

THE PROJECT OF PARA-LEGAL VOLUNTEERS OF NALSA

(Under the NALSA'S Plan of Action for the year 2009-2010)

A SUMMARY

The Project of Para-Legal Volunteers is aimed at imparting legal awareness to volunteers selected from certain target groups who in turn act as harbingers of legal awareness and legal aid to all sections of people. The Volunteers are expected to act as intermediaries between the common people and Legal Services institutions and thereby removing barriers of access to justice. Initially, the volunteers are identified from the NSS units in Colleges, creditworthy NGOs and credible social organizations and Women Self Help Groups. In order to achieve the desired results and to mould the volunteers into full-fledged Para-Legal Volunteers, the following guidelines are formulated:

MODALITIES

- ① At the First Stage, every Taluka Legal Services Committee (TLSC) shall identify 5 volunteers from each Arts and Science College where legal literacy classes are conducted. This should be done with the help of the NSS programme officers of the college and in consultation with the Principal. Volunteers shall be of good character, with inclination for social service, law obedient and with a strong sense of legal rights and justice. At least one of the volunteers should be a female student. Names, addresses, and contact telephone nos of the volunteers selected from each college will be kept in the Register of Para-Legal Volunteers maintained by the TLSC.
- ② In the Second stage, selection of volunteers is from the members of the social organizations and Women Self Help Groups. One member with the aforesaid qualities from each panchayat, shall be selected in consultation with the Chairperson of the local self government institutions. This can be done during the legal literacy classes by making advance announcement to the participants. Names, addresses and contact telephone numbers of the selected Para-Legal Volunteers should be noted in the Register.

TLSC may identify other suitable groups also from among whom Para-Legal Volunteers can be selected.

③ The Third stage is Training. Training programme shall be organized by the TLSC at the Taluka centers. The modalities of training may be decided by the TLSC in consultation with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA). Training programme is to be planned in such a manner as to provide adequate exposure to the volunteers for generating legal awareness about the Constitutional and statutory rights and duties, general civil, criminal, substantial and procedural laws. Legal issues relating to the following topics also can be included in the Training Programme:

1. Women
2. Children's rights and abolition of child labour.
3. Students.
4. Farmers
5. Industrial and Agricultural Labour.
6. Prisoners
7. Victims of natural calamities and Communal violence.
8. Physically and mentally challenged persons.
9. Victims of trafficking.
10. Members of Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes.
11. Consumers.
12. Senior Citizens.
13. Bonded labour.
14. Domestic Violence.
15. Farmers' debt relief.
16. Other beneficiaries of the Legal Services Authorities Act.

The Legal Services Authorities Act 1987, Rules and Regulations framed there under should be an integral part of the training programme. The training should be so oriented as to enable the trainees to act as effective coordinators with the TLSC at the first instance and then with District Legal Services

Authorities, High Court Legal Services Committee, State Authority and Supreme Court Legal Services Committee.

TRAINING TOPICS:

Rights of women under the following Acts and topics:

1. Hindu Marriage Act, Christian Marriage Act, Special Marriages Act, Muslim Women's Protection Act. ✓
2. Child Marriage Restraint Act. ✓
3. Family Courts Act.
4. Guardian and Wards Act.
5. Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act.
6. Maternity Benefit Act.
7. Medical Termination and Pregnancy Act.
8. Dowry Prohibition Act.
9. Dowry Harassment.
10. Domestic Violence.
11. S.125 Cr.P.C.
12. Harassment of Women.
13. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities Act.)
14. Consumer Protection Laws.
15. Labour Welfare Laws.
16. Procedure for claiming compensation for accident victims under Fatal Accidents Act, MV Act, W.C. Act and from railway Accident Claims Tribunal.
17. Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act.
18. F.I.R.

19. Arrest, Bail.
20. Rights of Prisoners.
21. Rights of accused in criminal cases.
22. Registration, Stamp duty.
23. Promissory Notes and Cheques.
24. Revenue Laws.
25. Rights of HIV/AIDS affected persons.
26. Govt. Orders promoting social welfare.
27. PILs.
28. LOKADALATS, ADR system and free services under the Legal Services Authorities Act.
29. Any other topic the DLSA or TLSC consider to be of relevance to a particular local area.

PROCEDURE RELATING TO TRAINING.

1. Para-Legal Volunteer's training programme is to be conducted under the supervision of the Chairman and Secretary of the TLSC, in consultation with the DLSA.
2. As soon as the training is completed, the TLSC shall send a list of volunteers their names, address and contact details to the DLSA. A consolidated list of Para-Legal Volunteers in the district shall be prepared by the DLSA and submitted to the State Authority.
3. A review meeting of the Volunteers shall be conducted by the TLSC once in three months and a report shall be submitted to the DLSA within a week. A copy of the report shall be sent to the State Authority also.
4. The TLSC may devise its own plan of action for utilization of the services of the Para-Legal Volunteers.

5. The DLSA may allot a maximum of Rs.2000/- to the TLSC for each training session for providing refreshments to the trainees.
6. The TLSC may utilize the services of serving/retired judicial officers, law teachers, lawyers, law students, revenue officials, officers of the social welfare department and the law graduates among the court staff as resource persons for the training programme.

Disqualifications of Para-Legal Volunteers and their removal

No person shall be eligible to work as Para-Legal Volunteer if he/she;

- a) fails to evince a sustained interest in the scheme or;
- b) has been adjudged insolvent or;
- c) is accused for an offence in a criminal case or convicted by a criminal court or;
- d) has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a Para-Legal Volunteer or;
- e) has abused his/her position or committed misconduct in any manner as to render his/her continuance prejudicial to public interest or;
- f) has willfully refused to obey the instructions of the DLSA/TLSC or;

A Para-Legal Volunteer with any of the above disqualifications may be removed by the Chairman, TLSC. Such removal should be promptly reported to the DLSA and also to the State Authority.

Duties of Trained Para-Legal Volunteers.

1. Para-Legal Volunteer shall educate people, especially those belonging to weaker sections of the society to enable them to be aware of the right to live with human dignity, to enjoy all the Constitutionally and statutorily

guaranteed rights, performing the duties and discharging obligations as per law.

2. Para-Legal Volunteers shall make people aware of the nature of their disputes/issues/problems and inform them that they can approach the TLSC/DLSA/HCLSC/SLSA/SCLSC and that they can resolve the dispute/issue/problems through these institutions.
3. Para-Legal Volunteers shall constantly keep a watch on transgressions of law or acts of injustice in their area of operation and bring them immediately to the notice of the TLSC through telephonic message or a written communication or in person to enable effective remedial action by the Committee.
4. Para-Legal Volunteers shall assist the DLSA/TLSC for organizing legal awareness camps in their area of operation.
5. Para-Legal Volunteers shall give information to the people of their locality about the legal services activities of SLSA/DLSA/TLSC/HCLSC/SCLSC and shall provide their addresses to the people so as to enable them to utilize the free services rendered by the above organizations to the eligible persons.
6. Para-Legal Volunteers shall generate awareness among people about the benefits of settlement of disputes through Lok Adalats, Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.
7. Para-Legal Volunteers shall propagate the facility of Pre-Litigation petitions in the TLSC/DLSA for inexpensive settlement of disputes.
8. Para-Legal Volunteers shall create awareness among citizens that if pending cases are settled through Lok Adalats the parties are entitled to refund of Court fee and that there is no appeal.
9. Para-Legal Volunteers shall make people aware of the benefits of inexpensive settlement of disputes relating to Public Utility Services like

P&T, Telephones, Electricity, Water Supply, insurance and hospital services through Permanent Lok Adalats (PLA).

10. Para-Legal Volunteers shall submit monthly reports of their activities to the TLSC.
11. Para-Legal Volunteers shall see that publicity materials of legal services activities are exhibited at prominent places in there are of activity.

Expenses incurred by Para-Legal Volunteers.

Reasonable expenses incurred by Para-Legal Volunteers e.g. Bus/Train fare, Postage, Telephone charges etc., may be reimbursed by the TLSC/DLSA/SLSA, on production of proof and receipts may be obtained. Travel expenses limited to the lowest class by road/rail/steamer of the legal aid beneficiaries brought by the Para-Legal Volunteers also may be reimbursed at the discretion of the Chairman.

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ACTION PLAN FOR NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR PARA LEGAL TRAINING AND LEGAL AID ACTIVITIES

Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India has set up a National Committee for Para Legal Training and Legal Aid Activities under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.Sathasivam, Judge, Supreme Court of India. The formal launching of the activities of the Committee was done on 25th April, 2010 at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development by Hon'ble Mr. Justice K.G.Balakrishanan, Chief Justice of India in the presence of Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.Sathasivam, Judge, Supreme Court of India. Dr. M.Veerappa Moily, Hon'ble Union Law Minister, Hon'ble Mr. Justice H.L.Gokhale, Chief Justice of Madras High Court and Hon'ble Mr. Justice E.Dharma Rao, Executive Chairman, Tamil Nadu State Legal Services Authority spoke on the occasion. If we examine the history of legal aid in India, we can see that it has been a journey from charity to Constitutional right. The Fundamental right conferred under Article 14 providing for equality and equal protection of laws, become meaningless if the citizens face barriers to 'access to justice'.

In the Indian society, barriers to access to justice are multifarious. In the report of the Expert Committee on Legal Aid under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice Krishna Iyer - "*Processual Justice to the People*" - a large number of barriers to 'access to justice' have been enumerated. Illiteracy, social backwardness, physical, geographical, social and psychological distancing and even mental incapacity act as real barriers to the common people for getting access to the seats of justice. The result is that they become silent sufferers even while they face abject denial of justice.

Para Legal Volunteers Scheme of NALSA

Para legal volunteers are intended to bridge the gap between the people who suffer the problems of 'access to justice' and the legal services institutions which are often located in towns and cities, far away from villages and

geographically inaccessible areas. Para-legal volunteers are a group of people with some basic training in the laws and legal system of our country, who like the "barefoot doctors" in China, can provide primary assistance to the common people who face problems relating to their rights conferred by law.

Para legal volunteers help the poor and disadvantaged to free them from the stranglehold of the mighty and powerful for protecting their legal rights. The ultimate object of para legal volunteers is to help the legal services institutions established under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 for bringing the voice of the voiceless to be heard and to get their grievances redressed. It is indeed a part of the **preventive and strategic legal aid** programme contemplated under Section 7 (2) (c) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has already put in place a Scheme for Para Legal Volunteers. The Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority (APSLSA) has been a pioneer in organizing para legal volunteers in their State. NALSA has adopted APSLSA's scheme and issued directions to all SLSAs to implement it.

Under the NALSA scheme of para legal volunteers, the para legal volunteers are identified and selected from the educated youth, teachers, *anganwadi* workers, field level officers of various government departments, NGOs, social clubs, social workers, members of co-operative societies, trade-unions and those willing persons who are interested in providing voluntary legal services to the poor and marginalized sections of the society.

Voluntariness is the hallmark of the para legal volunteers. Therefore, in the NALSA's scheme para legal volunteers are motivated and trained for rendering their services purely voluntary. However, the reasonable expenses incurred by the para legal volunteers in the process of rendering legal services will be reimbursed to them by the legal services institutions.

Para legals are given training on the important laws which have some bearing in the day-to-day lives of the common people. The topics covered in the training programmes are: -

- i) Laws relating to marriage – Hindu Marriage Act, Christian Marriage Act, Muslim Women's Protection Act and Special Marriage Act.
- ii) Child Marriage Restraint Act.
- iii) Family Courts Act.
- iv) Guardian and Wards Act 1980.
- v) Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act.
- vi) Maternity Benefit Act.
- vii) Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, and the related laws on Pre-Natal Diagnostics.
- viii) Dowry Prohibition Act.
- ix) Laws relating to maintenance of wives and parents including senior citizens.
- x) Harassment of working women.
- xi) Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act-2005.
- xii) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.
- xiii) Consumer Protection Laws.
- xiv) Labour Welfare Laws including labourers in the unorganized sector and MGREGA.
- xv) Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act.
- xvi) Important provision in the criminal laws, like arrest, bail.
- xvii) Rights of prisoners.
- xviii) Promissory notes and cheques.

- xix) Legal Services Authorities Act.
- xx) A.D.R.
- xxi) Mental Health Act and Disabilities Act.

Para legal volunteers are given training by the District Legal Services Authorities at the Taluk and District Levels.

Educated prisoners serving long-term sentence in jails also are given legal training. This would include the laws relating to the plea-bargaining, appeal, revision etc. Such trainings will help the prisoners and under-trials who are lodged in jails as *incommunicados* for early disposal of their cases.

The trained para legals are required to keep a constant watch on the instances of transgressions of law and justice in their areas of operation and to bring such instances and the affected persons to the legal services institutions like District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs), Taluk Legal Services Committees (TLSCs) and even to the higher legal services institutions like Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) and High Court Legal Services Committees (HCLSCs).

Para legal volunteers can also be trained to man the front office of the legal aid clinics. Para legal volunteers are further required to assist in organising legal awareness programmes and ADR mechanisms like, lok adalat, mediation & conciliation.

The para legal volunteers under the NALSA scheme are, in short, to act as *intermediaries between common man and the legal services institutions, bridging the gap between such institutions and common people and thereby bringing justice to the door steps.*

The action plan of the National Committee of Para Legal Training and Legal Aid Activities.

The National Committee of Para Legal Training aims at roping in the potentials

of the National Service Volunteers (NSVs) working in Nehru Yuva Kendras (NYK) under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The National Committee aims at supplementing the NALSA's scheme, not for supplanting it. Every year NYKs recruit approximately 5000 youths as National Service Volunteers to work in the 6400 blocks in the 623 districts of our country. They are paid around Rs.2500/- per month by the Ministry as honorarium. National Committee for Para Legal Training and Legal Aid Activities under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.Sathasivam, Judge, Supreme Court of India felt that if the NSVs are given training to act as para legal volunteers, their services also can be utilized for bridging the gap between common man and legal services institutions and to serve in an effective manner along with the other trained para legal volunteers, in bringing the concept of access to justice to a reality.

Under the auspices of the National Committee for Para Legal Training and Legal Aid Activities, the NSVs will be given training at the local level with the assistance of District Legal Services Authorities and utilize their services as para legal volunteers.

For this purpose, the NALSA will identify 90 trainers. It is proposed to give training to the Member Secretaries of all 35 State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) as trainers. The remaining trainers will be selected by the SLSAs from amongst lawyers and law teachers (one person from each category from each SLSA).

A Training of Trainers (TOT) Programme will be organized at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development (RGNIYD) with the help of Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNOU). Since IGNOU conducts para legal courses, the services of IGNOU to train the trainers can be availed off. After the TOT course, the trainers are expected to conduct training programmes for the NSVs at District /Taluk level. The Para Legal Volunteers can also join the academic courses on Para Legal Services offered by IGNOU on payment basis, if they desire so.

At the behest of the National Committee for Para Legal Training and Legal Aid Activities, the TOT training will take place at RIGNID sometime in August-September, 2010 which will be inaugurated by the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, NALSA. The date of the TOT will be fixed subject to the convenience of Executive Chairman, NALSA. In the meantime, the State Legal Services Authorities shall identify and select one lawyer and a law teacher each to act as trainers to undergo the TOT at RIGNID. The ultimate objective is to create a training base for the para legal volunteers not only for the NSVs under the NYKs but also for training the other para legal volunteers under the NALSA scheme and to transform them as intermediaries and thereby bridging the gap between common people and the legal services institutions.

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NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, NEW DELHI

SCHEME FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT OF PARALEGAL VOLUNTEERS BY THE STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the objectives of the ' **POLICY FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL** ' formulated by the National Legal Services Authorities is development of " **Para – Legal Services** " for the purpose of imparting legal awareness to various target groups of Para Legal Volunteers who in turn bring legal awareness to all sections of people.

For effective functioning of the system, modalities are to be worked out in respect of organizing training programmes and also provide reference material for the faculty of the training programmes and Para-Legals. In order to achieve the desired results and to shape the trainees as full-fledged Para Legal Volunteers, the following instructions are to be followed.

II. FORMULATION OF MODALITIES

1. **At the First** phase every District Legal Services Authority shall identify about 50 volunteers and every Taluk Legal Services Committee shall identify about 25 volunteers who can read and write vernacular language in such a way that the identified persons area of operation will cover the Jurisdiction of respective District Legal Services Authority or Taluk Legal Services Committee, for training at respective District Legal Services Authorities under the supervision of Chairman and Secretary, District Legal Services Authority.

The training programmes of Para Legal Volunteers and other activities enunciated herein shall be conducted, under the overall supervision of the District Judge and Chairmen, District Legal Services Authority, by Secretary of District Legal Services Authority and other Officers and staff.

The programmes under this scheme shall be formulated by the Secretaries of District Legal Services Authorities in consultations and approval of District Judge and Chairman concerned. Each such programme conducted by them as well as report about the work done by the Para Legal Volunteers shall be submitted to the State Legal Services Authority.


✓ **WHO SHOULD BE PARA LEGAL VOLUNTEERS:**

2. **Para Legal Volunteers** are to be identified from the following target groups:

- *Advocates, Teachers and lecturers of Government and Private School and Colleges of all levels.*
- *Anganwadi Workers*
- *Private or Government doctors and other Government employees.*
- *Field level officers of different departments and agencies of the State and Union Governments.*
- *Students of graduation and Post graduation in law, Education, Social Services and humanities.*
- *Members of apolitical Service oriented Non-Governmental Organizations and Clubs*
- *Members of Women Neighbourhood Groups, Maithri Sanghams*
- *Educated prisoners serving long term sentences in Central Prison and District Prison.*
- *Social Workers and volunteers, volunteers of Panchayat Raj and Municipal institutions.*
- *Members of Co-operative Societies.*
- *Members of Trade Unions.*
- *Any other persons which the District Legal Services Authority or Taluk Legal Services Committee deems fit to be identified as Para Legal Volunteers*

3. **After identification** of the volunteers, their names, addresses, telephone numbers (if available) shall be entered in a separate Register maintained by the District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee by giving batch number.

4. Each identified Para-Legal volunteer is to be given an identification card by the Secretary, District Legal Services Authority. Identification card shall be given in the proforma.

 Photo	STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY	
	Para-Legal volunteer registration number — (.....)	
	Name:	
	Father / Husband Name:	
	Village / Town:	
	Signature of Para Legal Volunteer	Signature of Secretary, DLSA

5. The identified volunteers be given training in Six Sessions, two sessions in each month and training is to be completed within a period of three months for each identified Batch.

6. After completion of Six Sessions of training, the District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee shall identify another batch of Para Legal Volunteers and impart training by observing the same instructions.

7. The District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee should enlist the cooperation of the Collector of the District or the Revenue Divisional Officer of that area and through them the Officers of the concerned departments or agencies or organizations, to identify the interested volunteers to be trained as Legal Aid volunteers and to enable participation of such persons in such programmes and for providing the necessary infrastructure and other support for organizing such programmes.

SPECIAL IMPETUS ISSUES

8. Training programmes are to be planned in such way to provide exposure to the Para Legal Volunteers to the necessity of generating Legal Awareness in respect of constitutional and statutory rights and duties, and general Civil, Criminal substantial and procedural laws and the problems and issues of law and Society as well as special issues related to:
- a. Women
 - b. Children
 - c. Students
 - d. Farmers
 - e. Industrial and Agriculture labour
 - f. Prisoners
 - g. Victims of natural disaster
 - h. Physically challenged, including persons suffering from Mental disorder and mentally retarded persons.
 - i. Victims of Trafficking i.e. Women and Children as well as those suffering from HIV /AIDS
 - j. Members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
 - k. Bonded Labour.
 - l. Consumers.
 - m. Senior Citizens.
 - n. And other beneficiaries under Legal Services Authorities Act, besides providing clear idea of the working of Legal Services Authorities and Services provided under the Legal Services Authorities Act.

9. If the District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee deems fit and necessary to identify Para Legal Volunteers exclusively in respect of dealing the issues of special groups mentioned in the para No.8, the District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee shall identify persons interested to work exclusively in respect of dealing the issues of any of the special groups mentioned, register their names and impart training focusing the issues related to the special group by following similar procedure in respect of entering the names in the Register and training Sessions.

10. The training should be so oriented as to enable the trainees to act as effective coordinators between the Legal Services authorities and the needy and deserving citizens.

11. The Para Legal Volunteers should know clearly that they should work as pure volunteers without expecting any fee, remuneration or salary, for doing services to the oppressed and suppressed sections of people around them in a dedicated way as a commitment.

TRAINING TOPICS

12. Topics to be covered in training programme.

- Rights of Women under the following Acts and Topics:
 - i. Hindu Marriage Act, Christian Marriage Act, Muslim Women's Protection Act and Special marriage Act.
 - ii. Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929.
 - iii. Family Court Act 1994.
 - iv. Guardian and Wards Act 1890.
 - v. Hindu Minority and Guardianship act.
 - vi. Maternity Benefit Act.
 - vii. Medical Termination of pregnancy Act.

- viii. Dowry Prohibition Act.
 - ix. Dowry harassment.
 - x. Section 125 CrPC.
 - xi. Harassment of working women.
 - xii. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.
- Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.
 - Consumer protection Act.
 - Labour Welfare Laws.
 - Procedure for claiming compensation under Fatal Accidents Act, Motor vehicles Act, Workmen's compensation Act and compensation from Railway Accident Claims Tribunal.
 - Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act 1976.
 - F.I.R.
 - Arrest – Bail.
 - Rights of Prisoners.
 - Fundamental Rights of accused including prisoners.
 - Fundamental Duties of accused including prisoners.
 - Registration and stamp Duty
 - Promissory notes.
 - Revenue Laws.
 - *Nyaya Sankalp* programme undertaken by National Legal Services Authority in collaboration with UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) entitled TAHA (Trafficking and AIDS / HIV)
 - Entitlements conferred on special groups by Governments under various schemes, orders and legislations.

- Public Interest Litigation.
- Lok Adalats, A.D.R. System, Free Legal Services under Legal Services Authorities act.
- Any other topic or Act the District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee deem it necessary, including those related to local problems.

PROCEDURE RELATING TO TRAINING

13. Para Legal Volunteers training programme is to be conducted under the supervision of the Chairmen and Secretaries District Legal Services Authority.

14. As soon as six sessions of training is completed to a batch of identified Para Legal Volunteers in the District, consolidated list of registered numbers and names of Para Legal Volunteers who have undergone training shall be submitted to the State Legal Services Authority.

15. A Separate review meeting with the trained Para-Legal Volunteers batch wise be conducted once in three months by the Secretary, District Legal Services Authority and a report shall be submitted to State Legal Services Authority with in one month thereof.

16. District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee should devise their own plan in preparing batches of identified Para Legal Volunteers in such away that the training programme be continued through out the year for batch after batch.

✓ 17. The District Legal Services Authorities be permitted to spend maximum amount of Rs.3000/- for each training session including refreshments, actual conveyance charges and stay to trainees.

18. The District Legal Services Authority may utilize the Services of serving or retired Judicial Officers, Law Teachers, Lawyers, Law students, Revenue Officials as well as Retired Sheristadars of Courts and Law Graduates among Court staff as resource persons for training programme.

PARA LEGAL VOLUNTEERS IN JAILS

For this purpose, about ten educated prisoners serving long term sentences in the very same Central Prison and District Prisons may be identified for being trained as Para Legal Volunteers whose services shall be available to the other prisoners in the jail itself at all times. The Jail Authorities have agreed to implement the scheme.

III. DISQUALIFICATIONS OF PARA LEGAL VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR REMOVAL:

No person is eligible for being identified as Para-Legal Volunteer if he / she:

- a) Fails to evince interest in the Scheme.
- b) Has been adjudged insolvent.
- c) Has been accused of an offence.
- d) Has become physically or Mentally incapable of acting as Para-Legal Volunteer.
- e) Has so abused his/her position or misconducted in any manner as to render his/her continuance prejudicial to the public interest.
- f) Affiliated to political parties.

Any such Para-Legal Volunteer can be removed by the Chairman, District Legal Services Authority and intimate the same to the State Legal Services Authority.

IV. DUTIES OF TRAINED PARA LEGAL VOLUNTEERS:-

1. The Para Legal Volunteers shall educate every citizen to enable him or her to be aware of the right to live with human dignity, enjoying all the constitutionally and statutorily guaranteed rights and performing the duties and discharging the obligations as per Law.

2. The Para Legal Volunteers shall make every citizen aware of the nature of the disputes / issues / problems concerning which a citizen can approach the Legal Services Authorities and through whom and the manner of resolution of disputes / issues / problems through the Legal Services Authorities.

3. The Para Legal Volunteers shall constantly keep a watch on any transgressions of law or acts of injustice in their area of operation and bring them immediately to the notice of the concerned District Legal Services Authority or Taluk Legal Services Committee through a telephonic message or a written communication or in person expeditiously to enable effective remedial action by such Authority or Committee.

4. The Para Legal Volunteers shall organize Legal awareness camps regularly in their area of operation either in collaboration or under intimation of District Legal Services Authority or Taluk Legal Services Committee to generate Legal Awareness among citizens in respect of the problems any issues related to women, Children, Labour, Members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes persons and other beneficiaries under Legal Services Authorities Act.

5. The Para Legal Volunteers shall create awareness among citizens about the working of the Legal Services in the State and services provided by the District Legal Services Authorities / Taluk Legal Services Committees / High Court Legal Services Committee / State Legal Services Authority / Supreme Court Legal Services Committee / National Legal Services Authority and also provide their address to enable them to utilize their services.

6. The Para Legal Volunteers shall generate awareness among citizens about the benefits in settlement of disputes through arbitration, conciliation, Judicial settlement including settlement Lok Adalat and Mediation.

7. The Para Legal Volunteers shall propagate among the citizens that they may approach the District Legal Services Authority / Taluk Legal Services Committee for settlement of disputes at pre-litigation stage itself without paying any Court Fees.

8. The Para Legal Volunteers shall create awareness among citizens that the parties are entitled for refund of court fees in the matters settled in Lok Adalat and that their litigation comes to an end there itself and lies no appeal and waste of time is avoided.

9. The Para Legal Volunteers shall create awareness among citizens about the settlement of disputes relating to **public utility Services** through permanent Lok Adalats.

10. The Para Legal Volunteers shall submit a brief report every month about their activities to District Legal Services Authorities / Taluk Legal Services Committees.

11. The Para Legal Volunteers shall see that the publicity brochures of Legal Services Authority reach educated persons in every village.

12. The Para Legal Volunteers and people trained can utilize the telephone services of Taluk Legal Services Committee, District Legal Services Authority wherever telephones are available and those of State Legal Services Authority to bring to the notice of various Legal Services

Authorities about any aberrations or infringement of rights for immediate help and instructions. If any expenditure is incurred by the volunteers as para legal volunteers on account of telephone charges for their services, can be got reimbursed from the Taluk Committees/district Authorities on production of proof of such expenditure.

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