

Volunteer Advocate Programme Handbook

Policies, Guidelines & Code of Conduct

Version 1.0

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1. Welcome Message

Welcome to the Corpus Juris India Volunteer Advocate Programme. This initiative is designed to provide enrolled advocates with a platform to contribute their professional legal services on a voluntary basis, while gaining practical exposure to litigation, legal research, and the administration of justice.

The Programme reflects our commitment to supporting legal research, ethical professional practice, and access to justice. We are pleased to have you as part of this endeavour and trust that your association with us will be mutually enriching.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this Handbook, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them below:

- **"Organisation"** means Corpus Juris India.
- **"Volunteer Advocate"** or **"Volunteer"** means an enrolled Advocate who has been selected to participate in the Programme.
- **"Programme"** means the Volunteer Advocate Programme.
- **"Coordinator"** means the person designated by the Organisation to supervise and coordinate the activities of the Volunteer Advocates.
- **"Confidential Information"** means all information, whether in oral, written, electronic, or any other form, that is disclosed to or acquired by the Volunteer during the term of engagement, which relates to the Organisation's business, clients, operations, strategies, financial information, personnel, or any other information designated as confidential.

- **"Working Day"** means a day on which the Organisation's office is open for business, excluding public holidays and weekends.
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3. Programme Overview

3.1 Purpose

The Volunteer Advocate Programme is a voluntary initiative aimed at:

- Providing practical exposure to legal research, drafting, and court proceedings.
- Enhancing access to justice and legal awareness.
- Fostering professional learning and ethical legal practice.
- Supporting the Organisation's commitment to legal research and public service.

3.2 Who Can Apply

The programme is open to eligible enrolled advocates who meet the specified eligibility criteria. Applicants must have a valid enrolment with a State Bar Council in India.

3.3 Duration

Volunteer engagements are offered for a fixed period, ranging from **one (1) month to six (6) months**, subject to organisational requirements and the selection process.

3.4 Voluntary Nature

Important Notice: Participation in this programme is purely voluntary. **No salary, stipend, fee, honorarium, employment benefits, or any other monetary compensation shall be payable** during the volunteer engagement period.

Participation in the Programme does not create any right, expectation, or entitlement to future employment, paid engagement, partnership, or continued association with Corpus Juris India.

4. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Volunteer Advocate Programme, applicants must:

1. Be an enrolled Advocate with a valid Bar Council Enrollment Certificate.
 2. Possess a valid Advocate Identity Card.
 3. Demonstrate a commitment to professional conduct and ethical standards.
 4. Be able to devote reasonable time to the assigned work.
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5. Selection Process

The selection process is designed to identify suitable candidates for the programme. The stages are as follows:

1. **Online Application:** Submission of the application form along with all required documents.
2. **Document Verification:** Verification of the submitted Bar Council Enrollment and other credentials.
3. **Shortlisting:** Evaluation of applications based on eligibility, suitability, and programme requirements.
4. **Interaction:** A personal or virtual interaction may be conducted if required.
5. **Final Selection:** Selected applicants will be informed via their registered email address.

Important: Submission of an application does not guarantee selection.

6. Scope of Engagement

Volunteers may be assigned professional legal, research, documentation, and programme-related responsibilities during their engagement.

Professional Activities

- Legal Research.
- Legal Drafting.
- Case Preparation and Documentation.
- Client Interaction (under supervision).
- Court Observations (where permitted).

Administrative Support

- Documentation.
- File Management.
- Research Compilation.

Outreach

- Legal Awareness Initiatives.
- Community Engagement Programmes.

Volunteers shall not represent any client of the Organisation independently without prior written authorisation.

7. Code of Conduct

Every volunteer is expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and integrity.

Volunteers Shall:

- Adhere to the ethical standards prescribed under the Bar Council of India Rules.
- Maintain punctuality and decorum.
- Treat colleagues, clients, and all stakeholders with respect.
- Follow organisational instructions and protocols.
- Avoid any act that may bring the Organisation or the legal profession into disrepute.

Volunteers Shall Not:

1. **Independently Represent Clients:** Representing any client of the Organisation without prior written authorisation.
2. **Accept Fees:** Receiving any professional fee, remuneration, or payment directly from any client of the Organisation for matters assigned by the Organisation.
3. **Unauthorised Opinions:** Issuing legal opinions or making statements on behalf of the Organisation without specific authority.
4. **Disclose Confidential Information:** Disclosing any Confidential Information to unauthorised persons or entities.
5. **Unauthorised Use of Name/Logo:** Using the Organisation's name, logo, or intellectual property without prior written permission.
6. **Engage in Misconduct:** Engaging in any act of professional misconduct, negligence, or behaviour that may adversely affect the Organisation or its clients.

8. Confidentiality & Data Protection

Volunteers shall maintain strict confidentiality regarding all information related to the Organisation and its clients. This obligation continues even after the programme ends.

8.1 Scope of Confidential Information

Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to:

- Client information and case files.
- Internal documents, research material, and office communications.
- Trade secrets, proprietary methodologies, and templates.
- Personnel and financial information.

8.2 Data Privacy

Information and documents submitted by applicants and volunteers shall be used only for programme administration and related organisational purposes and shall be handled with reasonable care and confidentiality.

8.3 Separate Agreements

Volunteers may also be required to execute separate documents, including confidentiality or other programme-related undertakings, where considered necessary by the Organisation.

9. Social Media & Public Communication

Volunteers shall not publish, share, or disclose any Confidential Information, client details, internal discussions, or any other information related to the Organisation or its clients on social media platforms or through any public communication channel.

Volunteers shall not represent themselves as authorised spokespersons of Corpus Juris India without prior written approval from the Organisation.

10. Conflict of Interest

Volunteers shall immediately disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest that may arise during their engagement. They shall avoid any activity that may adversely affect the Organisation or its clients. A failure to disclose a conflict of interest shall be considered a material violation.

11. Intellectual Property

All work, drafts, research, notes, templates, and other materials prepared by the volunteer during the course of the programme shall remain the sole and exclusive property of the Organisation, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

12. Return of Organisation Property

Upon termination or expiry of the engagement, or at any time upon the Organisation's request, the Volunteer shall immediately return to the Organisation all documents, materials, records, notes, case files, drafts, research, digital records, and any other media (including all copies and reproductions thereof) containing or disclosing any Confidential Information or Organisation property, including any identity cards or access devices that may have been issued.

13. Communication & Attendance

- **Communication:** Volunteers are required to regularly check their registered email address, including the Spam/Junk folder, for programme-related updates and communications.
- **Attendance:** Volunteers are expected to adhere to the attendance and participation requirements as specified by the Organisation.

14. Certificates

Issuance of any Certificate of Participation or Completion shall remain solely at the discretion of the Organisation after considering factors including:

- Participation and completion of assigned responsibilities.
- Professional conduct and adherence to programme guidelines.
- Quality of work.
- Compliance with all applicable terms and conditions.

Participation alone does not guarantee the issuance of a certificate. The decision regarding issuance, withholding, or non-issuance of any certificate shall be final and binding.

15. Suspension or Discontinuation

The Organisation reserves the right to discontinue a volunteer's participation with immediate effect in cases including, but not limited to:

- Professional misconduct.
 - Breach of confidentiality.
 - Submission of false or misleading information.
 - Non-compliance with programme guidelines.
 - Behaviour prejudicial to the Organisation or its clients.
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16. Programme Modification

The Organisation reserves the right to modify, suspend, discontinue, or amend the Volunteer Advocate Programme, its policies, eligibility criteria, procedures, or

guidelines whenever considered necessary. The latest version published by the Organisation shall supersede all previous versions.

17. Governing Law

This Handbook shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws applicable in India. Any legal issues shall remain subject to the jurisdiction specified in the relevant engagement documents.

18. Disclaimer

This Handbook is intended solely for informational and administrative purposes relating to the Volunteer Advocate Programme. Nothing contained herein constitutes legal advice, professional solicitation, or advertisement.

This Volunteer Advocate Programme is intended solely to facilitate voluntary professional engagement, legal research, legal awareness, and organisational support. Participation in the programme does not constitute employment, professional engagement, partnership, or any contractual right unless specifically agreed through a separate written instrument.

The Organisation reserves the right to amend, interpret, suspend, or discontinue the programme and its guidelines at any time. Nothing contained in this Handbook shall be construed as creating any legal entitlement to appointment, remuneration, continued engagement, or future professional association.

19. Applicant Acknowledgement

By submitting an application for the Volunteer Advocate Programme, the applicant confirms that:

1. The information provided is true, complete, and accurate.
 2. The Volunteer Advocate Programme Handbook has been read and understood.
 3. The applicant agrees to comply with the applicable programme guidelines, policies, and code of conduct.
 4. Participation in the programme is voluntary and does not create any employer–employee, partnership, contractual, or retainer relationship.
 5. The Organisation reserves the right to accept, reject, suspend, or discontinue any application or participation in accordance with the programme requirements.
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20. Acceptance of Handbook

Participation in the Programme shall be deemed to constitute acceptance of this Handbook, together with any amendments issued by the Organisation from time to time.

21. Contact Information

Corpus Juris India

I-10, Basement, Jangpura-B,
New Delhi – 110014

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM (IST)

Website: www.corpusjurisindia.com

Email: office@corpusjurisindia.com | admin@corpusjurisindia.com

22. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Is the programme paid?

No. The Volunteer Advocate Programme is purely voluntary. No salary, stipend, fee, or any other monetary compensation is payable during the volunteer engagement period.

2. Can I leave the programme early?

Yes. Volunteers may discontinue their participation by providing prior written notice to the Organisation in accordance with the terms of their engagement.

3. Will I receive a certificate?

A Certificate of Participation or Completion may be issued at the sole discretion of the Organisation, subject to satisfactory participation, professional conduct, and compliance with programme requirements. Participation alone does not guarantee issuance of a certificate.

4. Can I apply again if I am not selected?

Yes. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply for future volunteer cycles, subject to the eligibility criteria and selection process applicable at that time.

5. Can the programme be extended?

Extensions are not automatic. Any extension beyond the initially agreed period shall be at the sole discretion of the Organisation and subject to a fresh written communication.

6. Will I have to sign any other documents?

Volunteers may be required to execute separate documents, including confidentiality or other programme-related undertakings, where considered necessary by the Organisation.

7. Will I be able to use the work done during the programme for my portfolio?

Volunteers should not use or disclose any work, drafts, research, or other materials prepared during the programme without prior written permission from the Organisation, as such materials remain the property of the Organisation.

8. Is there a dress code?

Volunteers are expected to maintain professional attire appropriate to the nature of their assigned responsibilities and, where applicable, court or office requirements.

9. Will I get a reference letter?

Reference letters are not automatically provided. The Organisation may, at its discretion, provide a reference letter based on the volunteer's performance and conduct during the programme.

10. What happens if I violate the code of conduct?

Violations may result in immediate discontinuation from the programme and may also lead to other actions as deemed appropriate by the Organisation.

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End of Handbook