



**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
REGARDING THE FUNCTIONING OF COUNSELLORS IN  
DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES**



**Delhi State Legal Services Authority**

## **1. Beneficiaries**

The beneficiaries of counselling services to be provided by the District Legal Services Authorities shall be victims of offences under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012, rape victims, acid attack survivors, persons habitual of substance abuse and persons having matrimonial/family disputes.

## **2. Referral**

**2.1** Whenever an offence is reported under section 19 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, the Special Juvenile Police Unit or the Local Police Officials shall inform the victim and parent/guardian of the victim, about the availability of counselling services at the District Legal Services Authorities, in accordance with the mandate of Rule 4 (3) (e) of POCSO Rules, 2020. The SJPU or Local Police Officials shall provide contact details of the DLSA concerned to the victim and parent/guardian and also provide necessary assistance to enable them to avail these services. Simultaneously, the concerned Police Officials would also inform the concerned DLSA about the matter.

**2.2** The Para Legal Volunteers deployed at the police stations shall also inform the victim and parent/guardian about the availability of these services at DLSA, at the same time notifying the same to the DLSA.

- 2.3** In accordance with Rule 6 (4) (e) of the POCSO Rules, 2020, the registered medical practitioner rendering medical care may also refer the victim for counselling at the concerned District Legal Services Authority.
- 2.4** The Child Welfare Committee dealing with victims of offences under the POCSO Act may also refer them to the concerned District Legal Services Authority for counselling in accordance with Rule 4 (12) of the POCSO Rules, 2020.
- 2.5** The Legal Services Advocates operating DSLSA Helpline No. 1516 as well as NALSA Helpline No. 15100 shall also inform the beneficiaries, defined as above, regarding the availability of counselling services at the DLSAs.
- 2.6** In case any beneficiary is appearing at the Front Office of the concerned DLSA for availing some other services such as legal aid or victim compensation etc., the Legal Services Advocate manning the Front Office may also, with the approval of Ld. Secretary, DLSA, refer the matter to the counsellor.
- 2.7** The concerned courts dealing with the above beneficiaries may also refer them to the DLSA concerned for counselling.
- 2.8** Ld. Secretary, DLSA, *suo moto*, can also refer the matter coming into his/her notice during the course of DLSA activities, to the counsellor.
- 2.9** The referral mechanism as discussed in the aforesaid clauses shall also apply apart from the cases under POCSO Act, to rape

victims, acid attack survivors, persons habitual of substance abuse and those having matrimonial/family disputes.

### **3. Ambience**

Each DLSA shall ensure that the ambience and surroundings provided for the purpose of counselling include sufficiency of space to ensure privacy and comfort as well as an environment which is pleasant and conducive to the process of counselling.

### **4. Schedule Management**

4.1 The counsellors shall prioritise the cases coming before them in such a manner as to give sufficient consideration to the necessities of urgent intervention. As far as practicable and subject to individual needs in specific cases, first priority shall be given to cases registered under the POCSO Act, cases of rape victims and acid attack survivors and thereafter, to persons habitual of substance abuse and those having matrimonial and family disputes.

4.2 The counsellors shall maintain their schedule in such a manner as to ensure that the beneficiaries do not have to wait for long periods of time, without any justifiable reasons.

### **5. Privacy and Confidentiality**

The interaction with beneficiaries and record keeping thereof shall be conducted with utmost regard to the privacy and confidentiality of the beneficiaries and their issues.

## **6. Visits by the counsellors**

As a general course, the beneficiaries shall have to visit the concerned DLSA office for availing counselling services; however in appropriate cases, the counsellor may be required to visit the residence of the victim, or the police station or even the medical facility where the victim is getting treatment. The decision regarding such visits shall be taken by the concerned Ld. Secretary, DLSA considering the needs of the beneficiaries assessed by the counsellor.

## **7. Uniform proforma for preliminary interaction**

In order to streamline the initial assessment process and to ensure consistency in collection of information at the first meeting, the counsellor would fill the consent form (Annexure- I) and the interaction sheet (Annexure- II).

## **8. Other needs**

If the counsellor is of the view that the beneficiary requires any other services like legal aid, medical, mental health care intervention or of any other agency, then he/she shall refer the matter to Ld. Secretary, DLSA for necessary action.

## **9. Follow Up**

Ld. Secretary, DLSA shall regularly take follow up of the pending and disposed of matters dealt with by the counsellors.

## **10. Recording outcomes**

The counsellor would keep record of all the sessions including final outcome to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions and follow up actions.

## **11. Awareness and Publicity**

DSLSA/DLSAs shall endeavour to give wide publicity to the availability of counselling services, ensuring mass outreach by the use of information boards, information booklets, awareness programmes and other initiatives.

## **12. Sensitisation and Training**

DSLSA/DLSAs shall periodically conduct mental well being programmes for counsellors. Simultaneously, the programmes regarding sensitisation of Police Officials and other stakeholders shall also be arranged by the DSLSA/DLSAs.

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