping advice services in Norfolk.

Level 1: Information, assisted self-help and signposting

Providing:

* leaflets or web based resources providing information about rights and entitlement;
* access to information which will enable the client to take action to resolve the issue themselves, such as online resources and ‘how to’ guides; and/or
* information and contact details for both national and local services and agencies who may be able to provide further sources of help or advice (signposting).

*Responsibility for taking any further action rests with the client.*

Level 2: One-off advice and assistance

A service that involves:

* giving information and explaining options
* in-depth diagnosis of the client’s enquiry and the legal issues involved, and gathering information to pass on to an in-house advisor or an external agency (referral).
* identifying further action the client can take
* practical support and assistance: e.g. contacting third parties to seek information; filling in forms.

Examples include, help filling in benefit or tax credit forms; assistance with sorting out debt problems; advising on immigration rights.

*Responsibility for taking any further action rests with the client.*

Level 3: Advice with casework

A service that involves taking action on behalf of the client to move the case on, for example:

* negotiating with third parties on the telephone, by letter or face-to-face
* assisting the client in challenging decisions when rights in social welfare law have been refused and/or when a social care, health or educational service has been denied, including gathering additional evidence, seeking a review of a decision (by telephone or letter), or preparing and submitting appeal documents.

*The advice provider takes responsibility for following through with the case and assessing and advising the client on the merits (likely outcome) of the case.*

Level 4: Representation

The presentation of complex legal arguments, including:

* Acting for and representing a client at court and tribunal hearings, e.g. preparing and presenting written and oral submissions at hearings at Employment Tribunals, Social Security Appeal Tribunals, County Court and High Court.
* Preparing applications to a higher court or tribunal (e.g. judicial review) and preparing arguments to develop the case using relevant case law, guidance and statute.
* Calling on expert evidence and instructing other experts, such as barristers, for representation at hearings.
* Negotiating with the other side to a dispute or with relevant third parties in complex matters.

*The advice provider takes responsibility for following through with the case and assessing and advising the client on the merits (likely outcome) of the case.*

Other support

Issue based Advocacy

Supporting and enabling a client to secure and exercise their legal rights, including access to services, with regard to the main areas of social welfare legal advice listed above, whether this be provided by a volunteer or by a paid member of staff. It can also include accompanying a client at court or tribunal hearing in a support capacity (as opposed to a representative capacity) and providing language support.

This level covers those instances where the help is provided by a support worker who is not qualified to provide legal advice, but who advocates on behalf of the client to enable them to access the services and help they need. It is particularly relevant for specialist advice agencies working with clients with special needs.

Preventative education and support

An information, advice or support service where clients receive personal, tailored support to help avoid a crisis situation or to educate the client with regard to the main areas of social welfare legal advice listed above. This might include, for example, budgeting sessions or employability training.