



Gujarat National Law University



## Gujarat National Law University

GNLU/AD/43/15

**Subject: GNLU *Pro Bono* Legal Aid Programme**

Wednesday, 05 August 2015

### 1.0. Purposes

The phrase '*pro bono publico*' means 'for the public good'. This kind of service or activity is generally used for work which is undertaken willingly for the public service, and customarily without money.

The phrase – *Pro Bono* – plays an important role in the legal profession. Hence, Gujarat National Law University, through its Legal Services Committee and ADR Cell, introduces *Pro Bono* activities from this Academic Year, i.e., 2015-2016 for Batch 2015 onwards as an essential curricular requirements of the University. The major objective of introducing '*pro bono* service' is to encourage and motivate the students of the University to work for the community, offer their services under the legal provisions, which will help them bring closer to the society, besides helping them in their future career.

Since more and more focus is given on the dispute resolution and making litigation easier way to deal with through negotiations and mediation, it is very important for the law universities and law schools to come forward and join hands towards this initiative. As it has already been a major activity in almost all major law schools across the world (such as those in the US, UK, and other European countries), to achieve the above, GNLU introduces such activities under the aegis of the two significant bodies of the University, i.e., the Legal Services Committee and the ADR Cell.

### 2.0. Participation in Academic programs and activities

#### Role of Legal Services Committee (LSC) & Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Cell:

The Legal Services Committee (LSC) and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Cell will offer such services for the community through various activities mentioned in point number 4.

### 3.0. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.1. Objectives of the Legal Services Committee





The Constitution of India provides the framework for fulfilling, realising and actualising the pledge for 'justice' enshrined in the preamble. "Access of justice for all" is the vision of Legal Service in India. With the 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment (1976), Article 39A was introduced as one of the Directive Principles of State Policy introduced the concept of Legal Aid Committee. GNLU Legal Services Committee (LSC) has been set up in pursuant to Section 4(k) of the Legal Service Authorities Act, 1987. GNLU LSC shall coordinate with the activities of District Legal Service Authority and the State Legal Services Authorities and the objective envisioned by the National Legal Service Authority (NALSA) for the Articles 14, 21, 22 (1) & 39-A of the Constitution of India. In order to implement the 'Constitutional Vision' in its letter and spirit, it is a statutory obligation of GNLU LSC to lay down broad policies and principles for making legal services all inclusive, particularly having regard to the entitlement (as indicated in section 12) of marginalized or weaker sections of society like members of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, victims of trafficking, women, children, elderly persons, people with disabilities, etc.

### **3.2. Objectives of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Cell**

GNLU has established an in-house ADR Cell. ADR refers to any methods of settling disputes other than litigation. They gained wider acceptance amongst the general public and members of the legal profession, as they help parties resolve their disputes amicably without consuming much time and simultaneously being less procedural. Law professionals mediate between the parties and in turn also assist the courts to reduce the number of backlog cases which are piling up day after day. Hence, ADR comes into play in most cases, as it is also a perception of many that ADR incurs less cost than litigation; gives a freedom to select the desirable person for the negotiation and mediation, and also provides confidentiality.

The major focus and objective of these two bodies is to have a litigation free surrounding, such as in the nearby villages, institutions and also to help reducing the pending & backlog cases of the courts — to whatever limited extent possible.

### **4.0. Implementation of the Directive**

#### **Activities of Legal Services Committee (LSC) and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Cell:**

The Legal Services Committee (LSC) and the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Cell will include the following activities:

- a. To provide free and competent legal services to the eligible persons and institutions;
- b. To organize Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes;
- c. To organize legal awareness camps and services in the rural areas;
- d. To provide assistance through diverse methods, including traditional casework, self-help, community legal education, community development and policy reform initiatives;
- e. To provide services like negotiation and mediation to the poor and needy;
- f. To make litigation free villages and institutions;
- g. To help the community on legal issues/problems & to suggest possible solution(s);
- h. To provide legal aid services to the needy community;
- i. To conduct legal literacy, educational activities and awareness programmes;
- j. To conduct advisory lectures and discussions with the community and other needy individuals;
- k. To represent consumers before the consumer forum; and

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1. To undertake any other activities which upholds the spirit of *pro bono* Legal Services in the view of the Legal Services Cell and the ADR Cell.

#### 5.0. Requirement on part of the Students

The students of the GNLU are required to undertake *pro bono* services under the above-mentioned supervisory bodies.

Each Student shall provide such services for a minimum of 100 hours (i.e. 20 hours per academic year) in his/her entire tenure of the undergraduate law programme. This shall have the prospective impact from Batch 2015 onwards.

The time spent during internship shall not be counted as *pro bono* services.

#### 6.0. For further information / query, please contact

Faculty Convener, Legal Services Committee or  
Faculty Convener, Alternative Dispute Resolution Cell  
Gujarat National Law University  
Email: [probono@gnlu.ac.in](mailto:probono@gnlu.ac.in)

#### 7.0. Activity Report and Issuance of Certificate

- 7.1. The Students completion culminating into a certificate of *pro bono* services remains an essential requirement for awarding integrated law degree of UG level.
- 7.2. This *pro bono* work need to be certified by the authorised gazetted bodies.
- 7.3. The students shall submit a report on the activities carried (Minimum of 20 hours per academic year) out by them under the *pro bono* services at the end of each academic year by supporting documents to the above-mentioned supervisory bodies.
- 7.4. The students can carry minimum 20 hours per academic year of *pro-bono* work at their own places of convenience. All such *pro bono* work always need to be certified by the designated authorities from their local offices.
- 7.5. The supervisory bodies (LSC or/and ADR) shall issue a *completion certificate* to each student, on receiving report.
- 7.6. The certificate issued by the supervisory bodies shall be signed by the Faculty Convener of Legal Services Committee, Faculty Convener of ADR Cell and the Legal Services Coordinator after the completion of 100 hours of *pro bono* services in five years course.
- 7.7. *Pro Bono* Services Evaluation Form is an integral part of this Directive. In case of any difficulty or issues arising out of application or implementation of this Directive, the decision of the Legal Services Committee and/or the ADR Cell as approved by the Director shall be final.

#### 8.0. Effective Date

The Directive shall come into effect from academic year 2015-20 batch onwards.

Signed

Bimal N. Patel

Director