

Area of distinctiveness:

Title of the practice: Free Legal Aid Services

Objectives:

1. To provide legal services to the poor and weaker sections of the society.
2. To provide affordable local machinery for handling legal services of basic nature like legal advices, drafting petitions, notices, replies and other documents of legal importance.
3. To conduct surveys on contemporary socio legal issues.
4. To impart clinical education as part of practical training and also to imbibe the students to commit to social service.

The Context: The importance of Legal Aid and Awareness Campaign as a mechanism is the first step towards ensuring prompt and effective access to justice. Legal Aid is an effective way to secure the Constitutional goals 'Social, Economic and Political' Justice by eradicating poverty and inequality. The establishment of Legal Aid Cell is to raise the standards of legal education, and also engaging the students to serve their community by promoting legal awareness and literacy

The institution in consonance with its mission has established a Free Legal Aid Clinic with a faculty coordinator and student volunteers. The aim of the Cell is to expose the students to the practical aspects of the legal field, besides providing a platform to serve the poor and needy.

Practice:

Legal Awareness Programmes: The students visit schools, colleges and conduct legal awareness talks. They also perform street-plays in the local language in public places. The cell also invites resource persons like Judicial Officers, Lawyers, and Government Officials and organize legal literacy programmes during the NSS Special Camps. Organise rallies in association with District Legal Services Authority and Police Department to create awareness on Traffic Rules. Distribute the literature on basic laws through handbills to the public. Promote Legal Awareness through social media.

Legal Advice: The staff and students in consultation with Lawyers provide legal advice to the person who approaches for assistance.

Para Legal Services: The students are appointed as Para Legal Volunteers by District Legal Services Authority to help rural public in procuring the various government benefits like Senior Citizen Cards, Pensions, Ration Cards, Driving License etc.

Lok Adalats: The students participated in Lok Adalats organized by the District Legal Services Authority and assisted the Judges and Lawyers in settlement of disputes

Socio-Legal Survey: The cell through the student volunteers conduct socio-legal survey in the villages to know the socio-economic status and needs of the villagers, make a report and submit to the authorities for needful action.

Evidence of success:

The cell could create legal awareness successfully in the community.

The students learnt the importance of social values, interpersonal relations, understand the needs of the community and community service.

The Legal Awareness Camp helped the students to improve their communication skills and understand the practical aspects of topics of law

Few students are appointed as panel of Advocates of District Legal Services Authority.

Following is the list of the Alumni in the panel of District Legal Services Authority, Belagavi for free legal aid services.

1. Miss. Mahananda Patil
2. Sri. Chandrashekar Bommanavar
3. Miss. Lata Hanchinmani
4. Smt. Neeta V. Bulbule
5. Smt. Sunanda V. Motagi
6. Smt. Renuka S. Koli
7. Sri. Prashant B. Patil
8. Sri. Rehaman Nadaf
9. Miss. Saba R. Sayed Mulla
10. Sri. Irfan Y. Byal
11. Miss. Nilofar M. Muzawar

The participation in Lok Adalts and Legal Advice activities helped them to carry the profession with confidence

The legal aid activities helped few students for their selection as Judges.

Problems encountered and resources required:

- Lack of adequate financial support from the Government.
- Difficulty in getting co-ordination with various Government departments.
- Difficulty in follow up action.