



“Legal Services Camp Module”

NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Access to justice is essential for rule of law. Access to justice, enable citizens to have their voices heard, exercise their rights and challenge discrimination. Access to Justice is not confined to court based legal services. It extends to making people aware about their entitlements under various enactments and welfare schemes and programmes and strengthening their access to the same. Some Legal Awareness Camps are being held by the State Legal Services Authorities to make people aware about their entitlements and apprise them about the availability of free legal services. In most of the camps, it has been observed, only creating of awareness is focussed on. There is a need to effect paradigm shift from awareness to empowerment. For this to happen, a new Model of holding Legal Services Camp is required which would not only make people aware about their entitlements and procedural aspects relating to the same but also connect them to the welfare schemes meant for them. Delivery based Model for holding Legal Services Camp is required.

2. STATUTORY MANDATE

Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 was passed with an objective to provide free and competent legal services to weaker sections of the society so that they do not remain deprived of justice due to economic or other disabilities. This Act has created Legal Services Authorities primarily with an aim to provide legal services to weaker and marginalised sections of the society.

Section 4 provides the various functions of the Central Authority. One of the functions spelt out in Section 4(1)

“take appropriate measures for spreading legal literacy and legal awareness amongst the people and, in particular, to educate weaker section of the society about the rights, benefits and privileges guaranteed by social welfare legislations and other enactments as well as administrative programmes and measures” .

This itself reflects that apart ensuring Access to lawyers and legal advice, the mandate of the Legal Services Authorities also extends to educate the weaker sections of the society about the rights, benefits and privileges guaranteed by social welfare legislations and other enactments as well as administrative programmes and measures.

In view of the Section 4(b) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, NALSA has promulgated the following schemes as strategic and preventive programmes and to educate the weaker sections of the society about their entitlements and empower them to get redressed their grievances in accordance with the law of the land.

One of the functions as per Section 4(e) of National Legal Services Authority is to organise Legal Aid Camps especially in rural areas, slums, labour colonies with the dual purpose of educating weaker sections of the

society as to their right as well as encouraging the settlement of disputes through Lok Adalats.

3. OBJECTIVES OF LEGAL SERVICES CAMP:

The Legal Services camp must aim to achieve the following objectives:-

3.1 To spread awareness about welfare legislations and schemes, and strengthen the community's access to the schemes being implemented by the Legal Services Authority and other departments of government.

3.2 Identifying and connecting people to welfare schemes to ensure that fruits of welfare schemes are passed to eligible people.

3.3 To understand legal needs of people and address legal problems of people by giving appropriate legal advice and taking other necessary steps.

4. SUGGESTED THEMES/ ISSUES WHICH MAY BE COVERED IN A LEGAL SERVICES CAMP

4.1 Labour

- Connecting unorganised sector workers to welfare schemes.
- Issues of construction / agricultural labour.
- Availing benefit under Centre and State Schemes.
- Legal Services in any other issues relating to entitlements under labour laws.

4.2 Persons with disabilities

- Addressing disconnect between welfare schemes and persons with disabilities.
- Taking steps to connect beneficiaries with schemes such as Niramaya and Gyan Prabha run by National Trust.
- Ensuring legal services in any other issues.

4.3 Children related issues

- Addressing educational rights of children aged between 6-14.

- Child Marriage.
- Child Labour.
- Issues related to rights under Food Security Act.
- Establishment of Legal Literacy Clubs in Higher Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools.

4.4 Transgenders

- Ensuring benefits of welfare legislations/schemes. Issues dealt in NALSA vs. Union of India & Ors. (W.P.(C) No.400/2012).

4.5 Prisoners

- Ensuring representation before court.
- Availability of legal services for inmates.
- Digitisation of legal services clinics in jails.
- Adoption of E-Prison Portal by Jails.

4.6 Issues relating to SC/STs

- Ending discrimination.
- Partnering with State Commission of SC/ST on all issues pertaining to them.

4.7 Senior Citizens

- Ensuring benefits of welfare legislations/schemes.
- Availability of legal services including issues relating to Maintenance and Welfare of Parents & Senior Citizens Act, 2007.
- Senior Citizens Pension issues, if any.
- Elderly abuse, neglect and abandonment.

4.8 Beggars and homeless

- Exploring facilities available for them.
- Identifying abuse, trafficking etc.

4.9 Road Safety and accident

- Awareness about road safety signs.
- Protection to good Samaritans.

4.10 Victims of Disasters

- Problems/legal issues faced by people affected by drought/flood/industrial disasters. Short term and long term planning.
- Minimizing the impact of flood etc. A mechanism for drought stricken and sustenance to victim.

4.11 Victims of Trafficking

- Identifying causes/areas.
- Rehabilitation and repatriation issues.
- Helping to connect with schemes such as Ujjawala run by Ministry of Women and Child.
- Addressing legal issues relating to victims, particularly under Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 or any other law.

4.12 Any other eligible/category.

5. PRE-CAMP STEPS

5.1 Identification of target population

State Legal Services Authority shall identify cluster of villages in any particular district where categories of persons coming within the ambit of any particular NALSA Scheme are living. After identifying cluster of such villages, the scheme sought to be implemented shall form the core theme for the camp. The core theme, as per the conditions prevailing in the area and to touch particular section of society, may be further broken down to specific themes such as labour rights or rights of senior citizens or rights of women etc.

5.2 Formation of team for connecting with the intended beneficiaries

Teams of Panel Lawyers and Para Legal Volunteers be formed. NGOs working in the field of selected core theme , be identified. NGOs having credible reputation only to be identified and associated with teams. Any other expert having expertise in the subject matter of core theme can also be associated with the teams to connect with the target population so as to make

them aware about the organisation of Legal Services Camp and to ensure that benefits arranged at the Camp reaches them.

5.3 Identification of specific welfare schemes and departments implementing them

Welfare Schemes and legislations pertaining to core theme be identified. Government departments related to the said core theme be identified. Departments who are even remotely related to the sections of people of core theme be also identified so that multi-dimensional and holistic approach is adopted to ensure access to justice in a meaningful and effective manner. For instance, if the core theme is rights of labourers then, regarding that core theme, the relevant departments/entities would be Department of Labour, Department of Social – Welfare, Department of Health, Department of Women and Child, Ministry of Skill Development, Common Services Centres. These said departments/entities would be the main Departments. Main focus of the camp shall be to connect people with the schemes being run by the main departments related to core theme. Apart from those main departments, other entities and departments which can provide benefit to labourers on the day of camp be also identified. In the given illustration, another department can be department of education to take care of the educational rights of children of labourers etc. Services at Common Services Centres may be availed.

5.4 NALSA Schemes

1. Scheme for Para-Legal Volunteers
2. Schemes for Legal Services to Disaster Victims through Legal Services Authorities
3. NALSA (Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation) Scheme, 2015
4. NALSA (Legal Services to the Workers in the Unorganized Sector) Scheme, 2015
5. NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services to Children and their Protection) Scheme, 2015
6. NALSA (Legal Services to the Mentally Ill and Mentally Disabled Persons) Scheme, 2015
7. NALSA (Effective Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Schemes) Scheme, 2015
8. NALSA (Protection and Enforcement of Tribal Rights) Scheme, 2015
9. NALSA (Legal Services to the Victims of Drug Abuse and Eradication of Drug Menace), Scheme, 2015
10. NALSA (Legal Services to Senior Citizens) Scheme, 2016
11. NALSA (Legal Services to Victims of acid attacks)Scheme, 2016

5.5 Holding of pre-camp preparatory meetings with stakeholders

Before conducting camp, workshop for teams be conducted to make them aware about the camp design and government welfare schemes and the method to connect sections of community related to core theme with welfare schemes /programmes. In the said workshop, officials of the government departments and NGOs be also requested to participate so that coordinated

efforts are made to benefit the marginalized sections of the society. They be apprised about the objectives of the legal services camp, pre-camp steps and activities during camp etc.

5.6 Identification of venue for the camp

Open Space be also identified where legal services camp can be held for identified villages. It should be kept in view that the space must be large enough to accommodate around 1500/2000 people and setting up of stalls, LED screen etc.

5.7 Field visits by outreach teams in the district/adjoining areas

Teams in association with NGOs, if any, shall make field visits to identify people related to the core theme. Field visits must start at least fifteen days prior to holding of camp. Teams must identify targeted people related to core them. They must also interact with those people to apprise them about the welfare schemes/programmes related to them. Teams shall disseminate information about camp such as its importance/objectives and relevance to their lives to let people know about the importance of camp. People be also told to bring necessary identity documents required for filling up forms related to schemes. Sarpanches/ Panchayat members of the identified villages be also requested to come on the day of camp. They be also requested to mobilise people related to core theme of the camp. Presence of

Sarpanches and Panchayat members is also required as while submitting forms identification of applicant is required to be made.

5.8 Publicising the organisation of legal services camp

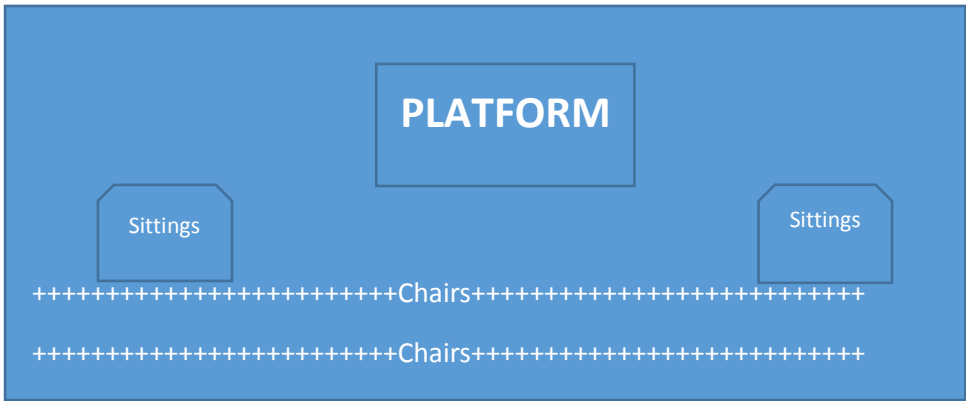
Before holding camp, mobilization be also done through community meetings and by door-to-door visits of field teams to disseminate information about camp. Information about details of the camp through loud speakers and community radio be also disseminated. Adequate number of hoardings be also placed at public places to give information to public about the venue and date of legal services camp.

5.9 Identifying of presenters by participatory government departments/ministries during the camp.

Meetings with the Officers of the concerned departments be held to chalk out strategies for conducting Legal Services Camp on the core theme. They be apprised about the objectives of the camp, pre-camp steps etc. They be also requested to have adequate pamphlets, booklets, application forms etc. relating to welfare schemes/programmes of their departments in vernacular language on the day of camp. They be also requested to nominate presenting officers who will give very brief presentation about the welfare schemes to people on the day of camp in local language.

5.10 Physical lay-out of the Camp

Camp's physical lay-out be also designed for the convenience of the villagers/participants. Separate registration stalls for males and females be put. Stalls for different departments including that of Legal Services Authority be also planned in coordination with the government departments. Two/three stalls be kept for NGOs and team members to fill up the forms for getting people connected with schemes. Arrangement for photocopier and adequate stationary be made in the said two/three stalls of the team members and NGOs. Power supply be also ensured to those stalls and LED. LED be placed at a place visible to participants. LED Screen is required so that the NALSA theme song and any other documentary relating to legal services authorities may be shown. The suggested camp design is as follows:



**Stalls of Legal services authority
Govt. Department/NGOs/teams**



Registration Desk
for Men

Help
Desk

Registration Desk
for Women

Fire
Team

Medical
Team

Toilet
for
Women

Toilet
for
Men

Drinking
Water
and
Refreshm
ents

6. DURING CAMP

6.1 Short presentation by the Departments/Ministries

The main Departments relating to core theme shall give presentation in local language about the relevant welfare schemes of their Department. They shall briefly spell out the eligibility criteria under the Schemes. Each Department shall not take more than five minutes for the said purpose.

6.2 Real time registration of beneficiaries during the Camp.

After overview by Departments about various schemes, people shall be visiting the stalls of Departments including that of Legal Services Authority. The Officers of Departments at the stalls shall not only apprise people about the welfare schemes and distribute pamphlets regarding the same but shall also fill up the forms so that the same are processed further for getting people connected with the schemes.

6.3 For the purpose of filling up forms under different schemes, people may be referred to the stalls of NGOs/teams who shall fill up forms and attach necessary documents with the form. The teams/NGOs at the end of the programme shall submit the said forms to the different concerned departments.

7. AFTER CAMP ACTIVITY

7.1 Preparation of Camp Report

A detailed report be prepared regarding the Legal Services Camp. It shall, inter-alia, spell out the activities done at the different stalls, application forms filled up with regard to different schemes etc. Lessons learnt from the camp also be clearly indicated so that improvements are made in upcoming camps to effectively reach out to people and getting them connected with the welfare schemes/legislations.

7.2 Follow up of all registrations done during the Camp.

Follow up action be taken on the various application forms submitted during the camp and the applications/representations written of the visitors relating to various issues.

7.3 Clearance of Camp Bills.

Bills of agencies whose services are taken for arranging the camp be cleared preferably within a week. Bills of Panel Advocates and PLVs associated in pre-camp activities and also during camp be also cleared within a week.

7.4 Maintenance of Cleanliness

Clearance of garbage etc. at the place where camp was held be also ensured.

8. SOME OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS

- 8.1 The duration of the camp shall be of 4-6 hours.
- 8.2 The time for opening Legal Services Camp be decided keeping in view weather condition and any other local conditions.
- 8.3 Adequate Drinking Water arrangements be made at the camp.
- 8.4 Refreshments including tea/biscuits be arranged for participants/villagers.
- 8.5 To deal with any emergency, Medical Team and Fire Fighting Team be also kept on standby.
- 8.6 Local police be also requested to put adequate number of policemen on duty at the camp site to avoid any chaos at the spot and to deal with any emergency.
- 8.7 Legal Services Camp should not be given the shape of a seminar, and, hence, inaugural sessions/speeches must be avoided. The focus should be to deliver by connecting people with the identified schemes and redress their problems.
- 8.8 Arrangements be also made for cord-less mics and standing mics.
- 8.9 Help Desks be also set up to help people during the camp by guiding them to the different stalls.
- 8.10 Adequate number of Registration Stalls be put up so that long queues are not formed and delay is avoided in registration of the participants.
