



# भारतीय विधिज्ञ परिषद् BAR COUNCIL OF INDIA

(Statutory Body Constituted under the Advocates Act, 1961)

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The Bar Council of India announces that it has framed and approved the Rules of Legal Education, Moratorium (Three-Year Moratorium) with respect to Centers of Legal Education, 2025. The Regulation is in the process of being published and shall remain in force for a continuous period of three years.

During the moratorium period, no new Center of Legal Education will be established or granted approval anywhere in India. Further, no existing Center of Legal Education may introduce any new section, course, or batch without the prior written and express approval of the BCI. All such proposals, if considered at all, will be subjected to strict scrutiny and ongoing compliance reviews. Pending applications that have not received final approval as on the commencement date will not be affected and shall be processed in accordance with law.

The Council has taken this step to arrest the decline in quality across segments of legal education, evidenced by the unchecked mushrooming of sub-standard institutions, routine issuance of NOCs by State Government and affiliations by Universities without proper inspection, and to prevent the commercialization of legal education, widespread academic malpractice, and persistent shortages of qualified faculty. With around 2000 Centers of Legal Education already operating, the BCI believes the country's institutional capacity is adequate, the focus must shift to consolidation, quality enhancement, and systemic strengthening in the public interest and in furtherance of constitutional commitments.

The Regulation draws its authority from Sections 7, 7(1)(h), 7(1)(i), 24(1)(c)(iii) and 49(1)(af), (ag) and (d) of the Advocates Act, 1961, and reflects the Council's duty to promote and maintain standards of legal education, protect the integrity of the profession, and safeguard public interest in the administration of justice.

This policy follows a sustained course of action undertaken by the Council, including a 2019 resolution imposing a temporary moratorium, subsequent judicial proceedings culminating in the judgment of December 4, 2020 of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, and a detailed press statement of June 16, 2021 urging rigorous diligence by State Governments and universities. The present Regulation answers the Court's guidance by enacting the measures through formal rules and reinforces the Council's long-standing commitment to quality.

Universities, State Governments, Central Government entities and other institutions are therefore advised not to submit or forward proposals to establish new Centers of Legal Education during the moratorium. The BCI expects full cooperation from all stakeholders in upholding the objectives of the Regulation.

In the interest of equity and access, the Regulation provides for narrowly tailored exceptions. These include proposals dedicated exclusively to socially and educationally backward classes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Economically Weaker Sections; proposals in remote, tribal or aspirational districts notified by the competent authorities; courses designed solely for persons with disabilities; and proposals of State or Central Universities created by statute or specifically recommended by the competent Ministries. All such proposals must satisfy strict conditions, including valid NOCs, prior university affiliations, demonstrated infrastructure and faculty strength, and compliance with need-based establishment under the Rules of Legal Education.

Transitional safeguards have also been specified. Centers with only conditional approvals prior to commencement shall not commence operations during the moratorium unless they meet the requirements under the Rules of Legal Education and receive express clearance from the BCI. Pending applications duly processed through the prescribed stages remain eligible for consideration.

The approval framework reiterates the three-stage process. First, a needs-based No Objection Certificate must be obtained from the State Government or relevant Ministry after an objective assessment of regional necessity. Second, the affiliating University must ensure strict compliance with minimum standards under the Rules of Legal Education, 2008 including governance structure, infrastructure, faculty recruitment, library resources, capital fund, and other mandatory criteria before granting affiliation. Third, only after these stages may the BCI conduct its own comprehensive inspection and decide on approval.

During the moratorium, existing Centers of Legal Education will be subject to intensified inspections and compliance audits. The BCI may order closure or derecognition where institutions fail to maintain prescribed standards and will discourage issuance of fresh NOCs or affiliations for new institutions or courses.

To ensure deterrence and protect students, the Regulation specifies consequences for violations, including withdrawal of BCI approval or recognition, derecognition of degrees issued in contravention of the Rules, ineligibility of graduates for enrolment under Section 24 of the Advocates Act, 1961, and initiation of disciplinary, civil and criminal proceedings against offending institutions and authorities.

The Council will review the operation and impact of the Regulation annually and may extend, modify, or repeal it based on evolving circumstances and policy considerations, with the aim of continuously improving and safeguarding standards of legal education.

For clarity, the Regulation overrides and supersedes any conflicting resolutions, circulars, notifications or prior decisions issued by the BCI or any other authority relating to legal education.

This declaration of policy intent affirms that the moratorium is aimed at elevating and protecting standards of legal education, preserving the dignity of the legal profession, and reinforcing public trust in the justice system, while ensuring inclusivity in keeping with constitutional mandates.

The BCI calls upon State Governments, Universities, Centers of Legal Education and all stakeholders to cooperate fully with the implementation of these Rules, to prioritize quality over expansion, and to uphold the highest academic and professional standards expected by the justice delivery system and the public at large.



(Srimanto Sen)  
Principal Secretary  
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