

Para-Legal volunteers (PLV)

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 all sections of people.

The District legal services Authority has engaged 93 Para-Legal volunteers (PLV) for the year 2014-2015 and engaged them all in the legal aid clinics functioning through out its jurisdiction. The important areas where the PLVs are engaged right now are Jail Legal Aid Clinic, Legal Aid Clinic at Bargarh Town P.S., Village Legal Aid Clinics and in the Front office of D.L.S.A., Bargarh.

Duties of Trained Para- Legal Volunteers

- 1) *Para-Legal volunteers shall educate people, especially those belonging to weaker sections of the society, to enable them to be aware of their right to live with human dignity, to enjoy all the constitutionally and statutorily guaranteed rights as also the duties and discharge of 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 so as to 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 there 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) *When the PLV receives information about the arrest of a person in the locality, the PLV shall visit the Police Station and ensure that the arrested person gets legal assistance, if necessary, through the nearest legal services institutions .*
- 5) *The PLVs shall also ensure that the victims of crime also also get proper care and attention. Efforts shall be made by the PLVs t secure compensation for the victims of crime under the provisions of Section 357-A Cr.p.c.*

- 6) *PLVs shall, with proper authorization from the DLSA/TLSC visit jails, lock-ups, psychiatric hospitals, children's homes/observation homes and shall ascertain the legal service needs of the inmates and intimate the authorities concerned about any absence noticed of basic essential necessities with special emphasis on hygiene.*
- 7) *PLVs shall report violations of child rights, child labour, missing children and trafficking of girl children to the nearest legal services institutions or to the child welfare committee.*
- 8) *Para-legal volunteers shall assist the DLSA/TLSC for organizing legal awareness camps in their area of operation.*
- 9) *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.*
- 10) *Para-legal volunteers shall generate awareness amongst people about the benefits of settlement of disputes including pre-litigation stage through Lok Adalats, Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.*
- 11) *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 Adalat (PLA).*
- 12) *Para-Legal volunteers **shall** submit monthly reports of their activities to the DLSA/TLSC under whom they are working in the prescribed format.*
- 13) *A diary to record the daily activities shall be maintained by each PLVs. The diary shall be printed and given to PLVs by the District Legal Services Authority. Such diary shall be verified and endorsed by the Secretary, DLSA or the Chairman, TLSC as the case may be.*
- 14) *Para-legal volunteers shall see that publicity materials on legal services activities are exhibited at prominent places in their area of activity.*

-Disqualifications of Para-Legal volunteers & their removal-

The PLVs shall be disqualified and removed from the panel if he/she:

- 1) Fails to evince interest in the Scheme.*
- 2) Has been adjudged insolvent.*
- 3) Has been accused of an offence .*
- 4) Has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as PLVs.*
- 5) Has so abused his/ her position or misconducted in any manner as to render his/her continuance prejudicial to the public interest.*
- 6) If she /he is an active political enthusiast of a political party. Any such Para-Legal volunteers may be removed by the Chairman, District Legal Services Authority after suitable enquiry and intimation of the same should be sent to the State Legal Services Authority.*

Para-Legal volunteers to work in the 'Front offices' of the DLSA/ TLSCs:-

The Secretary, DLSA or TLSC may depute one or more PLVs to operate the 'Front Offices' or the legal services institutions.

Para-legal volunteers to work in the 'Legal Aid Clinics' of the DLSA/ TLSCs:-

The secretary, DLSA/TLSC may depute PLVs in the Legal Aid Clinics set up under the National Legal Services Authority (Legal Aid Clinics) Regulations, 2011. The PLVs engaged in the Legal Aid Clinics shall function in such clinics in accordance with the provisions of the aforesaid regulations.

Honorarium for the PLVs rendering services in the Legal Aid Clinics and Front Offices.

The State Legal Services Authority in consultation with the National Legal Services Authority may fix an honorarium for the PLVs engaged in the legal aid clinics. However, such honorarium for those who have rendered services on any day shall not be less than Rs.250/-per day.

The PLVs who bring legal aid applications from the distant villages to the legal services institutions at the Taluk/District level and to the District ADR Centers shall also be eligible to receive honorarium for such day at the same rate.

PLVs shall also be eligible for honorarium if on any particular day they assist persons in connection with the PLV work the PLV work by accompanying such persons to various offices including Courts, however, subject to proof.

Para-legal volunteers to assist in the legal literacy classes and camps:-

The PLVs in consultation with the nearest legal services institutions shall organise micro legal literacy camps in the area of their operation by organising legal literacy classes for small groups of persons including labourers, women, children members of SC/ST etc. It shall be the duty of the

PLVs to distribute information booklets and other publication of the Legal Services Authorities during the legal literacy classes.

Resolving local disputes through ADR mechanism:-

The PLVs shall take efforts to bring the parties of the locality involved in disputes , to settlement, by using the machinery of Lok Adalat, Mediation or Conciliation at the District ADR Centers. If no District ADR Center has been set up in the District, the legal services institutions shall take steps for organising a suitable ADR mechanism like Lok Adalat ,mediation, conciliation etc. in the village itself in coordination with the PLVs. The PLVs who bring such cases to the ADR process shall be entitled to receive the prescribed honorarium on the day when such proceedings are held.

Para-legal volunteers in jails:-

A few educated well-behaved prisoners serving long term sentences in the Central Prison and District Prisons may be identified for being trained as Para-Legal volunteers. Their services shall be available to the other prisoners in the jail including the under trial prisoners. The training of such PLVs may be conducted along with the their PLVs.

Payment.

They will be entitled to be paid as PLVs for the services rendered at the prescribed rate o honorarium payable to other PLVs.
