TELANGANA STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, HYDERABAD.

NALSA ACID ATTACK LEGAL SERVICES SCHEME

Legal Aid, Compensation, Protection & Rehabilitation for Acid Attack Survivors Justice, Dignity and Rehabilitation for Every Acid Attack Survivor.

An acid attack is a grave offence that can cause permanent physical injuries, psychological trauma, social stigma and loss of livelihood. Acid attack survivors are entitled to appropriate legal aid, compensation, medical assistance, protection and rehabilitation.

1. Legal and Legislative Framework

A. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS)

Section 124 of the BNS, 2023 deals with voluntarily causing grievous hurt by use of acid, etc.

The law provides for stringent punishment for causing injuries through acid, including permanent or partial damage, deformity, burns or disfigurement.

B. Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987

Under the Legal Services Authorities Act, eligible persons are entitled to free and competent legal services to ensure that access to justice is not denied because of economic or other disabilities.

Acid attack survivors should be facilitated to obtain free legal assistance through the Legal Services Institutions.

C. Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013

D. Victim Compensation

An acid attack survivor may be entitled to compensation under the applicable State Victim Compensation Scheme and the relevant provisions of the BNSS, 2023.

Legal Services Institutions should proactively assist the survivor in accessing compensation and other entitlements.

2. Legal Services Available to Acid Attack Survivors Depending upon the circumstances of the case, survivors may receive:

a). Free legal aid and representation

b). Assistance in registration of FIR

c). Legal assistance during investigation and trial

d). Assistance in bail-related proceedings, wherever appropriate

e). Assistance in claiming victim compensation

f). Assistance in obtaining interim and final compensation

g). Assistance in accessing medical treatment

h). Assistance in rehabilitation and livelihood support

i). Linkage with appropriate Government welfare schemes

j). Psycho-social support through appropriate agencies

k). Assistance in protecting the rights and dignity of the survivor

l). Legal assistance in appeals and other appropriate proceedings

3. Role of Legal Services Institutions.

NALSA / SLSA

The State Legal Services Authority should:

a). Coordinate implementation of the NALSA Scheme at the State level.

b). Issue appropriate directions and guidelines to DLSAs.

c). Ensure sensitization of Panel Lawyers and PLVs.

d). Facilitate timely legal aid and compensation.

e). Coordinate with Police, Health, Women & Child Welfare, Social Welfare, Labour and other concerned departments.

f). Monitor the implementation of legal services for acid attack survivors.

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)

DLSA shall ensure that every identified acid attack survivor receives timely and effective legal assistance.

The DLSA should:

1. Identify acid attack survivors through Police, Hospitals, PLVs, NGOs and other agencies.

2. Immediately provide free legal assistance.

3. Assign a competent Panel Lawyer.

4. Assist the survivor in claiming compensation under the applicable Victim Compensation Scheme.

5. Monitor the case from FIR to investigation, charge-sheet and trial.

6. Coordinate with hospitals and other authorities for necessary assistance.

7. Protect the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of the survivor.

8. Facilitate access to rehabilitation and Government welfare schemes.

9. Maintain regular follow-up and monitor the progress of the case.

10. Ensure that the survivor is not subjected to unnecessary hardship during legal proceedings.

Taluk Legal Services Committee (TLSC)

TLSCs should:

a). Identify survivors at the local level.

b). Facilitate immediate legal assistance.

c). Connect survivors with Panel Lawyers.

d). Assist in accessing compensation and Government schemes.

e). Coordinate with DLSA for further legal and rehabilitation assistance.

Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs)

PLVs can play a vital role by:

1. Identifying vulnerable survivors.

2. Informing survivors and their families about their legal rights.

3. Connecting survivors with DLSA/TLSC.

4. Facilitating access to free legal aid.

5. Assisting in accessing compensation and rehabilitation services.

6. Maintaining confidentiality and treating survivors with dignity.

7. Reporting cases promptly to the concerned Legal Services Institution.

8 Not undertaking legal representation themselves, but referring the survivor to the appropriate legal service provider.

4. PLAN OF ACTION

Step 1 - Identification of Acid Attack Survivors.

Step 2 - Immediate Legal Aid.

Step 3 - Medical Assistance

Step 4 - Compensation

Step 5 - Case Monitoring

Step 6 - Rehabilitation.

Step 7 - Long-Term Follow-Up.

5. AWARENESS & SENSITIZATION

Legal Services Institutions should conduct regular awareness programmes on prevention of acid attacks and the rights of survivors through:

i). Legal Literacy Camps

ii). Schools, colleges and universities

iii). Women's groups and Self-Help Groups

iv). Rural and urban communities

v). Police and frontline officials

vi). Hospitals and medical institutions

vii). PLV and Panel Lawyer sensitization programmes

viii). Posters, pamphlets and social media campaigns

Awareness messages should highlight:

1. Acid attacks are serious criminal offences.

2. Survivors have the right to free legal aid.

3. Survivors may be entitled to victim compensation.

4. Immediate medical treatment is essential.

5. Survivors should be treated with dignity and sensitivity.

6. The identity and privacy of survivors should be protected.

7. Survivors should be connected with rehabilitation and welfare services.

6. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE AFTER AN ACID ATTACK?

Immediate Steps

1. Seek emergency medical treatment.

2. Inform the Police and ensure registration of the FIR.

3. Contact the nearest DLSA/TLSC for free legal assistance.

4. Obtain assistance from a Panel Lawyer.

5. Apply for compensation under the applicable Victim Compensation Scheme.

6. Seek rehabilitation and welfare assistance.

7. REMEMBER

AN ACID ATTACK SURVIVOR IS NOT ALONE:

i). Free Legal Aid | Compensation | Medical Assistance | Protection | Rehabilitation

ii). Every survivor deserves:

iii). Justice • Dignity • Equality • Protection • Rehabilitation

If you or anyone you know is an acid attack survivor, approach the nearest:
District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)
Taluk Legal Services Committee (TLSC)
Telangana State Legal Services Authority (TSLSA)

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IS A RIGHT – FREE LEGAL AID IS AVAILABLE.

"Justice for an acid attack survivor means not only compensation, but also the right to live with dignity."

TELANGANA STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, HYDERABAD.

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