

(RE: RULES ON UNIFIED LEGAL AID SERVICE [ULAS])

A.M. No. 22-11-01-SC, April 08, 2025

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WHEREAS, Section 5(5), Article VIII of the Constitution provides that the Supreme Court has the power to promulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights, pleading, practice, and procedure in all courts, the admission to the practice of law, the integrated bar, and legal assistance to the underprivileged;

WHEREAS, under Section 11, Article II of the Constitution, it is the declared policy of the State to value the dignity of every human person and to guarantee full respect for human rights;

WHEREAS, Section 9, Article II of the Constitution declares as a State policy the promotion of a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all;

WHEREAS, Section 11, Article III of the Constitution mandates that free access to the courts and quasi-judicial bodies and adequate legal assistance shall not be denied to any person by reason of poverty;

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2019, the Supreme Court introduced pertinent amendments to the provisions of Rule 138-A of the Rules of Court or the "Revised Law Student Practice Rule" in A.M. No. 19-03-24-SC;

WHEREAS, under Section 34, Canon III of the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability, a lawyer shall participate in the development of the legal system by initiating or supporting efforts in law reform, the improvement of the administration of justice, strengthening the judicial and legal system, and advocacies in areas of special concern like the environment, indigenous peoples' rights, human rights, access to justice, and good governance;

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court, in the exercise of its rule-making authority, approved and adopted on August 20, 2024, the Rules on Unified Legal Aid Service (ULAS Rules), which sets forth the framework by which Covered Lawyers are mandated to provide Pro Bono Legal Aid Services to Qualified Beneficiaries to ensure greater access to justice;

WHEREAS, the ULAS Rules is without prejudice to the development of rules on developmental/alternative/public interest lawyering;

WHEREAS, the ULAS Rules requires the constitution of a dedicated governing body called the ULAS Board which shall lay down policies and ensure the effective implementation of the ULAS Rules;

WHEREAS, to ensure the smooth implementation of the ULAS Rules, the Supreme Court, through a Resolution dated October 8, 2024 in this administrative matter, has appointed the ULAS Interim Board, in accordance with Section 29 of the ULAS Rules, to oversee the initial implementation, including the issuance of the ULAS Rules Manual;

WHEREAS, the Chairperson and Members of the ULAS Interim Board are the following:

Associate Justice Alfredo Benjamin S. Caguioa

Chairperson

Associate Justice, Supreme Court

Atty. Antonio C. Pido

Member

National President, Integrated Bar of the Philippines (ex officio)

Dean Sedfrey M. Candelaria

Member

Chairperson, Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Governing Board (ex officio)

Dean Teodoro A. Pastrana

Member

President, Philippine Association of Law Schools (ex officio)

Atty. Karl Arian A. Castillo

Member

Active Private Law Practitioner

Atty. Patricia-Ann T. Prodigalidad

Member

Active Private Law Practitioner

Atty. Tranquil Gervacio S. Salvador III

Member

Active Private Law Practitioner

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 33 of the ULAS Rules, the Supreme Court, through the ULAS Board and in coordination with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), is mandated to issue the "Manual on the Rules on Unified Legal Aid Service" or "ULAS Rules Manual" for the effective enforcement of the ULAS Rules;

WHEREAS, considering the magnitude of tasks leading to the first Compliance Period of the ULAS Rules and to ensure continuity, coherence, efficiency, and quality in the drafting process, it was necessary to constitute a Technical Working Group (TWG) for the drafting of the ULAS Rules Manual, under the Committee on Continuing Legal Education and Bar Matters;

WHEREAS, given the limited timeframe to undertake these substantial responsibilities, the TWG was composed of the same members as the TWG that drafted the ULAS Rules, thereby ensuring consistency and expertise in the implementation process;

WHEREAS, in furtherance of the ULAS Rules, partnerships have been established with the Department of Justice Action Center, the IBP, and the Philippine Association of Law Schools to enhance the implementation and accessibility of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services;

WHEREAS, in drafting the ULAS Rules Manual, the ULAS Interim Board and the TWG considered the comments and feedback gathered during the four-leg regional consultations held from April 12 to May 31, 2024, which provided valuable insights from lawyers intended to be covered by the ULAS Rules, ensuring that its

provisions are responsive and inclusive and effectively support the implementation of the ULAS Rules;

WHEREAS, after extensive deliberations and writeshops, the ULAS Interim Board and the TWG have successfully completed the task of drafting the ULAS Rules Manual;

NOW, THEREFORE, acting on the recommendation of Associate Justice Alfredo Benjamin S. Caguioa, Chairperson of the ULAS Interim Board and the TWG for the drafting of the Manual, the Court, sitting en banc, resolves to APPROVE the "Manual on the Rules on Unified Legal Aid Service" or the "ULAS Rules Manual."

The ULAS Rules Manual shall take effect after 15 days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines. It shall also be uploaded to the website of the Supreme Court, through its Communications Office.

April 8, 2025, Manila, Philippines

Gesmundo, C.J., Leonen, S.J., Caguioa, Hernando, Lazaro-Javier, Zalameda, M. Lopez, Gaerlan, Rosario, Dimaampao, Marquez, and Kho, Jr., JJ., concur.

Lazaro-Javier, M. Lopez, and J. Lopez, JJ., on official business but left concurring vote.

Singh, J., on leave but left concurring vote.

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MANUAL ON THE RULES ON UNIFIED LEGAL AID SERVICE**RULE 1****GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Section 1. Title. — This shall be known as the "Manual on the Unified Legal Aid Service (ULAS) Rules" or the "ULAS Rules Manual."

Section 2. Purpose and Coverage. — This Manual is issued pursuant to Section 33 of "The Rules on the Unified Legal Aid Service" (ULAS Rules), which was approved by the Court in the Resolution dated August 20, 2024 in Administrative Matter (A.M.) No. 22-11-01-SC, to provide the essential details for the implementation of the ULAS Rules. It outlines the procedures for compliance, the powers and functions of the ULAS Board, including the ULAS Interim Board, the ULAS Office (ULASO), the consequences of noncompliance with the ULAS Rules as well as the remedies available to affected parties. This Manual shall govern the provision of mandatory and government-incentivized pro bono legal aid services in the Philippines by members of the Philippine Bar.

Section 3. Definitions. — Whenever used in this Manual, the following terms shall be understood to mean as follows:

(a)

Answer – refers to the document submitted by a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization in response to a Notice to Comply, pursuant to Section 24 of the ULAS Rules and Section 4, Rule 15 of this Manual.

(b)

Appeal – refers to the remedy available to (i) a Covered Lawyer or (ii) a Registered Organization, in its behalf and that of its aggregated Covered Lawyers, aggrieved by a Decision of the Compliance and Monitoring Division, ULASO.

(c)

Application/or Exclusion – refers to the submission by a lawyer claiming exclusion from rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services under Section 3(a)(viii) to (h), Rule 2 of this Manual.

(d)

Assessment – refers to the examination of a Compliance Report to determine if the mandatory provisions of the ULAS Rules and this Manual have been complied with.

(e)

Attestation of Exclusion – refers to the declaration by a lawyer who occupies any of the positions listed under Section 3(a)(i) to (a)(vii), Rule 2 of this Manual, thereby claiming exclusion from rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services.

(f)

Certificate of Compliance – refers to the certificate issued by the Compliance and Monitoring Division after submission by the Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations of their respective Compliance Reports.

(g)

Certificate of Exclusion – refers to the certificate issued by the Compliance and Monitoring Division excluding a lawyer from submitting a Compliance Report for the Compliance Period(s) covered by the exclusion.

(h)

Compliance and Monitoring Division – refers to the Division of ULASO responsible for monitoring the compliance of Covered Lawyers and Registered Organizations with the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

(i)

Compliance Report – is a general term that may either refer to an Individual Compliance Report, if submitted by a Covered Lawyer, or a Consolidated Compliance Report, if submitted by a Registered Organization. A Compliance Report, once submitted to ULASO, may no longer be amended, subject to the submission of a Supplemental Compliance Report pursuant to a Notice to Comply thereafter issued against the concerned Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization.

(j)

Consolidated Compliance Report – refers to the Compliance Report submitted by a Registered Organization containing the following: (i) an updated list of its aggregated Covered Lawyers; (ii) the Personal Hours of each aggregated Covered Lawyer; (iii) a summary of all Service Entries of the Registered Organization entered into the ULAS Portal, including excess hours carried over from the immediately preceding Compliance Period; (iv) a listing of all Financial Contributions confirmed by the Finance and Budget Division of ULASO for the

current Compliance Period; and (v) such other information as may later be required by the ULAS Board.

The Consolidated Compliance Report must reflect the completed Minimum Hours of the Registered Organization and the completed minimum Personal Hours of each aggregated Covered Lawyer.

(k)

Deficient Hours – refer to the difference between the Minimum Hours or the minimum Personal Hours, and the hours declared in a Compliance Report that are credited for the Covered Lawyer or the Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, if any, as determined by the Compliance and Monitoring Division. The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers must complete the Deficient Hours by the end of the Grace Period.

(l)

Final Certificate of Compliance – refers to: (i) the Certificate of Compliance that has lapsed into finality two months after its issuance under Section 4, Rule 13 of this Manual; (ii) a certificate issued to a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, after they have fully satisfied a Notice to Comply; or (iii) a certificate issued after an Appeal is granted by the ULAS Board, subject to Section 5(a), Rule 16 of this Manual.

(m)

Final Notice of Noncompliance – refers to the notice issued to a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers who failed to complete the Deficient Hours in a Notice to Comply within the Grace Period and imposing the penalties for noncompliance in accordance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

(n)

Finance and Budget Division – refers to the Division of ULASO which shall manage the collection of Financial Contributions, fines, and penalties, handle the administration of the ULAS Fund, and plan and implement the budget of ULASO.

(o)

Financial Contributions – refer to the monetary contributions that a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization opts to give in lieu of rendering the mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services, up to the maximum allowable under the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

(p)

Grace Period – refers to the 60-day period reckoned from receipt of a Notice to Comply, if issued after the deadline for submission of Compliance Reports or from when the said Notice is deemed a Notice of Noncompliance under Section 3, Rule 15 of this Manual.

During the Grace Period, the noncompliant Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered

Lawyers may, despite the lapse of the Compliance Period (i) complete the Deficient Hours stated in the Notice to Comply by serving the same or, to the extent allowable, by giving Financial Contribution; or (ii) satisfactorily explain in detail why they are unable to fully comply with the ULAS Rules and show that such noncompliance was not intended to evade the said Rules and this Manual.

In all of these cases, the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization must file an Answer to the Notice to Comply in accordance with Rule 15 of this Manual.

(q)

Incidental Activities – refer to activities that do not strictly constitute, but are reasonably necessary to the rendition of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. These include, but are not limited to, traveling, printing or photocopying of documents, and other similar activities.

(r)

Individual Compliance Report – refers to the Compliance Report submitted by a Covered Lawyer who is not aggregated in any Registered Organization. It shall reflect: (i) the Service Entries of the Covered Lawyer for the current Compliance Period; (ii) the Financial Contributions they have made with respect to the current Compliance Period that have been confirmed by the Finance and Budget Division; and (iii) a summary of all Service Entries of the Covered Lawyer in the ULAS Portal, including any excess hours carried over from the immediately preceding Compliance Period.

(s)

Minimum Hours – refer to the number of hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services required to be completed within a Compliance Period by Covered Lawyers and Registered Organizations. In the case of Covered Lawyers who are not aggregated in a Registered Organization, the Minimum Hours shall be 60 hours. In the case of Registered Organizations and their aggregated Covered Lawyers, the Minimum Hours is 60 hours multiplied by the number of its Covered Lawyers as reported in its Consolidated Compliance Report.

(t)

Noncompliance Fine – refers to the fine imposed in the Final Notice of Noncompliance after the end of the Grace Period on a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization who or which is finally deemed to be noncompliant, the amount of which shall be fixed by the ULAS Board in accordance with this Manual.

(u)

Notice to Comply – refers to the notice issued by the Compliance and Monitoring Division (i) to a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, after the submission of their respective Compliance Reports which are later found to have Deficient Hours; or (ii) to a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, who failed to submit Compliance Reports within the deadline.

When issued after the last day to submit Compliance Reports, the Notice to Comply shall be considered the Noncompliance Notice under Section 24 of the ULAS Rules and shall, thus, trigger the running of the Grace

Period.

(v)

Personal Hours – refer to the service hours rendered personally by each Covered Lawyer in a Registered Organization for purposes of determining compliance with the Minimum Hours applicable to Registered Organizations and their aggregated Covered Lawyers under Section 2, Rule 7 of this Manual.

(w)

Pro Bono Legal Aid Services – refer to the services defined under Section 2, Rule 4 of this Manual.

(x)

Qualified Beneficiary – refers to (i) a person to whom a counsel de officio was appointed by any court, tribunal, or other government agency, with respect to the counsel de officio so appointed and the case in which the appointment was made; or (ii) any person who is determined by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization to be an Indigent Qualified Beneficiary under Section 3, Rule 5 of this Manual.

(y)

Registered Organization – refers to a corporation, partnership, association, or any other group of persons duly registered with the appropriate government agency, and which, thus, has a legal personality of its own. The term includes registered private law firms as well as agencies of the government and chartered institutions as defined under the Administrative Code of 1987, excluding local governments and district units therein.

(z)

Service Entries – refer to the recording of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services actually rendered in accordance with Section 2, Rule 10 of this Manual.

(aa)

Service Hours – refer to the actual time spent by a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services which shall be measured in accordance with Section 1, Rule 10 of this Manual.

(bb)

Supplemental Compliance Report – refers to a Compliance Report submitted reflecting the additional services or financial contribution to satisfy the Deficient Hours stated in a Notice to Comply.

(cc)

ULAS Portal – refers to the online portal that will be used for purposes of reporting and monitoring compliance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

Section 4. Compliance Period. — Each Compliance Period shall be for a duration of 36 months and will continue uninterrupted following the same cycle until otherwise modified by the ULAS Board. The first Compliance Period shall begin on January 1, 2025.

RULE 2

SCOPE, COVERAGE, AND EXCLUSIONS

Section 1. Mandatory Rendition of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. — It shall be mandatory for all Covered Lawyers to render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services in accordance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

Section 2. Covered Lawyers. — All members of the Philippine Bar who are not otherwise excluded under Section 3, Rule 2 of this Manual shall be considered Covered Lawyers under the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

Section 3. Excluded Lawyers. — Subject to the provisions of Section 4, Rule 2 of this Manual, the following lawyers are expressly excluded from rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services:

(a)

lawyers in the government service and incumbent elective officials who are absolutely prohibited from practicing law outside their public employment, namely,

i.

justices, judges, and other officials or employees of the Judiciary;

ii.

officials and employees of the Office of the Solicitor General;

iii.

government prosecutors;

iv.

the president, the vice president, the members of the cabinet, their deputies and assistants;

v.

chairpersons and members of the constitutional commissions;

vi.

ombudsman, overall deputy ombudsman, deputy ombudsman, and special prosecutor of the Office of the Ombudsman;

vii.

governors and mayors; and

viii.

such other government employees who are absolutely prohibited by special law or rules from engaging in private practice;

(b)

lawyers employed in the Public Attorney's Office (PAO);

(c)

Shari'ah counselors who are also members of the Philippine Bar and employed in the Shari' ah Public Assistance Office;

(d)

lawyers whose request for authority to render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services from their government agency under Section 13 of the ULAS Rules and Section 9, Rule 2 of this Manual, is denied by the duly authorized officer of the agency;

(e)

lawyers who have been in the practice of law for at least 35 years or who are at least 60 years of age, per the records of the Office of the Bar Confidant (OBC), reckoned from the last year of the relevant Compliance Period;

(f)

lawyers who suffer from physical disabilities or attributes, mental, or other circumstances that render compliance with the ULAS Rules unreasonably difficult or impossible;

(g)

new lawyers who are admitted to the Bar after the effectivity of the ULAS Rules, for the Compliance Period at the time of their admission; and

(h)

lawyers whose membership with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) has been terminated or retired.

Section 4. Certificate of Exclusion; Procedure and Supporting Documents. — To be excluded from rendering the required Pro Bono Legal Aid Services under the ULAS Rules and this Manual, a lawyer claiming exclusion under the preceding Section shall apply for and obtain a Certificate of Exclusion from ULASO through the ULAS Portal before the end of the relevant Compliance Period.

The lawyer shall accomplish and submit to ULASO an Application for Exclusion, which shall specify the applicable ground for exclusion and which shall include such documents as may support his or her application. These supporting documents, as applicable, shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a)

for lawyers under Section 3(a)(viii), (b), and (c), Rule 2 of this Manual, a certificate from the relevant head of the office or agency that the applicant is presently employed by such office or agency, or that the applicant is occupying any of the positions mentioned;

(b)

for lawyers under Section 3(d), Rule 2 of this Manual, the written denial by the relevant officer of the office or agency of the applicant's request for authority to render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services;

(c)

for lawyers under Section 3(f), Rule 2 of this Manual, an affidavit executed by the lawyer or the lawyer's guardian attesting to such ground, together with such other relevant supporting documents, such as, but not limited to, medical certificates duly issued by a registered physician and duly issued to persons with disability Identification Cards;

(d)

for lawyers under Section 3(h), Rule 2 of this Manual, a certificate issued by the IBP that the lawyer's membership has been terminated or retired.

No Application for Exclusion shall be required from a lawyer occupying any of the positions under Section 3(a)(i) to (a)(vii), Rule 2 of this Manual. Instead, ULASO shall issue a Certificate of Exclusion to such lawyer after his or her submission of an Attestation of Exclusion indicating the government position presently occupied by the lawyer.

Section 5. Validity of Certificate of Exclusion. — Certificates of Exclusion issued to lawyers under Section 3(e), Rule 2 of this Manual shall remain valid for the lawyers' lifetime. All other Certificates of Exclusion shall be valid only for the Compliance Period for which it was issued, which shall be stated in such Certificate, without prejudice to reapplications for subsequent Compliance Periods.

A Certificate of Exclusion shall remain valid for the entire Compliance Period for which it was issued, even if the ground for such exclusion has subsequently ceased.

Any excluded lawyer may, however, renounce the Certificate of Exclusion granted to him or her by informing ULASO of such renunciation before the end of the current Compliance Period. In that event, the excluded lawyer's status will revert to that of a Covered Lawyer or a Covered Lawyer in a Registered Organization.

Section 6. Effects of Exclusion. — A lawyer who has been issued a Certificate of Exclusion shall be exempt from submitting a Compliance Report under Rule 13 of this Manual for the Compliance Period covered by the exclusion. Notwithstanding such exemption, the excluded lawyer may still voluntarily render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services under this Manual during the period of exclusion, but any Compliance Report filed by him or her during the period of such exclusion will not be acted upon by ULASO.

Any hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services rendered by the excluded lawyer during the Compliance Period in which they are excluded may be reported in the immediately succeeding Compliance Period by the said lawyer, whether in their Individual Compliance Report or as part of a Registered Organization's Compliance Report, as the case may be, but only if such lawyer is not issued a Certificate of Exclusion in the immediately succeeding Compliance Period.

If the excluded lawyer was part of a Registered Organization at the time of the issuance of the Certificate of Exclusion, the Registered Organization may utilize for its compliance the hours retained by it pursuant to Section 7, Rule 9 of this Manual.

Illustrations

A. For Covered Lawyers who were not part of a Registered Organization

Suppose that in January 2026, a Covered Lawyer who was a solo practitioner had already rendered 30 hours of service when he or she became an excluded lawyer, having obtained a Certificate of Exclusion by virtue of his or her appointment to the PAO. His or her exclusion exempts him or her from submitting a Compliance Report for the Compliance Period ending in 2027.

Nonetheless, if in 2029 he or she transfers back to the private sector, thereby regaining his or her status as a Covered Lawyer, he or she may utilize the 30 hours he or she previously rendered by reporting the same in his or her Compliance Report for the Compliance Period ending in 2030.

If in 2029, instead of going back to solo practice, he or she transfers to a Registered Organization which includes him or her in its aggregation, the said Registered Organization may utilize the 30 hours previously rendered by the said lawyer, as long as he or she is not again excluded.

B. For Covered Lawyers who were part of a Registered Organization

Suppose that in January 2026, an associate of a 10-person law firm that had elected to aggregate had already rendered 20 hours of service when the said associate obtained a Certificate of Exclusion by virtue of his or her appointment to PAO. Under the 50-50 sharing rule in Section 7, Rule 9, 10 hours shall pertain to the Registered Organization, while the other 10 hours shall pertain to the now excluded lawyer.

When the Registered Organization submits its Consolidated Compliance Report for the first Compliance Period, it may choose to recognize and utilize the hours rendered by the excluded lawyer. Thus, assuming that it still has nine lawyers at the time of reporting, its Minimum Hours is 540 hours and it may report the hours rendered by all nine lawyers plus the 10 hours previously rendered by the now excluded lawyer.

With respect to the hours pertaining to the excluded lawyer, he or she may utilize the same in the same manner as provided in Example A above, which would apply only if he or she is no longer excluded in the immediately succeeding Compliance Period.

C. For Excluded Lawyers who renounce their exclusion

Suppose that in January 2026, a partner in a 10-person law firm that had elected to aggregate obtained a

Certificate of Exclusion by virtue of his or her reaching the age of 60 years. The said partner later decides, however, that he or she wants to assist the Registered Organization's ULAS compliance by continuing to render legal aid services. However, any hours rendered by him or her after being excluded cannot be utilized by the said Registered Organization. The said partner may opt to renounce his or her Certificate of Exclusion so that he or she will revert to the status of a Covered Lawyer, in which case, the hours subsequently (subsequent to the reversion as Covered Lawyer) rendered by him or her will be counted towards the Registered Organization's compliance.

Section 7. Lawyers Who Already Render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. — Covered Lawyers who, by the nature of their profession, already render free legal aid services to Qualified Beneficiaries, may include such legal aid services as creditable hours for the relevant Compliance Period. Such lawyers shall include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) Covered Lawyers employed by nongovernmental organizations or nonprofit organizations; (b) Covered Lawyers who render such legal services through the IBP legal aid office; and (c) Covered Lawyers who are acting as supervising lawyers of duly-certified law student practitioners under the "Revised Law Student Practice Rule."

Section 8. Effects of Suspension from the Practice of Law. — A Covered Lawyer whose privilege to practice law has been suspended shall continue to be required to comply with the Minimum Hours defined herein, subject to the following rules:

(a)

The suspended lawyer shall render the required Pro Bono Legal Aid Services during that portion of the Compliance Period when the suspension is no longer effective, subject to the Grace Period provided in Rule 15 of this Manual. Should he or she fail to complete the Minimum Hours within the time fixed herein, the penalties under Section 25 of the ULAS Rules shall apply.

(b)

The ULAS Board, on a case-to-case basis, may waive or reduce the amount of fine imposable under Section 25(a) of the ULAS Rules, with due regard to the relevant circumstances attending, such as the difficulty of completing the full Minimum Hours within the time remaining from the period fixed in the paragraph above.

If the duration of the suspension prohibits the Covered Lawyer from practicing law during the entire Compliance Period(s), no penalties shall be imposed for his or her failure to serve the relevant Minimum Hours. However, the unserved hours shall be carried over to the succeeding Compliance Period.

Section 9. Required Authority for Covered Lawyers in the Government. — Covered Lawyers in the government who are not absolutely prohibited from engaging in the private practice of law under Section 3(a)(viii), Rule 2 of this Manual, shall secure the appropriate written authority to render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services from their agency.

In cases where such authority is expressly denied, the lawyer may apply for a Certificate of Exclusion under Section 3(d), Rule 2 of this Manual.

The IBP and the ULAS Board shall coordinate with the relevant government agencies to arrive at agreements which may enable Covered Lawyers in the government to render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services on official time and the corresponding guidelines therefor.

RULE 3

CREDITING OF HOURS RENDERED UNDER THE RULE ON COMMUNITY LEGAL AID SERVICE

Section 1. Crediting of Services Rendered Under the Community Legal Aid Service (CLAS) Rules. — Covered Lawyers who have rendered Pro Bono Legal Aid Services pursuant to the "Rule on Community Legal Aid Service" (CLAS Rules), which was issued by the Court in the Resolution dated October 10, 2017 in A.M. No. 17-03-09-SC, shall be entitled to a full credit of such services as compliance hours under the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

Section 2. Applications for Credit of CLAS Hours. — Covered Lawyers availing of the credit under Rule 3 of this Manual shall submit through the ULAS Portal an application for crediting of such CLAS hours together with a Certification issued by the IBP Chapter Legal Aid Committee, by the Accredited Legal Aid Service Provider referred to in Section 5(f) of the CLAS Rules, or by the OBC on the number of hours rendered by the Covered Lawyer under the CLAS Rules.

The Application must be submitted not later than the end of the first Compliance Period under the ULAS Rules. Otherwise, the option to credit such hours shall be deemed waived.

Any excess hours in favor of the Covered Lawyer resulting from the crediting of his or her CLAS hours may be carried over to the immediately succeeding Compliance Period only.

RULE 4

PRO BONO LEGAL AID SERVICES

Section 1. Mandatory Rendition of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. — It shall be mandatory for all Covered Lawyers to render the Minimum Hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services for each Compliance Period, in accordance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

Section 2. Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. — "Pro Bono Legal Aid Services" refer to the performance of acts or services that involve the application of law, legal procedure, or legal knowledge, training, and experience, which legal services are rendered free of charge and provided to Qualified Beneficiaries. These legal services include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a)

representation in the courts in civil and criminal cases and quasi-judicial bodies in administrative cases, including proceedings for mediation, voluntary or compulsory arbitration, and alternative dispute resolution. The representation extends to the drafting and filing of all pleadings and written submissions in said cases;

(b)

legal counseling, rendering assistance in contract negotiations and drafting of legal documents, including memoranda of law, affidavits, and contracts. Drafting may include policy work involving legal research and advocacy;

(c)

developmental legal assistance consisting of rights awareness, capacity-building, and training in basic human rights, documentation, and affidavit-making;

(d)

participation in Accredited Legal Outreach Programs and Legal Missions under Rule 6, including the supervision of students under Rule 138-A or the "Revised Law Student Practice Rule";

(e)

notarization of documents;

(f)

Incidental Activities as defined under Section 3(q), Rule 1 of this Manual; and

(g)

such other legal services as may be defined by the Supreme Court.

Pro Bono Legal Aid Services shall be considered "free of charge" when the service is rendered to the Qualified Beneficiary without any valuable consideration, monetary or otherwise. Nonetheless, nothing in this Manual shall be construed as prohibiting Qualified Beneficiaries from voluntarily giving gifts of nominal or insignificant value to the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization, out of gratitude for the service rendered. Such service shall remain "free of charge" notwithstanding the receipt of such small or simple gifts or tokens.

Section 3. Prohibition Against Solicitation or Acceptance of Gifts. — Covered Lawyers shall not solicit, request, or accept, directly or indirectly, any fee, gift, token of gratitude, or anything of monetary value in the course of rendering the legal aid services under the ULAS Rules. Any and all legal services provided under the ULAS Rules and this Manual shall be on a pro bono basis.

A "gift" refers to a thing or a right to dispose of gratuitously, or any act of liberality, in favor of another who accepts it, and shall include a simulated sale or an ostensibly onerous disposition thereof. It shall not include an unsolicited gift of nominal or insignificant value not given in anticipation of, or in exchange for, a favor from[1] the Covered Lawyer or the Registered Organization.

Section 4. Notarization. — As an exception to Section 2, Rule IV of the "2004 Rules on Notarial Practice," which was approved by the Court in the Resolution dated July 6, 2004 in A.M. No. 02-8-13-SC, notarization of documents in favor of or for the benefit of Qualified Beneficiaries may be conducted in places other than the notary public's regular place of work or business; provided, that the place of notarization is within the territorial jurisdiction of the notary public's commission. This is without prejudice to the provisions and application of the "Rules on Electronic Notarization" and the "Guidelines on the Accreditation of Electronic Notarization Facility Providers" approved by the Court in the Resolution dated February 4, 2025 in A.M. No. 24-10-14-SC.

RULE 5

QUALIFIED BENEFICIARIES

Section 1. Appointment as Counsel de Officio. — A person for whom a counsel de officio is appointed by any court, tribunal, or other government agency if so authorized by law is presumed to be a Qualified Beneficiary with respect to the counsel de officio so appointed and such case or matter in which the appointment is made.

Section 2. Counsel de Officio Order. — A Covered Lawyer appointed as counsel de officio under the ULAS Rules and this Manual shall be issued a Counsel de Officio Order in the form prescribed under Annex "A" of this

Manual.

The Counsel de Officio Order shall contain the following information:

(a)

if appointed by

i.

judicial court – the appointing court, judicial region, branch number, municipality/city, and province; or

ii.

a quasi-judicial officer or agency – the appointing agency and the specific division thereof which issued the appointment;

(b)

the name of the presiding judge or presiding officer;

(c)

docket or case number;

(d)

case title;

(e)

scope and duration of the appointment;

(f)

name of the Qualified Beneficiary;

(g)

name of the Covered Lawyer; and

(h)

roll number of the Covered Lawyer.

The court or agency concerned shall issue the Counsel de Officio Order on the same day when the appointment of a Covered Lawyer as counsel de officio is made.

Section 3. Indigent Qualified Beneficiaries. — The following persons may avail of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services as Qualified Beneficiaries under Section 4(g)(ii) of the ULAS Rules:

(a)

one who has no money or property sufficient and available for food, shelter, and basic necessities for himself or herself and his or her family;

(b)

one whose gross monthly income and that of his or her immediate family does not exceed an amount double the monthly minimum wage of an employee in the place where he or she resides;

(c)

one who does not own real property with a fair market value as stated in the current tax declaration of more than PHP 300,000.00; or

(d)

any person, including an overseas Filipino worker (OFW), migrant worker, refugee, asylum-seeker, and stateless person, who has no sufficient means to afford the adequate legal services sought.

Section 4. Qualified Beneficiary Declaration. — A person claiming to be a Qualified Beneficiary under the preceding section shall execute a Qualified Beneficiary Declaration, in the form prescribed in Annex "B" of this Manual, laying down the circumstances that make him or her a Qualified Beneficiary.

The Qualified Beneficiary Declaration shall include the following information with respect to the person seeking Pro Bono Legal Aid Services:

(a)

full name;

(b)

phone and/or mobile number;

(c)

source of income;

(d)

name of employer, if any;

(e)

position, if employed;

(f)

monthly family income; and

(g)

brief description of the problem/complaint for which Pro Bono Legal Aid Services are sought.

The Qualified Beneficiary Declaration may be accompanied by such supporting documents as may substantiate the person's claim as a Qualified Beneficiary, such as, but not limited to their latest income tax return, pay slip, or other proof of income; current tax declaration; and a certificate of indigency issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development or the local government unit where the person resides. The Qualified Beneficiary Declaration shall be subscribed and sworn to before a notary public.

For Filipinos situated abroad, including OFWs or migrant workers, the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration need not be notarized and supporting documents may also include a certificate of indigency issued by the Philippine embassy or consulate of the country where the person claiming to be a Qualified Beneficiary is located.

Section 5. Notarization of a Qualified Beneficiary Declaration. — The notarization of a Qualified Beneficiary Declaration shall automatically be considered as a Pro Bono Legal Aid Service rendered in favor of a Qualified Beneficiary, consistent with Section 2(e), Rule 4 of this Manual.

However, the Covered Lawyer who notarizes the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration shall not be the same Covered Lawyer who will examine the affidavit, interview the Qualified Beneficiary, and execute the Covered Lawyer's Certification as required in Sections 6 and 7, Rule 5 of this Manual.

Section 6. Examination of Qualified Beneficiary Declaration; Interview. — A person claiming to be a Qualified Beneficiary shall submit the duly executed Qualified Beneficiary Declaration to a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization.

The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization shall interview the applicant and examine the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration and any supporting documents attached to determine whether (a) the person is a Qualified Beneficiary as defined in Section 3, Rule 5 of this Manual; and (b) the assistance sought constitutes Pro Bono Legal Aid Service as defined in Section 2, Rule 4 of this Manual.

The Covered Lawyer shall exercise prudence in ascertaining the qualification of the applicant, which includes the assessment of the capacity of the applicant to engage the services of a remunerated counsel for the specific legal assistance sought.

Section 7. Covered Lawyer's Certification. — If the Covered Lawyer who conducted the interview and examination under Section 6, Rule 5 of this Manual is satisfied that there is reasonable cause to believe that the person and the corresponding assistance sought is covered under Section 3, Rule 5 and Section 2, Rule 4 of this

Manual, respectively, the Covered Lawyer shall execute a Certificate under his or her Lawyer's Oath to that effect. The Covered Lawyer's Certification shall be in the form prescribed in Annex "B-1" of this Manual.

If a person has already (a) executed a Qualified Beneficiary Declaration and (b) secured a Covered Lawyer's Certification, any Covered Lawyer who is later engaged in the service covered by such declaration and certification is not required to conduct another interview of the Qualified Beneficiary under paragraph 2, Section 6, Rule 5 of this Manual. In such case, the newly engaged Covered Lawyer shall execute a new Covered Lawyer's Certification in the form prescribed in Annex "B-2" of this Manual, attesting under his or her Lawyer's Oath that his or her assessment of the applicant is based on the previously executed Qualified Beneficiary Declaration and Covered Lawyer's Certification by the first Covered Lawyer.

Section 8. Unilateral Termination of Representation. — A Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization shall have the authority to unilaterally terminate the representation of an alleged Qualified Beneficiary upon such Covered Lawyer's finding, made in good faith, that the latter has committed any of the following acts, without prejudice to other grounds as may be provided under A.M. No. 22-09-01-SC or the "Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability":

(a)

knowingly made a false statement or material omission in the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration;

(b)

submitted fraudulent, fabricated, or otherwise sham supporting documents to establish his or her indigency status; or

(c)

engaged in any other form of dishonesty or material misrepresentation in relation to his or her claim of being a Qualified Beneficiary.

The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization shall document the grounds and factual basis for the termination in a written Notice of Termination, a copy of which shall be furnished to the alleged Qualified Beneficiary and to the ULAS Board. If the services rendered in favor of the alleged Qualified Beneficiary include representation before a court, a copy shall also be furnished to the court. The termination shall take effect upon receipt of said notice by the alleged Qualified Beneficiary.

The unilateral termination of representation under this Section shall not, in itself, preclude the former client from seeking Pro Bono Legal Aid Services from another Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization, provided that he or she is able to submit a new and truthful Qualified Beneficiary Declaration, supported by authentic and verifiable documentation.

Section 9. Qualified Beneficiary Case Number. — A Qualified Beneficiary Case Number is a distinct control number assigned to a particular case or matter for which Pro Bono Legal Aid Services under the ULAS Rules are rendered in favor of a Qualified Beneficiary. The Covered Lawyer who has executed the Certification required under Section 7, Rule 5 of this Manual may opt to create a Qualified Beneficiary Case Number through the ULAS Portal for ease of logging Service Entries.

The creation of a Qualified Beneficiary Case Number shall require the following information:

(a)

full name of the person claiming to be a Qualified Beneficiary;

(b)

description of the legal service sought;

(c)

name of the Covered Lawyer;

(d)

roll number of the Covered Lawyer; and

(e)

a scanned copy or photo of the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration and Covered Lawyer's Certification.

Section 10. Scope of Creditable Legal Aid Services for a Qualified Beneficiary. — Creditable Pro Bono Legal Aid Services rendered in favor of a Qualified Beneficiary shall be limited to the scope of appointment in the Counsel de Officio Order, or the particular legal service sought, as declared in the Covered Lawyer's Certification.

Section 11. Application of the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability to Covered Lawyers Rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. — The provisions of the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability relating to confidentiality and conflict of interest, equality and standard of service, Pro Bono Limited Legal Services, as well as all the duties and responsibilities of members of the Bar under the same Code, shall equally apply to Covered Lawyers, including those aggregated in Registered Organizations, in their rendition of the Pro Bono Legal Aid Services under the ULAS Rules or this Manual.

RULE 6

ACCREDITED LEGAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND LEGAL MISSIONS

Section 1. Who May Apply for Accreditation. — A Covered Lawyer, a Registered Organization, a group of Covered Lawyers, the IBP either through its National Office or its Chapters, the Department of Justice through the Department of Justice Action Center and its regional offices, or the legal aid clinics of law schools, may apply for accreditation of a legal outreach program or legal mission for Qualified Beneficiaries.

Section 2. Accreditable Legal Outreach Programs and Legal Missions. — Activities which may be accredited under Rule 6 of this Manual include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a)

jail visitations and decongestion – activities conducted in penal facilities to counsel inmates, including follow-ups on the status of their cases and measures taken to expedite the disposition of their cases.

(b)

legal clinics – those that provide free legal consultations, drafting of simple legal documents, or offer notarization services.

(c)

legal seminars – those intended to give lectures on various laws, hold open forums, and conduct seminars to raise legal awareness.

In all instances, the activity sought to be accredited must be intended to provide Pro Bono Legal Aid Services to Qualified Beneficiaries.

Section 3. Application for Accreditation of Activities. — Applicant(s) for accreditation of a legal outreach program or legal mission shall submit an Application for Accreditation of Activities, in such form as ULASO may prescribe, which shall contain the following information:

(a)

name(s) of the applicant(s);

(b)

name of representative, if applicable;

(c)

current business address, email address, and mobile number of the applicant or representative, as applicable;

(d)

title of the activity(ies);

(e)

brief description of the activity(ies);

(f)

date(s) and location(s) of the activity(ies);

(g)

duration of the activity(ies);

(h)

target Qualified Beneficiaries; and

(i)

agenda/programme.

An Application for Accreditation may contain more than one activity. In such case, each activity shall be assessed for approval separately in accordance with Rule 6 of this Manual.

Each Application for Accreditation of Activities shall include a Certification from each Covered Lawyer-applicant or the representative of a Registered Organization that: (a) they caused the preparation of the Application for Accreditation; and (b) they assume full responsibility and accountability for the veracity of the contents of the Application and its supporting documents.

Should any of the declared information in the Application be later found to be materially false and knowingly misrepresented, the applicant(s) shall be held liable in accordance with the following guidelines:

(a)

the accreditation of the legal outreach program or legal mission shall be immediately revoked; and

(b)

each Covered Lawyer-applicant or the representative of the Registered Organization shall be suspended from applying for accreditation for a period not exceeding six months.

Section 4. Period for Application. — The Application for Accreditation shall be submitted to ULASO not later than 15 calendar days prior to the conduct of the legal outreach program or legal mission.

In meritorious cases, ULASO may accept applications submitted not later than seven calendar days prior to the conduct of the legal outreach program or legal mission, provided that such shortened period will still allow a meaningful assessment of the application and its alignment with the objectives of rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services to Qualified Beneficiaries.

Applications submitted beyond this period shall be deemed late and may be denied, without prejudice to the applicant's right to refile for a later date or future activity.

Section 5. Processing and Approval of Applications for Accreditation. — The executive officer of ULASO shall act on the Application for Accreditation of legal outreach programs or legal missions within seven calendar days from receipt of a complete application. The executive officer of ULASO shall approve the application upon satisfactory finding that the legal outreach program or legal mission will be rendered in favor of Qualified Beneficiaries.

Upon approval of the Application for Accreditation, a certificate of activity accreditation (CAA) for each activity, with a corresponding unique CAA Number, shall be issued in favor of the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization who sought the accreditation. Any Covered Lawyer who rendered Pro Bono Legal Aid Services in the course of such accredited activity may enter the CAA Number in the ULAS Portal when logging the corresponding service entry.

Pro Bono Legal Aid Services rendered during an activity with a CAA Number shall be exempt from the submission of a Qualified Beneficiary Declaration with Covered Lawyer's Certification.

RULE 7

MINIMUM HOURS

Section 1. Minimum Hours for Covered Lawyers. — The Minimum Hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services for each Covered Lawyer not aggregated in a Registered Organization is 60 hours for every Compliance Period.

Section 2. Minimum Hours for Registered Organizations and its Aggregated Covered Lawyers. — The Minimum Hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services for each Registered Organization that has manifested its intent to aggregate pursuant to Rule 9 of this Manual is 60 hours multiplied by the total number of its Covered Lawyers as listed in its Consolidated Compliance Report. Of the 60-hour multiplier, at least 15 hours must be personally served by each Covered Lawyer (Personal Hours), while the remaining 45 hours may be performed by any of such Covered Lawyers.

Illustration

An aggregating Registered Organization that employs five lawyers shall be required to render at least 300 hours (60 hours x 5 lawyers) of Pro Bono legal Aid Services for the Compliance Period. Each lawyer is required to personally render at least 15 hours of service, totaling 75 hours (15 hours x 5 lawyers). The remaining 225 hours (300 hours - 75 hours) may be rendered by any, some, or all of the five lawyers.

Section 3. Carryover of Excess Hours. — All hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services rendered in excess of the Minimum Hours defined under this Manual shall be carried over to the immediately succeeding Compliance Period. In no case shall such excess hours be carried over beyond such immediately succeeding Compliance Period.

For Registered Organizations, all Service Hours in excess of the Minimum Hours shall be carried over in favor of each of its Covered Lawyers in proportion to their Service Hour contribution for the relevant Compliance Period. These Service Hours may be reported in the immediately succeeding Compliance Period, subject to Sections 5, 6, and 7, Rule 9 of this Manual.

Illustration

A Registered Organization that opted to aggregate the Minimum Hours of its five lawyers, i.e., required to render at least 300 hours (60 hours x 5 lawyers), was able to report 500 hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services for the first Compliance Period or 200 hours in excess of the Registered Organization's Minimum Hours. The Registered Organization obtained a Final Certificate of Compliance without issue.

Of the 500 hours, each lawyer was able to render the following Service Hours:

- Lawyer 1 – 15 hours
- Lawyer 2 – 60 hours
- Lawyer 3 – 100 hours
- Lawyer 4 – 125 hours
- Lawyer 5 – 200 hours

Since Lawyer 1 rendered 15 hours, 45 hours were shared by Lawyers 3, 4, and 5 (15 hours each) to meet the Registered Organization's Minimum Hours. Meanwhile, Lawyer 2 did not contribute to the excess hours of the Registered Organization.

The excess 200 hours shall thus be carried over in the following manner:

Lawyer 1

—

0 hour

Lawyer 2

—

0 hour (60 hours less 60 individual share)

Lawyer 3

—

25 hours (100 hours, less 15 for Lawyer 1 and less 60 individual share)

Lawyer 4

—

50 hours (125 hours, less 15 for Lawyer 1 and less 60 individual share)

Lawyer 5

—

125 hours (200 hours, less 15 for Lawyer 1 and less 60 individual share)

Should Lawyer 3 resign from the Registered Organization, he or she will retain 12.5 hours of the excess hours attributable to him or her, while 12.5 hours will be retained by the Registered Organization, reportable in their respective Compliance Reports for the second Compliance Period.

Any excess Service Hours rendered after the submission of the Compliance Report may be reported in the Compliance Report for the immediately succeeding Compliance Period.

RULE 8

CREATION OF ULAS ACCOUNT

Section 1. Integration of ULAS Compliance Monitoring in ULAS Portal. — Compliance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual shall be primarily done through the ULAS Portal to be developed by the Supreme Court. All reports, notices, applications, payments, and requests shall be coursed through the ULAS Portal, as far as practicable.

Section 2. Registration of Lawyers. — All Covered Lawyers and lawyers intending to apply for a Certificate of Exclusion under Rule 2 of this Manual shall create an account in the ULAS Portal and provide the following information:

(a)

personal information

i.

full name

ii.

date of birth

(b)

lawyer's information

i.

roll number

ii.

law school from which their Philippine law degree was obtained

iii.

year admitted to the Bar

iv.

IBP chapter

(c)

contact information

i.

permanent and current addresses

ii.

mobile number

iii.

telephone number

iv.

email address

(d)

employment information

i.

sector of employment, e.g., private or government

ii.

name of employer, if applicable

iii.

indicate if solo practitioner

It shall be the duty of the lawyer to update his or her registration details as these details change.

RULE 9

AGGREGATION BY REGISTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. Registration of Registered Organization. — A Registered Organization that intends to aggregate its hours shall create an account in the ULAS Portal and provide the following information:

(a)

name of the Registered Organization;

(b)

name of the government agency where it is registered;

(c)

the name and position of the authorized representative of the Registered Organization who shall have access to the ULAS account;

(d)

contact number; and

(e)

email address.

In support of the foregoing, the Registered Organization shall likewise submit the following documents through the ULAS Portal account:

(a)

proof of its registration with a government agency; and

(b)

proof of the representative's authority to register the Registered Organization with ULAS and access and manage the Registered Organization's account, containing the language provided in Annex "C" of this Manual.

It shall be the duty of the Registered Organization, through its authorized representative, to update its registration details as these details change.

Section 2. Authorized Representative of a Registered Organization. — The Registered Organization's ULAS Portal account shall be accessed and managed by its authorized representative, who shall be a Covered Lawyer included in the Registered Organization's aggregation. Such representative shall make the necessary entries and

submissions on behalf of the Registered Organization.

Section 3. Manifestation of Intent to Aggregate. — A Registered Organization shall submit its Manifestation of Intent to Aggregate through the ULAS Portal within 60 calendar days before the commencement of the Compliance Period, provided that, for the first Compliance Period, the manifestation must be submitted within 60 calendar days from the creation by the Registered Organization of an ULAS account.

The manifestation shall contain the following: (a) a declaration of the Registered Organization's intent to aggregate the creditable hours of some or all of its Covered Lawyers; (b) a list of the names and roll numbers of such Covered Lawyers (List of Lawyers for Aggregation) that it intends to include in the aggregation; and (c) a declaration that each Covered Lawyer has knowingly approved his or her inclusion in the aggregation.

The Manifestation of Intent to Aggregate shall likewise bear the approval of each Covered Lawyer signifying that he or she is authorizing the Registered Organization to prepare the Consolidated Compliance Report for him or her and for the rest of the aggregated Covered Lawyers in the Registered Organization.

The Manifestation shall be valid only for one Compliance Period and shall be irrevocable for such Compliance Period. A new Manifestation of Intent to Aggregate shall be submitted for the subsequent Compliance Periods should the Registered Organization opt to continue aggregating hours.

Any Covered Lawyer included in a Registered Organization's List of Lawyers for Aggregation cannot later be excluded from the list unless he or she is removed or resigns from the Registered Organization. Any such change in affiliation shall be reported in accordance with Section 6, Rule 9 of this Manual.

Any Covered Lawyer included or excluded from a Registered Organization's List of Lawyers for Aggregation in accordance with this Section, or Section 6, Rule 9 below, shall be notified of, and be required to confirm, such inclusion or exclusion through his or her own account in the ULAS Portal.

A Covered Lawyer who fails to confirm his or her inclusion or exclusion in the list within 10 calendar days from notice shall be automatically added or removed in the aggregation in accordance with the most recent List of Lawyers for Aggregation on record.

Section 4. Covered Lawyers in Registered Organizations. — Covered Lawyers in Registered Organizations refer to those (a) employed by the Registered Organization under an employer-employee relationship or (b) who, even in the absence of an employer-employee relationship, serve as directors, trustees, partners (in a partnership), officers, or other persons reasonably and professionally connected to the Registered Organization. For this purpose, a registered private law firm, which is considered a Registered Organization, may aggregate the creditable hours of its partners, associates, of counsels, special counsels, or full-time consultants.

Section 5. Effects of Aggregation. — Whenever a Registered Organization opts to aggregate under the ULAS Rules and this Manual, the following rules shall apply:

(a)

The Consolidated Compliance Report submitted by the Registered Organization shall bind both the Registered Organization and the aggregated Covered Lawyers. The latter are not allowed to submit separate Compliance Reports, even with respect to their Personal Hours.

No Financial Contribution may be given by the Registered Organization or the aggregated Covered Lawyers in lieu of the 15 Personal Hours under Section 2, Rule 7 of this Manual.

The Registered Organization shall be responsible for identifying and assigning Qualified Beneficiaries to its Covered Lawyers and the Pro Bono Legal Aid Services to be rendered.

(b)

The Registered Organization may amend its List of Lawyers for Aggregation during the Compliance Period, subject to the right of the Covered Lawyer removed from the aggregation, if any, under Sections 6 and 7, Rule 9 of this Manual.

(c)

Each Covered Lawyer may only be part of the List of Lawyers for Aggregation of one Registered Organization at any given time.

Section 6. Changes in the Composition of the Aggregation in a Registered Organization. — Where the composition of aggregated Covered Lawyers in a Registered Organization changes during the Compliance Period on account of the removal, resignation, or the employment of a Covered Lawyer, the Registered Organization must submit an updated List of Lawyers for Aggregation through the ULAS Portal within 10 calendar days from the removal, resignation, or employment of a Covered Lawyer. If, after the lapse of such period, the Registered Organization has not yet submitted the updated list, the affected Covered Lawyer in such Registered Organization may request ULASO to reflect the change in ULASO's records upon submission of proof of such change.

Upon the Registered Organization's submission of the updated List of Lawyers for Aggregation, any Covered Lawyer added or removed from such list shall be notified of, and be required to confirm, the change in affiliation through his or her own account in the ULAS Portal in accordance with Section 3, Rule 9 of this Manual.

Section 7. Effects of Resignation or Removal of a Covered Lawyer from the Registered Organization. — A Covered Lawyer who is removed or resigns from a Registered Organization shall retain 50% of the Service Hours personally rendered by him or her (Retained Hours), which Retained Hours shall not exceed 60 Service Hours. The remaining 50%, along with any Service Hours exceeding 60, shall remain part of the Registered Organization's compliance with its Minimum Hours.

(a)

Should the Covered Lawyer be employed or engaged by a new Registered Organization during the same Compliance Period, the Covered Lawyer may report his or her Retained Hours as part of the new Registered Organization's Consolidated Compliance Report, if applicable.

(b)

Should the Covered Lawyer opt to comply individually, his or her Retained Hours shall be reported in his or her Individual Compliance Report.

RULE 10

RECORDING OF SERVICE HOURS

Section 1. Service hours; How Measured. — The actual time spent by a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers rendering Pro Bono Legal Aid Services, otherwise known as their "Service Hours," shall be measured in six-minute increments, where six minutes shall be expressed as "0.1 hour." A

fraction of six minutes shall be counted as six minutes.

Section 2. Mandatory Service Entries. — Each Covered Lawyer shall record their rendition of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services in the ULAS Portal. Such recording, otherwise known as "Service Entries," shall indicate the following information, as ULASO may require through the ULAS Portal:

(a)

proof that the service was rendered in favor of a Qualified Beneficiary, which may include

i.

a scanned copy or photo of the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration with Covered Lawyer's Certification and attachments thereto, if any;

ii.

a Qualified Beneficiary Case Number (Section 8, Rule 5);

iii.

a scanned copy or photo of the Counsel de Officio Order; or

iv.

a CAA Number (Section 5, Rule 6);

(b)

category of service;

(c)

Service Hours spent by the Covered Lawyer;

(d)

nature of service;

(e)

brief description of service;

(f)

case docket number, when applicable; and

(g)

claims for reimbursement, if any, with proof of incurred expenses.

Each Covered Lawyer who is part of a Registered Organization's List of Lawyers for Aggregation shall record his or her own Service Hours in his or her ULAS account, which Service Entries shall be integrated in the Consolidated Compliance Report to be submitted by the authorized representative of the Registered Organization.

Section 3. Supporting Documents. — The supporting documents required to show compliance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual shall consist of any document as would substantiate the rendition of the service recorded, such as, but not limited to, court submissions, certificates of appearance issued by the branch clerk of court, and court orders indicating the appearance of the Covered Lawyer during the hearing.

Except for the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration and the Covered Lawyer's Certification, as well as the Counsel de Officio Order, other supporting documents shall not be required for immediate submission and shall be retained by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization until the Certificate of Compliance covering the services being supported by such documents becomes final.

In cases where a claim for reimbursement is filed, the required supporting documents shall be submitted through the ULAS Portal as required under Rule 18 of this Manual.

Scanned copies of the original or certified true copies of such documents shall be submitted through the ULAS Portal.

RULE 11

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Section 1. Option to Give Financial Contribution. — A Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization may, in lieu of rendering the mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services, opt to give a Financial Contribution to the ULAS Fund, in accordance with the rates fixed in Section 2, Rule 11 of this Manual, which may cover only up to a maximum of 50% of the Minimum Hours. Such Financial Contribution shall be remitted to ULASO before the end of the relevant Compliance Period and the Service Hours corresponding to the amount stated in the official receipt shall be deemed served as of the date of the remittance subject to verification and the issuance of such receipt.

Aggregated Covered Lawyers in Registered Organizations shall personally render at least 15 Personal Hours each of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. The Personal Hours may not be covered by a Financial Contribution nor aggregated.

With the exception of Philippine Lawyers Based Abroad, no Covered Lawyer shall be allowed to give financial contributions in lieu of rendering mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services in excess of the 50% cap under this Section.

The foregoing notwithstanding, a Covered Lawyer or a Registered Organization that completes 40% of the applicable Minimum Hours on or before the end of the first year of the Compliance Period may opt to give a Financial Contribution corresponding to the remaining 60% of such Minimum Hours, in lieu of rendering the required Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. To avail of this benefit, the Covered Lawyer or the Registered Organization shall indicate the foregoing in the Compliance Report which must be submitted on or before January

31 of the second year of the relevant Compliance Period.

Illustration

A. For Covered Lawyers

A Covered Lawyer is required to render a minimum of 60 hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services for the first Compliance Period (2025-2027). If he or she renders 24 hours of service (which is 40% of the Minimum Hours) on or before December 31, 2025 (the end of the first year of the Compliance Period), he or she may complete the remaining 36 hours (60% remainder of the Minimum Hours) by giving a Financial Contribution instead of rendering service. The said Covered Lawyer may avail of this benefit by giving the said Financial Contribution and then submitting, on or before January 31, 2026, a Compliance Report indicating the 24-hour service and the Financial Contribution corresponding to the 36 hours.

If the Covered Lawyer is unable to meet the 40% requirement by the end of the first year, he or she may avail of the Financial Contribution but only up to 50% of the Minimum Hours (30 hours) and can submit the Compliance Report not later than one month after the end of the Compliance Period.

B. For Registered Organizations

A Registered Organization that opts to aggregate the Minimum Hours of its five lawyers shall be required to render at least 300 hours (60 hours x 5 lawyers) of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services for the first Compliance Period. Each lawyer is required to personally render at least 15 hours of service, which shall total to 75 hours (15 hours x 5 lawyers). The remaining 225 hours (300 hours - 75 hours) may be rendered by any, some, or all of the five lawyers.

If on or before December 31, 2025, the Registered Organization is able to complete a total of 120 hours (40% of the Minimum Hours), which is inclusive of the total of 75 Personal Hours of its lawyers (rendered personally), then the Registered Organization may opt to complete the remaining 180 hours (60% remainder) through a Financial Contribution. The Registered Organization may avail this benefit by giving the said contribution and then submitting a Consolidated Compliance Report on or before January 31, 2026.

Section 2. Amount of Financial Contribution. — Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations opting to give Financial Contribution may remit PHP 500.00 for each hour of mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services intended to be offset. The total amount to be remitted to the ULAS Board shall not exceed the limits stated in Section 1, Rule 11 of this Manual.

The ULAS Board shall regularly review and update the rates for Financial Contributions outlined in this Manual to ensure that they remain equitable and commensurate with the Pro Bono Legal Aid Services required under the ULAS Rules. Any adjustments to the rates shall be approved by the Supreme Court En Banc.

Section 3. Manner of Remitting Financial Contributions. — Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations intending to give Financial Contributions shall pay through bank deposits, online fund transfers, or such other payment channels as the ULAS Board shall allow. Proof of remittance, such as deposit slips and electronic transaction confirmations, shall be submitted by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization's authorized representative through the ULAS Portal. The proof of remittance must clearly show the amount remitted and the transaction reference number. Failure to reflect the transaction reference number may lead to delays in, or even failure of, the proper crediting of the equivalent hours.

Section 4. Verification and Issuance of Official Receipt. — Upon submission of the proof of remittance, ULASO, through the Finance and Budget Division, shall verify the payment within 10 business days. If the remittance is

successfully verified, ULASO will issue to the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization an official receipt which may be accessed in the ULAS Portal. The number of hours equivalent to the amount contributed as reflected in the official receipt will automatically be reflected in the ULAS account of the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization.

Section 5. Unverified Remittances and Discrepancies. — In case the remittance cannot be verified, or is found to have failed, or if there are discrepancies between the amount claimed and the amount actually received by ULASO, the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization will be notified through their ULAS account and their registered email address.

The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization may resolve the issue by submitting the corrected proof of remittance or raising a dispute through the ULAS Portal within 15 calendar days from notification.

The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization may file a request for reevaluation to the ULAS Board through the Office of the Executive Officer if (a) the Finance and Budget Division determines that no payment was reflected in the ULAS account of the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization despite submission of proof of remittance; or (b) there are discrepancies between the payment details submitted by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and those verified by the Finance and Budget Division, e.g., varying amounts, different bank accounts, etc. The decision of the ULAS Board, whether granted or denied, shall be final and executory.

Section 6. Overpayments. — In case the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization remits an amount in excess of the limits provided in Sections 1 and 2, Rule 11 of this Manual, the number of hours that will be credited shall nevertheless not exceed the maximum allowable limits set under Section 1, Rule 11 of this Manual. Any overpayments shall accrue to the ULAS Fund.

RULE 12

PHILIPPINE LAWYERS BASED ABROAD

Section 1. Definition of Philippine Lawyer Based Abroad (PLBA). — A Philippine lawyer based abroad (PLBA) means a Covered Lawyer who establishes to the satisfaction of the ULAS Board, based on the reportorial requirements under Section 4 of the ULAS Rules, the fact that he or she, at any time during the relevant Compliance Period,

(a)

maintains physical presence abroad with a definite intention to reside therein;

(b)

leaves the Philippines either as an immigrant or for employment on a permanent basis;

(c)

works and derives income from abroad and whose employment there requires such lawyer to be physically present abroad for an aggregate period of more than 180 calendar days in a year; or

(d)

has been previously considered a PLBA by the ULAS Board, and who arrives in the Philippines to permanently reside and practice law therein, provided that he or she arrives in the Philippines after the first year of the Compliance Period.

The status of being a PLBA shall only be effective for the Compliance Period(s) affected as specifically mentioned in the Certificate issued by ULASO.

Section 2. Rendition of Mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services. — A PLBA may complete the mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services by rendering pro bono legal services related to Philippine law or that requires the application of Philippine law to Qualified Beneficiaries as defined under Section 4(g) of the ULAS Rules, which may include OFWs or migrant workers.

Section 3. Option to Give Financial Contribution. — A PLBA may avail of the option to give Financial Contribution instead of serving Pro Bono Legal Aid Services during the affected Compliance Period. The Financial Contribution may cover up to 100% of the Minimum Hours. The Financial Contribution shall be based on a rate of PHP 500.00 per hour of Pro Bono Legal Aid Service, subject to any adjustments as may be approved by the Supreme Court En Banc.

The mode of giving Financial Contributions for PLBA shall be governed by the procedures detailed under Section 3, Rule 11 of this Manual.

Section 4. Reportorial Requirements for PLBA. — Covered Lawyers seeking classification as a PLBA shall submit the following through the ULAS Portal:

(a)

an application detailing the grounds for the classification; and

(b)

copies of relevant travel, residency, or employment documents, including but not limited to visas, work permits, and immigration records.

All required documents shall be submitted before the end of the relevant Compliance Period.

ULASO shall review the submitted documents within 30 calendar days from receipt. If additional information or clarification is required, the Covered Lawyer shall submit the requested documents within seven calendar days from notice. Once satisfied that the Covered Lawyer is a PLBA based on his or her documentary submissions, ULASO shall issue in such Covered Lawyer's favor a Certificate to such effect which shall be conclusive for purposes of enforcing Section 3, Rule 12 of this Manual.

RULE 13

COMPLIANCE REPORT

Section 1. Generation and Form of Compliance Report. — The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization shall generate their Compliance Report through the ULAS Portal.

The Compliance Report shall consolidate all the Service Entries and Financial Contributions recorded for the relevant Compliance Period, clearly reflecting the total number of equivalent ULAS-creditable hours being reported for the Compliance Period. All supporting documents previously uploaded as part of the Service Entries under Rule 10 of this Manual shall be deemed an integral part of the Compliance Report.

For Registered Organizations, the Consolidated Compliance Report shall indicate the Service Entries corresponding to each Covered Lawyer included in such report.

Section 2. Submission of Compliance Reports Through the ULAS Portal; Certification in Submission. — All Compliance Reports shall be submitted to ULASO through the ULAS Portal.

By submitting an Individual Compliance Report, the Covered Lawyer certifies under his or her Lawyer's Oath that (a) he or she caused the preparation of the Compliance Report; (b) the material entries in the Compliance Report are true and correct based on his or her personal knowledge or based on authentic documents; and (c) the supporting documents proving the Service Entries and/or Financial Contributions reported are authentic.

By submitting the Consolidated Compliance Report, the authorized representative of the Registered Organization certifies under his or her Lawyer's Oath that (a) he or she caused the preparation of the Compliance Report; (b) the material entries in the Compliance Report are true and correct, and the supporting documents proving the Service Entries reported are authentic, based on the representation of each Covered Lawyer in the Registered Organization; and (c) the supporting documents proving the Financial Contributions reported are authentic.

Once the Compliance Report is submitted, the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization can no longer revise or amend the Service Entries included in such Compliance Report. However, they may continue recording new Service Entries in the ULAS Portal. Any excess Service Hours rendered after the submission of the Compliance Report shall be carried over and reported in the Compliance Report for the immediately succeeding Compliance Period.

Section 3. Deadline of Submission of Compliance Reports. — Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations and their Covered Lawyers who have completed the Minimum Hours under the ULAS Rules, may submit their Compliance Reports at any time during the Compliance Period but not later than 30 calendar days after the end of the Compliance Period (Reporting Period).

As an exception, Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations availing of the option to give a Financial Contribution for the remaining 60% of the Minimum Hours, pursuant to Section 1, Rule 11 of this Manual, shall submit their Compliance Report on or before January 31 of the second year of the relevant Compliance Period.

Section 4. Certificate of Compliance. — Upon submission by the Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations of their respective Compliance Reports, a Certificate of Compliance shall be issued by the Compliance and Monitoring Division. However, the Certificate of Compliance shall only become final two months after its issuance, provided that no Notice to Comply is issued in the meantime in accordance with Rule 15 of this Manual.

Section 5. Assessment of Compliance Reports; Standards for Assessment. — The Compliance and Monitoring Division shall assess the Compliance Reports submitted by Covered Lawyers and Registered Organizations within two months from the issuance of the Certificate of Compliance based on the following standards:

- (a)
completeness of entries – the completeness of the entries in the Compliance Report;
- (b)
appropriateness of supporting documents – whether every Service Entry is supported by the corresponding form or type of supporting document stated in this Manual;
- (c)
sufficiency of supporting documents – whether the substance of the supporting documents sufficiently supports

the declarations in the Compliance Report;

(d)

covered service – whether the service declared is a Pro Bono Legal Aid Service as defined in the ULAS Rules and this Manual;

(e)

qualification of beneficiary – whether the beneficiary of the service rendered is a Qualified Beneficiary as defined in the ULAS Rules and this Manual;

(f)

reasonableness of declarations – whether under the circumstances, the declarations are reasonable; and

(g)

other circumstances which show that the declarations in the Compliance Report are true and correct or otherwise made in good faith.

RULE 14

NONCOMPLIANCE

Section 1. What Constitutes Noncompliance. — Any of the following shall constitute noncompliance:

(a)

failure to meet the Minimum Hours of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services as defined in the ULAS Rules and this Manual within the Compliance Period;

(b)

failure to submit a Compliance Report under Section 22 of the ULAS Rules or a Supplemental Compliance Report corresponding to the Deficient Hours as required under Section 5, Rule 15 of this Manual within the Compliance Period;

(c)

failure to attach to the Compliance Report satisfactory evidence of compliance with at least the Minimum Hours in accordance with Sections 2 and 3, Rule 10 of this Manual or to obtain a Certificate of Exclusion in accordance with Section 4, Rule 2 of this Manual;

(d)

failure to fully pay the Noncompliance Fine within the period prescribed in Section 1, Rule 17 of this Manual; or

(e)

any other acts or omissions intended to evade compliance with the mandatory provisions of the ULAS Rules

and this Manual.

RULE 15
NOTICE TO COMPLY

Section 1. Notice to Comply. — A Notice to Comply shall be issued to

(a)

a Covered Lawyer who, after submitting his or her Individual Compliance Report, is found to have Deficient Hours;

(b)

both the Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, if the Registered Organization submitted a Consolidated Compliance Report but is later found to have Deficient Hours; or

(c)

a Covered Lawyer or a Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers who, after the deadline for submission of Compliance Reports, is/are found to have not submitted any Compliance Report.

Section 2. Contents of the Notice to Comply. — The Notice to Comply shall state the following:

(a)

the total number of Deficient Hours of the Covered Lawyer or the Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, as the case may be.

(b)

the reasons for disallowing the Service Entries, Financial Contributions, and/or supporting documents attached to the Compliance Report, if there are any so disallowed, as determined under Section 5, Rule 13 of this Manual.

(c)

a directive to the concerned Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization to file an Answer and observe the ULAS Rules by

i.

completing the Deficient Hours stated in the Notice to Comply by the end of the Grace Period and submitting the corresponding Supplemental Compliance Report to the Compliance and Monitoring Division;

ii.

obtaining a Certificate of Exclusion within the Compliance Period or otherwise satisfactorily explaining in

detail why the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers are unable to fully comply with the ULAS Rules; or

iii.

giving Financial Contributions to complete the Deficient Hours, subject to the limits prescribed under Section 10 of the ULAS Rules.

(d)

If the Notice to Comply is issued after the last day to file a Compliance Report, it shall include a notice that the Deficient Hours remaining by the end of the Grace Period shall be carried over to the relevant Compliance Period following Section 3, Rule 7 of this Manual.

Section 3. When Notice to Comply is Deemed as Notice of Noncompliance. — A Notice to Comply, whether issued prior to or after the deadline to submit Compliance Reports, shall be ipso facto deemed a Notice of Noncompliance under Section 24 of the ULAS Rules upon the end of the said deadline.

Section 4. Answer; Content and Attachments. — A Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers to whom a Notice to Comply was issued shall file an Answer stating, as applicable, the following:

(a)

specific portions of the Notice to Comply being disputed, if any, as well as the reasons and the factual and/or legal basis therefor;

(b)

that the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers has/have served the Deficient Hours specified in the Notice to Comply;

(c)

that the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization has given Financial Contributions to cover the Deficient Hours subject to the limits prescribed under Section 10 of the ULAS Rules;

(d)

that the Covered Lawyer is excluded from the ULAS Rules under Section 5 thereof; and/or

(e)

that despite the outstanding Deficient Hours after the end of the Grace Period, the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers had no intention to evade the ULAS Rules and this Manual along with a detailed description of the circumstance(s) that prevented compliance despite reasonable efforts.

If the Answer states items (b) and/or (c) above, it shall include a Supplemental Compliance Report detailing the subsequent Service Entries and/or Financial Contributions.

If the Answer states item (d) above, and is filed within the Compliance Period, it shall include an Application for Exclusion or an Attestation of Exclusion, as applicable.

In all cases, the assertions in the Answer must be supported by documentary evidence in accordance with the Rules on Evidence.

In the case of a Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers, only the Registered Organization may submit the Answer, which must contain all relevant requirements under this Section.

Answers must be submitted before the lapse of the Reporting Period under Section 3, Rule 13, subject to the Grace Period under Section 3(p), Rule 1 of this Manual.

Section 5. Report on Completion of Deficient Hours. — Any Supplemental Compliance Report submitted pursuant to a Notice to Comply shall be accepted only when it shows that the Covered Lawyer has, or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers have, completed the Deficient Hours. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Compliance Report reflecting partial compliance, submitted after the lapse of the Compliance Period and during the Grace Period, shall be allowed.

Section 6. Grace Period to Comply. — Noncompliant Covered Lawyers or Registered Organizations and their Covered Lawyers shall have a Grace Period of 60 calendar days from receipt of the Notice to Comply if issued after the deadline to submit Compliance Reports, or from when the Notice is deemed a Notice of Noncompliance pursuant to Section 3, Rule 15 of this Manual.

Creditable hours earned during the Grace Period under this Section shall be counted towards completion of the Deficient Hours under the previously issued Notice to Comply. Any excess shall be carried over and credited to the relevant Compliance Period following Section 3, Rule 7 of this Manual.

Section 7. Decision of the Compliance and Monitoring Division. — The Compliance and Monitoring Division may affirm, modify, or reverse any contested findings in the Notice to Comply. The Decision shall state whether, based on the Answer and its attachments submitted by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization, they have already completed the Deficient Hours in the Notice to Comply.

Section 8. Final Certificate of Compliance. — A Final Certificate of Compliance shall be issued if, upon determination of the Compliance and Monitoring Division, the concerned Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers

(a)

has/have satisfied the Deficient Hours under the Notice to Comply within the current Compliance Period or the Grace Period based on their Supplemental Compliance Report(s); or

(b)

had no intention to evade the ULAS Rules and this Manual along with a detailed description of the circumstance which prevented compliance despite reasonable efforts.

The Final Certificate of Compliance shall be immediately effective upon issuance and shall be binding for the Compliance Period for which it was issued.

Certificates of Compliance which have lapsed into finality pursuant to Section 4, Rule 13 of this Manual shall have the same force and effect as the Final Certificate of Compliance issued under this Section.

RULE 16

APPEAL

Section 1. Appeal. — A Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization aggrieved by a Decision of the Compliance and Monitoring Division under Section 7, Rule 15 of this Manual may file an Appeal with the ULAS Board, through the Office of the Executive Officer, within 15 calendar days from receipt of such Decision.

Decisions of the Compliance and Monitoring Division against a Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers may only be appealed by the Registered Organization, which Appeal must contain all required statements under this Manual pertaining to the Registered Organization and each of its Covered Lawyers.

Section 2. Content of Appeal; Supporting Documents. — The Appeal shall contain a statement of the specific portions of the Decision being disputed, as well as the reasons and the factual and/or legal basis for the Appeal.

The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization shall attach such relevant and material supporting documents, if any, to the Appeal.

Section 3. Grounds for Appeal. — The Appeal may be filed based on the same grounds as the Standards for Assessment under Section 5, Rule 13 of this Manual.

Section 4. Period to Resolve. — The ULAS Board shall resolve the Appeal within 30 calendar days from the time the matter is submitted for decision.

Section 5. Decision on Appeal. — The ULAS Board may grant or deny, whether wholly or partially, the Appeal filed by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization.

(a)

If the Appeal is granted and the Minimum Hours is satisfied by the appellant, the ULAS Board shall direct the Compliance and Monitoring Division to issue a Final Certificate of Compliance. Any excess of the required Minimum Hours shall be credited to the relevant Compliance Period following Section 3, Rule 7 of this Manual.

(b)

If the Appeal is denied, whether fully or partially, and the Minimum Hours is not completed by the appellant, the Decision of the ULAS Board must indicate the remaining Deficient Hours and direct the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization to complete the same within the applicable Compliance Period or its Grace Period, as the case may be, if these periods have not yet lapsed. If the said periods have already lapsed, the remaining Deficient Hours shall be carried over to the succeeding Compliance Period.

(c)

If the Appeal is resolved after the Grace Period, any Service Hours credited as a result thereof, in excess of the Minimum Hours of appellant shall be credited to the succeeding Compliance Period pursuant to Section 3, Rule 7 of this Manual.

Section 6. No Motion for Reconsideration or Appeal Allowed. — No motion for reconsideration or further appeal

of the Decision of the ULAS Board shall be allowed.

Section 7. Effect on Compliance Period; Effect on Grace Period. — The filing of an Appeal shall not suspend or toll the running of the relevant Compliance Period or its Grace Period.

An Appeal shall not prevent the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization from complying with the appealed Notice to Comply.

Section 8. Compliance Pending Appeal. — Any Supplemental Compliance Report submitted pursuant to Section 5, Rule 15 of this Manual pending an Appeal with the ULAS Board shall be filed with the Compliance and Monitoring Division which shall assess the same. The Decision on the assessment of the Supplemental Compliance Report may be appealed to the Board pursuant to Rule 16 of this Manual.

The ULAS Board may consolidate pending appeals pertaining to the same Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization in the same Compliance Period.

RULE 17

EFFECTS OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Section 1. Final Notice of Noncompliance; Penalties. — A Covered Lawyer or a Registered Organization and its Covered Lawyers who fails to comply with the Notice to Comply even after the Grace Period shall be issued a Final Notice of Noncompliance by the Compliance and Monitoring Division which shall contain any or all of the following imposable penalties:

(a)

Noncompliance Fine. After the end of the Grace Period, a Noncompliance Fine, as determined by the ULAS Board, which shall not be less than PHP 1,000.00 but not more than PHP 1,500.00 shall be imposed against the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization for each hour they fall short of the Minimum Hours required by the ULAS Rules.

The Noncompliance Fine shall be paid within 30 calendar days from receipt of the Final Notice of Noncompliance.

(b)

Recommendation of Delinquency. After the issuance of a Final Notice of Noncompliance, the ULAS Board may send to the IBP a written recommendation for the noncompliant Covered Lawyer to be declared a delinquent member. However, the declaration of delinquency status for the noncompliant Covered Lawyer shall not affect the requirement to pay IBP membership fees during the period of delinquency.

(c)

Marking as Ineligible to Obtain a Certificate of Good Standing from the Office of the Bar Confidant. Within 10 calendar days from the issuance of a Final Notice of Noncompliance, the ULAS Board shall send to the OBC a written recommendation that the delinquent Covered Lawyer be made ineligible to obtain a Certificate of Good Standing.

Section 2. Effects of Payment of Noncompliance Fine. — Upon full payment by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization of the Noncompliance Fine, including legal interests and surcharges, if any, the ULAS Board shall send a certified list to the IBP and the OBC regarding the lifting of the penalties under paragraphs (b) and (c) of

the immediately preceding Section, unless other grounds exist under the IBP and the OBC rules that prevent said penalties from being lifted.

The payment of the Noncompliance Fine, however, does not relieve the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization from rendering the Minimum Hours required by the ULAS Rules. The Deficient Hours shall be carried over to the relevant Compliance Period and will, thus, be added to the Minimum Hours for such Compliance Period.

Section 3. Effects of Repeated Noncompliance. — If the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization fails to comply for two consecutive Compliance Periods or for three or more Compliance Periods, regardless of whether they are consecutive, the following penalties may be imposed by the ULAS Board in addition to the penalties under Section 1, Rule 17 of this Manual:

(a)

fine in an amount not less than six times the value in Financial Contribution of the Deficient Hours but not more than twelve times such amount; and

(b)

referral of the matter to the IBP or the Supreme Court for appropriate administrative proceedings if upon determination by the ULAS Board, the same is warranted.

RULE 18

REIMBURSEMENTS FROM THE ULAS FUND

Section 1. Expenses Eligible for Reimbursement. — Subject to the availability of funds in the ULAS Fund, the following expenses that are reasonably necessary in the performance of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services required under the ULAS Rules may be submitted to ULASO for reimbursement in accordance with the following rates and caps:

Kind of expense

Rates/Cap

Remarks

printing and photocopying of documents in connection with the legal matter

actual amount indicated in the receipt or PHP 2.00 per page, whichever is lower, with a maximum reimbursement of PHP 350.00 per Service Entry

in case there is no receipt, the per page rate shall apply by submitting soft copies of the document

transportation to the court, quasi-judicial tribunal, or government office where the Pro Bono Legal Aid Service is rendered, excluding services under Section 2(d), Rule 4

PHP 300.00 per appearance

proof shall be a certification from the court, quasi-judicial tribunal, or other government office visited to render the Pro Bono Legal Aid Service

kilometrage fees of witnesses who appeared for a Qualified Beneficiary

PHP 150.00 per attendance of the witness

certification from the court or quasi-judicial tribunal before whom the witness appeared

certified true copies of documents

amount as shown in the receipt

must be actually used for the case, proceeding, or legal matter

The ULAS Board shall have the power to update the rates herein prescribed from time to time. Any adjustments to the rates shall be approved by the Supreme Court En Banc.

Section 2. Filing and Other Case-Related Fees. — The submission of the Qualified Beneficiary Declaration with Covered Lawyer's Certification under Sections 4 and 7, Rule 5 of this Manual shall be sufficient for the court to use the authority of exemption from payment of docket and other lawful fees and of transcripts of stenographic notes under Section 21, Rule 3 of the Rules of Court. The amount of docket and other lawful fees that the indigent was exempted from paying shall be a lien on any judgment rendered in favor of the indigent unless the court provides otherwise.

Any adverse party may contest the grant of such authority at any time before judgment is rendered by the trial court. If the court should determine after hearing that the party declared as an indigent is in fact a person with sufficient income or property, the proper docket and other lawful fees shall be assessed and collected by the clerk of court. If payment is not made within the time fixed by the court, execution shall issue for the payment without prejudice to such other sanctions as the court may impose.

Filing fees that are not covered by the foregoing exemption in cases filed before certain government or quasi-judicial agencies shall be shouldered by the Qualified Beneficiary. These fees shall not be charged and will not be reimbursed against the ULAS Fund.

Section 3. How to Claim Reimbursement; Period to Decide. — The Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization seeking reimbursement must submit their claim through the ULAS Portal within 60 calendar days from incurring the expense. Each claim for reimbursement must pertain to or be connected with a particular Service Entry recorded in the ULAS account of the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization.

The Finance and Budget Division of ULASO shall decide on a reimbursement claim within 90 calendar days from its submission.

If, however, a reimbursement already paid to a Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization is later disallowed after the assessment of Compliance Reports, ULASO's claim for recovery may be offset against future claims for reimbursement by the same Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization in the next Compliance Period.

Section 4. Power to Deny Requests for Reimbursement. — The Finance and Budget Division of ULASO shall have the power to deny requests for reimbursement that are not covered by or which go beyond the limits set in Section 1, Rule 18 of this Manual, or due to the failure to substantiate the reimbursement request such as not providing sufficient documentary support.

Section 5. Reimbursement Appeals. — In case a claim for reimbursement is denied, the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization may appeal the denial to the ULAS Board through the ULAS Portal within 30 calendar days from receipt of the notice of denial. Failure to timely appeal the denial will render the same final.

Section 6. Decision of the ULAS Board. — Decisions of the ULAS Board on claims for reimbursement, whether granted or denied, shall be final and executory.

Section 7. Manner of Reimbursement. — Should a claim for reimbursement be granted, the full amount of the approved claim shall be transmitted to the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization within 15 working days from notice of its approval.

RULE 19

INCENTIVES

Section 1. Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Credit. — Each Covered Lawyer, whether complying individually or through a Registered Organization, who is able to meet the Minimum Hours required for one Compliance Period as well as those issued with Certificates of Exclusion in accordance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual shall be credited with 15 MCLE units for the corresponding MCLE Compliance Period under such Rules. The MCLE credits granted herein shall not be prejudiced unless otherwise specifically provided for by the Supreme Court En Banc.

Covered Lawyers, including those in Registered Organizations, with pending appeals before the ULAS Board shall be included in a list to be submitted to the MCLE Office, which shall issue a provisional MCLE Compliance Number valid until the final resolution of their appeal.

For purposes of this Section, the Compliance Period for ULAS shall be synchronized with the compliance period for the MCLE.

Section 2. Transmission of List of Compliant Covered Lawyers to the MCLE Office. — For purposes of crediting the MCLE units under this Manual, ULASO shall transmit, within 15 calendar days after the end of each quarter, to the MCLE Office a list containing the names of Covered Lawyers whose Certificates of Compliance have attained finality as well as the list of those issued with Certificates of Exclusion.

Section 3. Attorney's Fees. — In the event of successful litigation, whatever attorney's fees may have been awarded to the Qualified Beneficiary under the ULAS Rules shall accrue to the ULAS Fund. To this end, courts are enjoined to indicate, in cases where the successful litigant is a Qualified Beneficiary, that the attorney's fees awarded shall redound to the ULAS Fund. The courts shall furnish ULASO with a copy of said decision or resolution.

Section 4. Recoveries from the Cost of Successful Litigation. — Regardless of whether attorney's fees have been awarded, the ULAS Board may require the Qualified Beneficiary in whose favor the decision referred to in Section 3, Rule 19 of this Manual has been rendered, to turn over a nominal or reasonable portion of his or her actual recovery, except actual damages, in an amount not exceeding 10% thereof, to the ULAS Board as contribution to the ULAS Fund, provided that the Qualified Beneficiary agreed in writing to such arrangement prior to his or her engagement of the Covered Lawyer under the ULAS Rules.

Section 5. Sharing of Recoveries. — A portion of the amount remitted to the ULAS Fund referred to in the preceding Section may be given to the handling lawyer at the discretion of the ULAS Board, subject to the availability of funds, upon written request by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization who rendered the Pro Bono Legal Aid Service.

The request shall include a summary of work performed, time spent, and the significance or complexity of the service rendered. In evaluating the request, the ULAS Board shall take into account the following criteria:

(a)

extent and quality of Pro Bono Legal Aid Services rendered;

(b)

duration and complexity of the case or matter handled;

(c)

contribution of the handling lawyer to the successful outcome; and

(d)

overall purpose of sustaining the ULAS Fund under Section 6, Rule 21 of this Manual.

In case the matter was handled by multiple Covered Lawyers in the course of the proceedings, the ULAS Board shall take into account the time spent and the nature of services rendered by each Covered Lawyer in determining their respective shares, if any.

If no written request is submitted, the amount remitted shall remain with the ULAS Fund and no portion shall be released to the handling lawyer, except in exceptional cases where the ULAS Board, *motu proprio*, finds that the nature of the service rendered by the Covered Lawyer or Registered Organization warrants recognition. In such cases, the ULAS Board shall issue a resolution stating the reasons for granting a share, with due regard to the same objective criteria.

Section 6. Other Incentives. — The ULAS Board, in consultation with the IBP, has both the power and the duty to add incentives for Covered Lawyers and Registered Organizations who render Pro Bono Legal Aid Services in excess of the Minimum Hours required under the ULAS Rules and shall coordinate with the proper governmental or nongovernmental body for such purpose. Proposals from the ULAS Board regarding such other incentives shall be subject to the approval of the Supreme Court En Banc.

RULE 20

ULAS BOARD

Section 1. Composition and Qualifications of the ULAS Board. — There shall be an ULAS Board which shall be primarily responsible for the implementation of the ULAS Rules. It shall be composed of a chairperson and six members who shall be of proven probity and integrity.

The chairperson shall be an incumbent Justice of the Supreme Court to be designated by the Supreme Court En Banc in accordance with the Internal Rules of the Supreme Court. The national president of the IBP, the chairperson of the MCLE governing board, and the president of the Philippine Association of Law Schools, in their *ex officio* capacities, shall also be members of the ULAS Board.

The Supreme Court En Banc shall also appoint three members who are active private law practitioners with at least 15 years of experience in the practice of law and who shall each represent Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. For this purpose, each representative must belong to an IBP Chapter of the island group that he or she represents.

The chairperson and members of the ULAS Board shall receive such allowances as may be determined by the Supreme Court En Banc.

Section 2. ULAS Interim Board. — The ULAS Interim Board shall be composed of a chairperson and six members, preferably coming from the same groups as the regular ULAS Board under Section 26 of the ULAS Rules, who shall serve until December 31, 2025.

Section 3. Chairperson. — The Chairperson shall

(a)

preside over the meetings of the ULAS Board;

(b)

submit evaluation reports and recommendations to the Supreme Court En Banc as required or as may be necessary;

(c)

represent the ULAS Board before the Committee on Continuing Legal Education and Bar Matters and other committees where official representation may be required; and

(d)

perform such other functions as may be necessary and required for the efficient implementation of the ULAS Rules and other purposes related thereto.

Section 4. Appointment Process for Active Private Law Practitioners. — The ULAS Interim Board shall nominate the three active private law practitioners, each representing Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, to serve as members of the ULAS Board for the remaining two years of the first Compliance Period. Each nominee must belong to an IBP Chapter of the island group he or she represents.

For the succeeding Compliance Periods, the incumbent ULAS Board members shall nominate the active private law practitioners for Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Each nominee must belong to an IBP Chapter of the island group he or she represents.

The Supreme Court En Banc shall then appoint the private law practitioners who shall represent Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Section 5. Term of Office of Active Private Law Practitioners. — Except for the ULAS Interim Board and the first ULAS Board, the three active private law practitioners shall serve for a term of three years. The first ULAS Board shall serve for the remaining two years of the first Compliance Period.

No active private law practitioner shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Section 6. Vacancy in the Position of Active Private Law Practitioner. — In case of vacancy in the position of an active private law practitioner before the expiration of the term of office, the remaining members of the ULAS Board shall nominate, within 30 calendar days from the occurrence of the vacancy, a qualified active private law practitioner from the respective island group to fill the position. The nominee must belong to an IBP Chapter of the island group he or she will represent.

The Supreme Court En Banc shall then appoint the successor to serve the remaining period of the original appointment. The completion of such unexpired term shall count as a term for purposes of the two-term limit under Section 5, Rule 20 of this Manual.

Section 7. Duties of the ULAS Board. — The ULAS Board shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

(a)

administer and adopt the ULAS Rules Manual for the implementation of the ULAS Rules subject to the approval of the Supreme Court En Banc;

(b)

accredit legal outreach programs and legal missions that fall within the scope of ULAS;

(c)

monitor the compliance of Covered Lawyers and Covered Lawyers in Registered Organizations;

(d)

identify and acknowledge Registered Organizations;

(e)

issue the schedule of Financial Contributions with the corresponding hours of mandatory Pro Bono Legal Aid Services that each amount shall cover as may be approved by the Supreme Court En Banc;

(f)

issue the schedule of fines or penalties as may be approved by the Supreme Court En Banc;

(g)

manage the ULAS Fund;

(h)

recommend to the IBP for listing as a delinquent member Covered Lawyers who fail to comply with the ULAS Rules and this Manual;

(i)

provide for adequate and appropriate remedies, including processes for resolving disputes or controversies, involving the implementation of the ULAS Rules, as approved by the Supreme Court En Banc;

(j)

decide and resolve matters brought to it on appeal from the decision or findings of the Compliance and

Monitoring Division or the Finance and Budget Division of ULASO;

(k)

hold information, education, and communication programs to promote awareness of ULAS;

(l)

exercise the authority to make decisions and take actions necessary to ensure that the implementation of the ULAS Rules and this Manual is consistent with law, equity, and the principles of justice; and

(m)

perform such other functions as may be needed to implement the objectives of the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

RULE 21

ANNUAL BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Section 1. Annual Budget and Fiscal Management. — The ULAS Board, with the assistance of the Finance and Budget Division, shall submit to the Supreme Court En Banc an annual budget proposal for the continuous operation and maintenance of the ULAS Program and Office, not later than 90 calendar days from the start of the fiscal year, for the succeeding fiscal year.

Section 2. Approval and Implementation of the Budget. — Upon approval by the Supreme Court En Banc, the ULAS Board shall implement the budget according to the approved allocations.

Any modifications to the budget during the fiscal year shall require prior approval from the Supreme Court En Banc.

Section 3. Financial Reports. — The Finance and Budget Division shall prepare and submit monthly and quarterly financial reports to the ULAS Board and the Supreme Court's Fiscal Management and Budget Office (SC-FMBO) detailing the status of fund utilization, including reimbursements granted under the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

At the end of each fiscal year, the Finance and Budget Division shall submit an annual financial report to the ULAS Board and the SC-FMBO. This report shall include a summary of total collections and expenditures.

Section 4. Transparency and Public Access to Financial Information. — The ULAS Board shall publish an annual summary of its budget and financial performance on the Supreme Court website and through the ULAS Portal to ensure transparency and accountability to the public and stakeholders.

Section 5. Fiscal Autonomy. — The ULAS Fund forms part of the budget of the Court and enjoys fiscal autonomy guaranteed by the Constitution.

Section 6. ULAS Fund. — All funds sourced from contributions, penalties, monetary awards from successful litigations, and others as may be provided by the ULAS Board shall accrue to the ULAS Fund for purposes of reimbursements of allowable expenses under Rule 18 of this Manual and of sharing of recoveries under Rule 19 of this Manual.

Section 7. Funding. — ULASO shall be initially funded through savings of the Court until such time that its budget is incorporated into the annual general appropriations law.

RULE 22

ULASO OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES

Section 1. Officials and Employees. — The officials of ULASO shall consist of the executive officer, assistant executive officer, SC chief judicial staff officers, and SC supervising judicial staff officers of the three divisions, each complemented by a sufficient number of staff, who shall be appointed by the Supreme Court En Banc in accordance with existing Civil Service Rules.

Section 2. Divisions. — ULASO shall be composed of the following divisions:

(a)

The Compliance and Monitoring Division which shall be responsible for monitoring the compliance of Covered Lawyers and Registered Organizations with the ULAS Rules and this Manual. It shall assess Compliance Reports and Answers submitted, recommend incentives to the ULAS Board, and perform such other duties and functions as the ULAS Board, through the executive officer, may assign to it.

(b)

The Finance and Budget Division which shall manage the collection of Financial Contributions, fines, and penalties, handle the administration of the ULAS Fund, including the preparation of an annual budget plan and financial reports, and process requests for reimbursements related to Pro Bono Legal Aid Services rendered.

(c)

The Technical and Administrative Division which shall provide technical, logistical, and administrative support, to ensure the efficient operation of ULASO.

Section 3. Reorganization of ULASO. — ULASO may be reorganized as necessary, or other divisions and/or sections may be created or dissolved, for the efficient delivery of its services subject to the recommendation of the ULAS Board and approval of the Supreme Court En Banc.

RULE 23

MEETINGS OF THE ULAS BOARD

Section 1. Meetings. — The ULAS Board shall meet every three months on such date and time as it shall designate to assess the status of compliance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual and evaluate the functions and work of ULASO, as may be necessary. The chairperson or, in case of his or her incapacity, any member of the Board, shall have the authority to call special meetings provided that a written notice is issued to all members at least five calendar days before the meeting. Any member of the ULAS Board may request a special meeting subject to the discretion of the chairperson.

The meetings of the ULAS Board, whether regular or special, shall be held, as much as possible, at its principal office or at any place designated by the ULAS Board. When it is physically impossible to hold a ULAS Board meeting in person, the meeting may be conducted through remote communication or other alternative modes of communication, such as via teleconference or videoconference.

Section 2. Quorum. — A majority of the members of the ULAS Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business. Any decision or resolution shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting where a quorum is in attendance.

Section 3. Conduct of Meetings of the ULAS Board. — Meetings of the ULAS Board shall be presided over by the chairperson. The conduct of the meeting may be recorded by digital and/or other means.

Section 4. Manner of Voting. — All decisions, resolutions, or recommendations to the Supreme Court En Banc shall be made by a majority vote of the members present at a meeting where a quorum is constituted.

Votes may be cast in person, through teleconference or videoconference, or through other secure electronic means. In case of a tie, the chairperson's vote shall prevail, serving as the deciding vote.

No proxy voting shall be allowed in any meeting of the ULAS Board.

Section 5. Designation of Acting Chairperson. — In case of absence of the chairperson, the chairperson shall designate an acting chairperson from among the current members of the ULAS Board who shall exercise all the powers and functions of the chairperson during the period of absence.

In case of incapacity of the chairperson, the Supreme Court En Banc shall designate one of the incumbent members of the ULAS Board to act as the acting chairperson until such time that the chairperson becomes capacitated. All powers and functions of the chairperson shall be temporarily exercised by the designated acting chairperson.

RULE 24

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 1. Establishment of Public Assistance Desk. — ULASO shall establish a public assistance desk for consultation and advice in relation to compliance with the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

Section 2. Confidentiality Clause. — All personal data submitted to the ULAS Portal, including those contained in Compliance Reports, supporting documents, and related information about Covered Lawyers and Qualified Beneficiaries, shall be treated with utmost confidentiality and used solely for purposes of implementing the ULAS Rules and this Manual.

ULASO shall comply strictly with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, or the "Data Privacy Act of 2012," and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations governing data privacy protection. This obligation to protect personal data is continuing and shall survive even after the completion of any Compliance Period.

Access to personal data shall be restricted to authorized personnel of the Supreme Court, ULASO, the ULAS Board, and other entities as may be authorized by the ULAS Board subject to compliance with the "Data Privacy Act of 2012" and other applicable regulations. Any disclosure or use beyond its intended purpose is strictly prohibited, except as required by law or court order.

Section 3. Repealing Clause. — All resolutions, circulars, Bar matters, including the "Rule on Mandatory Legal Aid Service for Practicing Lawyers," which was approved by the Court in the Resolution dated February 10, 2009 in B.M. No. 2012 and the "Rule on Community Legal Aid Service," which was issued by the Court in the Resolution dated October 10, 2017 in A.M. No. 17-03-09-SC, or administrative orders issued by the Supreme Court En Banc inconsistent with the ULAS Rules or this Manual are hereby repealed accordingly.

Section 4. Amendments to the ULAS Rules Manual. — This Manual may be amended, modified, or repealed by the ULAS Board. The amendment, modification, or repeal may be done *motu proprio* or upon recommendation of

the Supreme Court En Banc.

Section 5. Transitory Clause. — Pending the establishment or operability of the ULAS Portal or of any technical, organizational, or other requirement necessary to implement this Manual, the ULAS Board may issue or adopt such rules, guidelines, or measures as may be necessary to implement and achieve the purpose of the ULAS Rules and this Manual, consistent with its powers under Section 28(a) and (k) of the ULAS Rules and its duties under Section 7(a), (l), and (m), Rule 20 of this Manual.

Section 6. Effectivity. — The ULAS Rules Manual shall take effect after 15 days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines. It shall also be uploaded to the website of the Supreme Court, through its Communications Office.

[1] CODE OF CONDUCT OF PUB. OFF., sec. 3(c).

Annex "A" – ULAS Rules Manual

*This is a template form. The relevant details may be modified by the court or agency.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT

__ Judicial Region

Branch __

Municipality/City, Province

PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES,

Plaintiff,

- versus -

Crim. Case No. _____

For: _____

JUAN DELA CRUZ,

Accused.

X-----
-----X

ORDER

In today's hearing, the accused, [name], appeared without counsel de parte and informed the court that he/she cannot afford the services of counsel to represent him/her. The public attorney manifested that he/she is unable to represent the accused due to [state reason given]. In order to avoid unnecessary delays and considering the need to protect the rights of the accused, the court hereby appoints Atty. [name], then present, with roll number , as counsel de officio for the accused for purposes of [insert purpose].

SO ORDERED.**PRESIDING JUDGE**

Annex "B" - ULAS Rules Manual

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)

_____ CITY) ss.

QUALIFIED BENEFICIARY DECLARATION

I, _____, of legal age, Filipino, with residence in _____, hereby declare the following to be true and correct:

Ako si _____, nasa hustong gulang, Filipino, at nakatira sa _____, ay nagsasalaysay at nagpapatunay sa mga sumusunod:

1

Personal Details (put N/A if not applicable)

Full Name

Pangalan

Contact No.

Telepono

Source/s of Income

Kabuhayan/

Trabaho

Name of employer, if any

Pangalan ng employer, kung mayroon

Position in Employment

Posisyon sa trabaho, kung mayroon

Combined Monthly Family* Income

Buwanang kita ng pamilya**

* "Family" includes the parents, sibling/s, spouse, and child/children of the applicant.

** Kabilang sa "pamilya" ang mga magulang, kapatid, asawa, at anak ng aplikante.

2

Brief Description of the Legal Aid Services Sought (additional sheet/s may be used)

Maikling Pagsasalaysay ng Tulong Legal na Nais Matanggap

Annex "B-1" - ULAS Rules Manual

page 2

3

Grounds Applied for as a Qualified Beneficiary

Batayan ng Aplikasyon bilang Qualified Beneficiary

I am applying as a Qualified Beneficiary under the ULAS Rules based on the ground/s that

Ako ay nag-a-apply bilang Qualified Beneficiary ng ULAS Rules dahil

I have no money or property sufficient and available for food, shelter, and basic necessities for myself and my family.

Wala akong sapat na pera o ari-arian para sa pangangailangan ko at ng aking pamilya.

My gross monthly income, together with that of my immediate family, does not exceed double the monthly minimum wage in the place where I reside.

Ang aking buwanang kita, kasama ng kita ng aking pamilya, ay di hihigit sa doble ng buwanang minimum wage sa lugar kung saan ako nakatira.

I do not own real property with a fair market value of more than PHP 300,000.00 as stated in its current tax declaration.

Wala akong ari-arian na may fair market value na hihigit sa PHP 300,000.00 batay sa pinakahuling tax declaration nito.

I have no sufficient means to afford the adequate legal services sought above.

Wala akong pantustos sa karampatang tulong legal na nais kong matanggap.

4

Explanation of Applicable Ground (explain or detail the applicant's circumstances in support of the ground/s selected in [3])

Ipaliwanag ang batayan ng aplikasyon bilang Qualified Beneficiary/ kalagayang pinansyal ng aplikante

Annex "B-1" - ULAS Rules Manual

page 3

5

Supporting Documents Presented, if any

Mga dokumentong kalakip ng aplikasyon, kung mayroon man

6

Date of Execution

Petsa ng Pagsasakatuparan

I have signed this form on this date of _____
Petsa ng paglaking ng lagda

Signature
Lagda

Full Name
Pangalan

7

Jurat (to be accomplished by the notary public)
This is not required if this form is executed outside of the Philippines.

Subscribed and sworn to before me on _____, in _____ City, affiant exhibiting to me the following competent proof of identity: _____.

NOTARY PUBLIC

Doc. No. _____
Page No. _____
Book No. _____
Series of _____.

Annex "B-1" - ULAS Rules Manual

COVERED LAWYER'S CERTIFICATION

I, _____, a member of the Philippine Bar with Roll Number _____, hereby certify that on _____, I interviewed (the "Applicant") and examined the foregoing Applicant's Qualified Beneficiary Declaration and any and all supporting documents attached thereto. Upon personal assessment, I have determined that

(a)

the Applicant is a Qualified Beneficiary as defined in Section 4(g) of the ULAS Rules and Section 3, Rule 5 of the ULAS Rules Manual; and

(b)

the assistance sought by the Applicant constitutes a Pro Bono Legal Aid Service as defined in Section 4(f) of the ULAS Rules and Section 2, Rule 4 of the ULAS Rules Manual.

I confirm the foregoing to be true and correct.

Name

Date

Annex "B-2" - ULAS Rules Manual

COVERED LAWYER'S CERTIFICATION

I, _____, a member of the Philippine Bar with Roll Number _____, hereby certify that I have personally examined the following: (i) the Qualified Beneficiary Affidavit dated _____, executed by _____ (the "Applicant"), and any and all supporting documents attached thereto; and (ii) the Covered Lawyer's Certification dated _____ executed by Atty. _____.

Upon personal assessment of these documents, I have determined that

(a)

the Applicant is a Qualified Beneficiary as defined in Section 4(g) of the ULAS Rules and Section 3, Rule 5 of the ULAS Rules Manual; and

(b)

the assistance sought by the Applicant constitutes a Pro Bono Legal Aid Service as defined in Section 4(f) of the ULAS Rules and Section 2, Rule 4 of the ULAS Rules Manual.

I confirm the foregoing to be true and correct.

Name

Date

Annex "C" - ULAS Rules Manual

**AUTHORIZATION TO MANAGE THE
REGISTERED ORGANIZATION'S ULAS ACCOUNT**

The Registered Organization authorizes [Full Name of the Authorized Representative], with Roll Number [roll number of the authorized representative], to

1.
register and create the organization's account in the ULAS Portal;
2.
access, manage, and update the organization's ULAS account as necessary;
3.
submit the List of Lawyers for Aggregation and related compliance documents on behalf of the Registered Organization; and
4.
act as the Registered Organization's representative for matters relating to ULAS registration and compliance, including the filing of Appeals to the ULAS Board.

This authorization shall remain in effect unless revoked in writing by the Registered Organization. The Registered Organization shall promptly notify the ULAS Office of any changes in its authorized representative.

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