SCHEME FOR EMPANELMENT OF LEGAL AID COUNSEL IN DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, U.T. CHANDIGARH, UNDER PROVISO TO REGULATION 8 OF THE NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (FREE AND COMPETENT LEGAL SERVICES) REGULATIONS, 2010

The objective of this scheme is to ensure a fair and transparent exercise of the powers conferred on the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh, under the Proviso to Regulation 8 of the National Legal Services Authority (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations, 2010, for the empanelment of Advocates in the District Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh.

1. This Scheme shall be applicable prospectively.

2. There shall be two categories of empanelment, referred to as Category A and Category B:

CATEGORY-A: As of September 15 of the concerned year, all the practicing Advocates who have been enrolled with any State Bar Council in India for 25 years and more and are currently the active members of the District Bar Association, U.T. Chandigarh (DBA Chandigarh), continuously for a minimum period of the preceding 10 years, and have not yet attained the age of 70 years shall fall under category 'A' and shall primarily deal with heinous cases and all complex matters. The term of empanelment shall be for a maximum period of one year.

CATEGORY-B: As of September 15 of the concerned year, all the practicing Advocates who have been enrolled as Advocates for a minimum period of three years but have not completed 25 years, with any State Bar Council in India, and are currently active members of the District Bar Association, U.T. Chandigarh, shall fall under category 'B'. The term of empanelment shall be for a maximum period of one year

3. The Category 'A' Advocates are encouraged to consider working *pro bono*; however, it shall be at their discretion.

4. Until and subject to the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court/ National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), in the matter concerning the Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC) scheme, all criminal cases may be accepted on a *pro bono* basis; and after such decision, this clause shall stand modified in terms of the decision or further clarifications, if required by the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh.

5. The process for fresh empanelment shall commence from 15th September and shall be completed by 25th September annually, or as directed by the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh.

6. The empanelment shall take effect from 2nd October. If the empanelment date is after 2nd October, it shall start from such date as the case may be. The term shall end on 1st October of the subsequent year, irrespective of the date of empanelment.

7. The cases that have been allocated to the empaneled Advocate shall continue to be retained by such Advocate until case's disposal or decision. However, any empaneled Advocate may return a case without assigning any reason, and a litigant may also withdraw an assigned brief from the empaneled Advocate to whom such case was assigned/marked.

8. The pre-existing or a previous selection shall not be a bar to re-empanelment, Advocates of both of the categories, 'A' and 'B' shall be eligible for re-empanelment. However, in case of the category 'A', it shall be subject to the restriction with respect to the maximum age of 70 years.

9. The Chairperson, District Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh, shall be competent to remove any empaneled Advocate even before the expiry of the term by specifying the reasons. However, any such order may be challenged by filing an application before the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh, within 30 days, whose decision shall be final.

10. In case of any ambiguity or clarification, the decision of the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh, shall be final.

CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURE FOR EMPANELMENT OF ADVOCATES WHO FALL UNDER CATEGORY 'A'.

11. The maximum permissible age for continuing as an empaneled Advocate in this category shall be one day before attaining 70 years of age, and irrespective of the date of appointment, such appointment shall automatically

cease on the day before the Advocate attains the age of 70 years or on the 1st October of the next year, whichever is earlier, even if the actual period is less than one year.

12. All Advocates falling in this category may apply, and their applications shall be considered for empanelment till 1st Oct of the following year, or a day before attaining 70 years of age, whichever is earlier.

CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURE FOR EMPANELMENT OF ADVOCATES WHO FALL UNDER CATEGORY 'B'.

13. A total of 60 Advocates shall be empaneled in this category: 30 female Advocates and 30 other-than-female Advocates, which shall include males.

14. The empanelment shall be for a maximum period of one year, ending on 1st October of the subsequent year, even if the period is less than one year.

15. The Advocates who have been enrolled for three years but have not completed 25 years of enrolment shall be divided into 22 groups; each group representing a distinct number of completed years of enrolment, that is, the Advocates who have been enrolled for three years and more but have not completed four years shall constitute one group and those who have been enrolled for four years and more but have not completed five years, and so on, ending with those who have been enrolled for 24 years and more but have not completed 25 years of enrolment, shall constitute separate groups. Thus, there shall be 22 groups, named as 'Group 3' to 'Group 24', each representing the completed years of enrolment.

16. To ensure equal representation of Female Advocates across all age groups, the above-mentioned 22 groups shall be further divided into 44 groups: 22 for eligible Female Advocates and 22 for eligible other-than-female Advocates.

17. To clarify, Group-3 (Female) shall consist of Female Advocates who have completed 3 years of enrolment but have not completed 4 years; Group-3 (other-than-female) shall consist of other-than-female Advocates who have completed 3 years of enrolment but have not completed 4 years. Likewise, Group-4 (Female) shall consist of Female Advocates who have completed 4 years of enrolment but have not completed 5 years, and similarly, Group-4 (other-than-female), and so on. In this manner, 44 groups shall be formed, i.e., 22 groups categorized as female groups and 22 groups categorized as other-than-female groups. The second-last Group-24 (Female) shall consist of female Advocates who have completed 24 years of enrolment but have not completed 25 years of enrolment, and similarly for the last Group-24 of other-than-female Advocates, who have completed 24 years of enrolment but have not completed 25 years of enrolment.

18. From Group 3 to Group 10, four Advocates shall be appointed from each group, i.e., two female Advocates and two other-than-female Advocates.

19. From Group 11 to Group 24, two Advocates shall be appointed from each group, i.e., one female Advocate and one other-than-female Advocate.

20. In order to maintain fairness and transparency in the selection process for empanelment, 44 ballot boxes with inscription labels shall be pasted on each of such boxes, clearly depicting the Groups and Gender. These shall be kept in the Bar Room of the DBA, Chandigarh, under the supervision of the District and Sessions Judge Chandigarh-cum-Chairperson, DLSA, who shall monitor and supervise the entire process, and is authorized to take all decisions on the spot for smooth completion of the selection process. They may also ask DLSA/DBA officials to remain present during the selection process.

21. This selection process shall run from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the date fixed by the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh, in consultation with the elected body of the DBA, U.T. Chandigarh.

22. All eligible Advocates seeking empanelment in the DLSA, U.T. Chandigarh, may contact the CJM-cum-Secretary, DLSA, and obtain an Application-cum-Consent-Ballot Form, and after filling in all the details, i.e., Group Number, Name, Age, Enrolment Number, etc., and signing the form and getting it countersigned and stamped by the Secretary, DLSA, shall put the form in the relevant Group box, not later than 2:00 p.m. on the date fixed. For example, a female applicant who has completed three years of enrolment but not four years shall drop her form in the ballot box, with the inscription, "GROUP -3 FEMALE". After that, the entry slot of every ballot box shall be sealed with tape.

23. Thereafter, all the ballot boxes shall be opened in the presence of the Chairperson, DLSA and/or CJM-cum-Secretary, DLSA, and the Executive Members of the DBA, Chandigarh, if present at that time. The boxes shall be shaken and mixed properly, then be opened one by one, starting with Group 24 (Female), followed by Group 24 (other-than-females), and so on, with Group 3 (other-than-females) as the last category in the list.

24. From the boxes of Group 11 to 24, one slip each shall be picked out, and from the boxes of Group 3 to Group 10, two slips each shall be picked out by a neutral person, as decided by the Chairperson, DLSA, and in the absence of the Chairperson, the Secretary, DLSA. The name on the slip shall be made public, and the slip shall be signed by the Secretary, DLSA, and any Executive Member of the DBA, Chandigarh.

25. If any box is empty, then the vacant category shall be filled by drawing extra slips in the following sequence: First from Group 3 (female), Second from Group 3 (other than female), Third from Group 4 (female), and so forth depending upon the number of empty boxes. If Group 3 boxes are empty, then the slip shall be picked from the next higher group, i.e., Group 4 (female) followed by Group 4 (other than female) box, and so on.

26. After completion of the draw and subsequent processes, the ballot slips shall be destroyed in such a manner that they cannot be reused or tampered with.

27. The Secretary, DLSA, U.T. Chandigarh, shall prepare a list of the selected candidates, get it countersigned by the District and Sessions Judge, Chandigarh-cum-Chairperson, DLSA, U.T. Chandigarh, and forward it to the Executive Chairperson, State Legal Services Authority, U.T. Chandigarh, for approval, and take all necessary steps towards completion of the selection process.

Date: Oct 01, 2026

Sunil Kumar
Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Secretary,
District Legal Services Authority,
U.T. Chandigarh

RESOLUTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT BAR ASSOCIATION, U.T. CHANDIGARH:

ENDORSED	✓	Endorsed A.S.Gujral A.S.Gujral (President) Distt. Bar Association Chandigarh Mob. No.:- 9814977077
NOT ENDORSED		
SEAL OF THE DISTRICT BAR ASSOCIATION, U.T. CHANDIGARH AND SIGNATURES OF ITS PRESIDENT **DATE: Oct 7th, 2026.**	⇒	Tejwinder Singh Gill (Secretary) Distt. Bar Association Chandigarh Mob. No.:- 9888574770