Legal Aid and Consultancy Center
Membership Guideline
2018
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1. Introduction & Scope

Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre (LACC) is a non-governmental, non-profit making, social organization founded in 1987 as a pioneer in the field of providing free legal aid and combating gender based violence for promoting women's access to justice. Prof. Dr Shanta Thapalia together with like-minded colleagues in the country endeavoured to establish this organisation with the goal of promoting and protecting the rights and interests of women and children in Nepal. LACC is dedicated to protect and promote the dignity, well-being and rights of women and children in Nepal. It is committed to uplifting the social, political, legal, economic and cultural status of women and children, defending their interests and eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against them. The founding members of LACC were Prof. Dr Shanta Thapalia, Dr Sudhakar Anil Thapalia, Advocate Mr Mahendra Prasain, Advocate Mr Surya Kiran Gurung, Advocate Mr Shantam Singh Khadka. All of them have excelled in their lives to promote human dignity, equality, equity and justice in the country.

2. Working Strategy:

As a pioneer legal resource organization, it is dedicated for the advancement and empowerment of women, development of their socio-legal status and protection of child rights. LACC's approach to combating injustice is comprehensive and interconnected. Provision of institutional free legal aid is LACC's core service. This service includes telephone counselling, initial psycho-social counselling, mediation, legal advice, paralegal services and case representation. LACC is committed in achieving its aims through different areas covering policy intervention, human rights training, dissemination of legal information, sensitisation, documentation, fact-finding, research, publications, advocacy campaigns, lobbying, and networking. Besides these LACC has also been involved in drafting of legislative bills and legal publication activities.

The organisation works in three levels:

Policy level
The organisation has been lobbying the Government to meet its obligations under international human rights instruments to which the Government of Nepal (GoN) is a signatory. Collaboration with likeminded organisations to influence legislative reform and public policy, conduct research and providing legal inputs, guidance and recommendations to law makers, is yet other endeavour of LACC to pressurise Government for empowerment and equitable development.

Regional Level
At the regional level, LACC undertakes its activities such as free legal aid, advocacy cum awareness programmes, sensitisation programmes, workshops, seminars and so on. The other main activity in regional level includes are training, research and publication.

Grassroots level
LACC believes that unless and until the grassroots communities are empowered, real and equitable development is far to attain. Thus keeping the motto to uplift the standard of grassroots communities, LACC has been organising various activities from time to time. The activities LACC has been organising in grassroots level are - awareness raising for gender sensitisation, survey studies, sharing legal publications, advocacy and training on equal property rights, vital registration and citizenship rights, advocacy on sustainable development goals, legal literacy and so on.

3. The need of the Membership guideline
As a pioneer organisation in the field of women empowerment, social justice and human rights for women and children, the organisation seeks to maintain the standard of national and international humanitarian assistance interventions for protection and promotion of women and children rights. As such, to keep the organisation in this frontier and build up networking with similar organisation while advancing the services to the needy women and children, the general members of the organisation are instrumental for the advancement of the organisation. It is the general members who keep the organisation lively and promote networks and always devote for the promotion of the organisation to achieve the goals leading toward the vision and mission of
the organisation. The assembly of the general members elect executive members among them and carefully watch every movement of the organisation and if required advice, guide and control. The input of the general members for the betterment of the organisation is crucial. Therefore, a careful attention is needed while awarding the membership of the organisation. The members not only should be committed to the vision, mission, and strategy of the organisation but also be humble enough to carry the compassion towards the women and children who are the prime client of the organisation.

Hence, to guide, manage and regulate the membership of the organisation, this membership guideline has been envisaged so that the new members joining the organisation could utilise their membership to the fullest for the benefit of the grass-root community. The members enjoy their membership with this organisation as a true social service with full satisfaction.

Legal Aid and Consultancy Center is currently individual members based organisation and mainly focussed in Kathmandu Valley while catering services to any needed part of the country. The scope of branch offices is there in the article of association and to some extent the project offices have catered as branch offices but has not yet been formalised. To govern the organisation in the Center (federation level of the nation), the by-laws have prescribed a 9 member executive committee (board of directors) and there is a need to manage a sizeable general membership. The founding members are by default lifetime members of the organisation and so is the case with Executive Board members.

4. The types of Membership
   a) General member
   b) Life member
   c) Founding member
   d) Honorary member
5. The criteria for the Membership

The Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre honours the knowledge, skills, wisdom, courage and hard work of Nepali people. It encourages them to become member of the organisation to foster its network and enhance service delivery capacity. Nepali citizen having the following qualifications, qualities and experience are encouraged to apply for the membership of the organisation:

a) A Nepali citizen of 21 year of age or above
b) Having Educational Qualification or at least a bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised university.
c) 2 years of experience in working advocacy, social work or development sector
d) A good understanding of the issues of women and children in Nepal
e) Committed for the values of the organisation
f) Good networking skills
g) Recommended by at least an existing member of the organisation
h) Having no personal conflict of interest with the organisation

6. Method of granting membership

- Any person fulfilling the above criteria can send their application as per annex -1 along with two photographs and a bio-data to the executive board for consideration.
- The executive committee will check the necessary reference and if convinced to provide membership shall take decision to grant membership and inform the prospective member to deposit the membership fee in cash at the office or in bank account of the organization.
- Once the payment of the membership fee is received by the organization and verified by the account officer, the Executive Chairperson shall issue a membership certificate to the member
- Such membership certificate will be valid for that fiscal year only. The member should renew the membership every year before expiry of the fiscal year.
7. **Special provision on membership**
   
   Whatever is written on the above, the executive committee may decide to grant a particular type of membership to those people who have made outstanding contribution to the organization or Nepalese society in the field of women empowerment.

8. **Database of the Membership**
   
   - The organization shall develop a database of members
   - The database of members shall include the following details:
     - Full Name
     - Date of Birth
     - Permanent and local addresses along with contact details such as telephone, email websites
     - Educational qualification, affiliation with other institutions, specialties
     - Type of membership
     - Membership obtained date and validity

9. **The database to be confidential**
   
   - The information recorded in database of members maintained by the organization shall be confidential
   - Name and type of membership of current members may be published in reports, websites or other communications as necessary

10. **Seizure of membership**
    
    The membership shall end on the following grounds:
    
    - If the member is proved to have embezzled fund of the organization
    - If the member is proved to have spread false and defaming information on the organization
    - If 2/3 majority of members in general assembly decide to revoke the membership
    - If the member resigns/denounces membership
    - If the member dies

Approved by the Board of Directors on: 28th of December 2018.