

Best Practices

Public Writer

The Public Writer provides support to help people understand and write documents and texts. This service is offered by volunteers, municipal staff, or by associations. Through attentive listening, they help to interpret and understand letters or administrative documents, offer advice and information, and assist with drafting responses.

The service includes, in particular, the drafting of administrative letters addressed to municipal, state or quasi-governmental organizations, companies and individuals, as well as support with cover letters or résumés.

The services of the Public Writer are free of charge, available by appointment or during office hours, and each case is handled with the utmost confidentiality.

Objectives

- To assist citizens with administrative procedures
- To combat exclusion of individuals who have difficulty writing and/or understanding documents
- To promote the inclusion of all residents of a municipality

Methods

- By appointment or during drop-in hours
- Offer occasional support, with no obligation to achieve a specific result
- Help interpreting and understanding administrative letters or documents
- Advise and inform beneficiary about the steps they need to take
- Support the drafting of responses to letters
- Accurately transcribe and faithfully convey the client's words
- The Public Writer service may be provided by volunteers or by professionals
- For volunteers, it is strongly recommended to sign an agreement
- The activity of the public writer is strictly bound by professional confidentiality
- Public writer services are entirely free of charge
- The service may be offered remotely



Budget

The budget for the Public Writer varies depending on the required material and equipment, the location made available, and whether the service is provided by a volunteer or a professional.

Materials

Equipment

- Desk and chairs
- IT equipment (computer, printer, internet access, telephone etc.)
- Office supplies (paper, folders, pens, etc.)

Location

- A central and easily accessible location within the municipality, possibly the municipality's "Biergerzenter" (citizens' center)
- The service may also be offered remotely (online)

Periodicity

- Permanent service
- Weekly or monthly service or by appointment (depending on local needs)

Evaluation indicators

- Number of consultations
- Type of consultations



Practical advice - DO's

Advice for municipalities

- Ensure that the service is free of charge
- Inform all municipal services and committees, as well as local partners (e.g. the Social Office, associations, etc.), about the new service offered to citizens
- Publicity campaign (municipal newsletter, social media, posters and flyers in shops and medical offices, etc.)
- Collaboration with the Social Office and the municipal Rent Committee

Advice for volunteers and/or professionals

- Ensure that the beneficiary remains in charge and responsible for their own process
- Inform the person about any potential consequences of the document and the possible follow-up actions (costs, procedures, deadlines, implications, etc.)

Practical advice - DONT's

Advice for municipalities

- Do not discontinue the service after the first sessions; it is over time that the service will become known and used
- Do not offer a location that is difficult to find or access, or too far from services frequently used by citizens

Advice for volunteers and/or professionals

- Do not let one's own ideas influence the text; remain neutral and supportive
- Do not intervene in the content of the text, only in its form
- Do not write letters containing denunciation, blackmail, threats, insults, or offensive language
- Do not draft any letter that contradicts Luxembourg law



Contact person/Possible partners

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(Une formation pour bénévoles souhaitant s'engager en tant qu'écrivain public est proposée par l'ASTI a.s.b.l.)

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Additional information

Bertrange – <https://www.bertrange.lu/citoyens-residents/ecrivain-public>

Esch-sur-Alzette (offre professionnelle) – <https://administration.esch.lu/ecrivain-public/>

Differdange – https://differdange.lu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ecrivain-public_flyer.pdf

Sanem – https://www.suessem.lu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Ecrivain-public_De%CC%81pliant_FR.pdf

Luxembourg-Eich (ASTI) – <https://www.asti.lu/ecrivain-public/>

Hosingen (Resonord) – <http://www.resonord.lu/projekte-und-aktivitaeten/ecrivain-public/>

Wiltz – <https://hut.lu/news/actualites/benevoles-pour-nos-projets-parlons-ensemble-et-ecrivain-public>

