

Delhi State Legal Services Authority Patiala House Courts, New Delhi



**STANDARD OPERATING PROTOCOL
FOR LEGAL SERVICES HELPLINE
NUMBER “1516”**

INDEX

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1. MISSION STATEMENT

DSLSEA is widely publicising its Helpline Number besides its various legal services programmes. In order to ensure that the calls of the Legal Aid seekers are attended in a professional manner, it is expedient that the following Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) should be in place to redress the grievances of the Legal Aid seekers. The SOPs are intended not only to meet routine or day to day legal queries but also to meet any exigency or emergent situation that the caller might be facing. The caller who makes contact over telephone should get a response from the Legal Services Advocates in a manner that exhibits a great level of trust in the kind of services that the caller may ultimately be getting.

2. PROTOCOL

Legal Services Advocates shall follow the following protocol in attending the calls on helpline no. 1516:-

- (a) On receiving a call, the attending Legal Services Advocate or the Staff should wish ‘*Namaste*’ or greet him/her with ‘*Good Morning*’, ‘*Good Afternoon*’ or ‘*Good Evening*’ (as the case may be);
- (b) The Legal Services Advocate should identify himself/ herself in brief by stating that he is an empanelled Advocate speaking on behalf of Delhi State Legal Services Authority along with name and ask the caller in a vernacular Hindi or English as to how he can help him / her. For instance, “How

can I help you?” or “Mein aapki kya sahayta kar sakta/sakti hu”.

- (c) The Receiver at the Front Desk operating the helpline “1516” or the Legal Services Advocate at office working hours shall at all the times be polite, courteous and engage in active listening to elicit relevant information or grievance that has been raised by the caller;
- (d) All endeavour shall be made to keep the conversation short but in an informative and advisory manner;
- (e) Lengthy discussion on facts and/or law should be avoided and after ascertaining jurisdiction concerned where Legal Services could be provided, the caller may be guided to approach the Front Office of the DLSA concerned;
- (f) The Receiver or attending person is expected to know the following categories of persons who are entitled to free Legal Aid Services and Advice:-
 - A member of Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe.
 - A woman or a child.
 - An industrial workman.
 - A person in custody, including a child in a protective home and a mentally ill person in a psychiatric hospital or nursing home.
 - A victim of trafficking in human beings or begar.
 - A person with disability such as suffering from blindness, locomotor disability, hearing impairment, mental illness or retardation or leprosy cured.
 - A victim of mass disaster, ethnic violence, caste atrocity, flood, drought, earthquake or industrial disaster.
 - A Transgender with an annual income of less than Rs.2,00,000/-.

- A Senior Citizen with an annual income of less than Rs.2,00,000/-.
 - Any other person with an annual income of less than Rs.1,00,000/-.
- (g) However in case any information is sought on phone about Legal Services, the Caller must be attended irrespective of the fact that caller falls in eligible category or not.
- (h) Receiver/Attending Person shall ensure that the Caller is properly informed and guided in regard to this query or grievance and should conclude the call by politely saying 'Thank You' or 'Dhanyawad' for calling on the Helpline.
- (i) If the caller is in immediate need of any assistance, he/she may be advised to approach the concerned Authorities viz. Police or Hospital seeking appropriate relief and if the situation is an emergent one, the Legal Services Advocate shall in turn inform the concerned Authority to assist the needy/caller as per Law. In case of such emergent situation, the Legal Services Advocate shall verbally or in writing inform the Secretary of the District concerned or the P.S. to the Secretary for follow up action, if any.
- (j) Secretary of the DLSA concerned in such emergent situation shall follow up the matter with the concerned authorities and take all necessary steps to ensure the grievances of the Legal Aid seeker is redressed, and shall document the same at their end and send a copy of the Action Taken Report to the Central Office, DSLSA forthwith.
- (k) After office hours i.e. 5.00 p.m., the call will be transferred to anyone of the Legal Services Advocates who shall be notified in this regard.

- (l) Such notified Legal Services Advocate shall keep the mobile handset provided to him by the Authority, sufficiently charged with volume of the ringer at suitable level so that chances of the ring not being heard are ruled out.
- (m) Even if the call is received late at night, he/she shall attend the call without getting disturbed and shall answer/satisfy all the queries of the caller promptly and efficiently. LSA shall maintain a record of such calls in the manner prescribed as **Annexure 'A'** and submit the same to DSLSA after completion of month.
- (n) In case Legal Services Advocate is unable to take a call due to some exigency or where Legal Services Advocate is already in the process of attending to a Caller or where LSA finds that there is some 'missed call' on his mobile set, the LSA shall as soon as possible call back the Caller, identify himself or herself and try to find out if the Caller is in need of any kind of Legal Services and do the needful.
- (o) Legal Services Advocates shall keep the details of the contact numbers/locations of the office of DSLAs with him every time and should be well conversant with the categories of persons entitled to free legal aid services and advice.

3. RECORD/DOCUMENTATION

The following instructions shall be followed in regard to maintaining Helpline Call Data:-

- i. It must be maintained in the format that has been devised by DSLSA which is **Annexure 'A'** to this SOP;

- ii. Name of the Caller and the place from where one is calling or seeking information must be recorded;
- iii. Caller's contact number must be recorded so that required information can be given in case the information is not readily available;
- iv. Purpose of call must be recorded giving an account or detail of the information/query which has been raised;
- v. The column for additional remarks indicates what advice, if any has been given;
- vi. The column for follow up action must indicate "Yes or No" and as and when any follow up action is taken, the same be also recorded in the helpline data.

4. SUPPORT SERVICE

- i. Superintendent, Establishment Wing shall ensure that the Legal Services Advocates who are deputed to operate the Helpline No. "1516" by 24x7 are provided with details of the Eleven District Legal Services Authorities, their functionaries as also the Police Stations under their jurisdictions.
- ii. Superintendent, Establishment Wing shall also ensure that the Legal Services Advocates who are operating Helpline No. "1516" are supplied details of all the Child Welfare Committees as also accredited NGOs who are working with DSLSA or otherwise particularly the NGOs who are dealing with Juvenile in Need of Care and Protection, destitute women, children suffering with MR or physically handicapped children, old or infirmed persons.
- iii. Receiver/attendant person shall ensure that the telephone line and the instrument are in good order and in functional condition, any fault must be brought to the notice of Central Office, DSLSA for necessary action, immediately.

5. MONITORING & TROUBLE SHOOTING

- i. Superintendent, Establishment Wing shall ensure that frequent checking calls are made to the helpline number in office hours and even beyond to check if the same is handled professionally and promptly. In case of any lapses, the same shall be brought to the notice of Ld. Special Secretary immediately.
- ii. Ld. Special Secretary, DSLSA shall have a appraisal meeting with LSAs attending the “1516” calls on the first day of each calendar month. If it is a holiday, then it shall be held on next working day. All issues raised shall be addressed and reduced into minutes.
- iii. In case, if Delhi is afflicted with any mass disaster, ethnic violence, caste atrocity, drought, earthquake, industrial disaster or any other industrial/manmade disaster of the likewise nature affecting community at large and a victim of such eventuality makes a call to the Call Centre, then such catastrophe should be immediately brought to the notice of the concerned Ld. Secretary, DLSA by the person receiving the call so that a Camp can be organized at such place of disaster for providing effective Legal Aid to the affected citizenry.

Annexure – 'A'

Data regarding calls received on Help Line No. 1516

S. No.	Name of Caller	Date	Time	Contact No. of Caller	Query	Advice given	Follow up action, if required