

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
LAW (A) DEPARTMENT

NOTIFICATION

No. LJ (A) 56/2026/2

Dated Shillong, the 16th September 2026

**THE MEGHALAYA PANEL ADVOCATES (EMPANELMENT AND ENGAGEMENT)
GUIDELINES, 2026**

Whereas the engagement of counsel to represent the State is a public function to be discharged in public interest, and whereas it is expedient to frame guidelines regulating the empanelment of advocates to represent the State before the Hon'ble High Court of Meghalaya and/or Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

1. Short title, commencement and application

- 1.1 These Guidelines may be called the Meghalaya Panel Advocates (Empanelment and Engagement) Guidelines, 2026. They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.
- 1.2 They apply to the empanelment and engagement of advocates engaged at State expense to represent the State of Meghalaya before the High Court of Meghalaya and/or Supreme Court of India.
- 1.3 Nothing in these Guidelines applies to the Advocate General of Meghalaya, whose appointment is governed by Article 165 of the Constitution.

2. Categories of Panel Advocates and minimum standing

- 2.1 The panels shall be constituted in the following categories:

Forum	Category	Minimum standing as advocate
Supreme Court of India	Standing Counsel (Mandatory requirement: The candidate must be an Advocate-on-Record before the Supreme Court)	10 years
	Panel Advocate	5 years
High Court of Meghalaya	Additional Advocate General	15 years
	Senior Government Advocate	12 years
	Additional Senior Government Advocate	8 years
	Government Advocate	6 years
	Panel Advocate	5 years

3. Eligibility and disqualification

- 3.1 An applicant must hold a degree in law from an institution recognized by the Bar Council of India, be enrolled as an advocate under the Advocates Act, 1961, hold a valid Certificate of Practice, and, if enrolled on or after such date as the Bar Council of India may notify, have qualified the All India Bar Examination.

- 3.2 The applicant must be actively practicing before the forum for which empanelment is sought.
- 3.3 No person shall be empaneled who:
- (a) is under any disqualification under section 24A of the Advocates Act, 1961, or has been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude;
 - (b) has been found guilty of professional or other misconduct by a Bar Council or held guilty of contempt of court; or
 - (c) is in whole-time salaried employment.

4. Tenure, review and renewal

- 4.1 Empanelment shall be for **three years** from the date of the notification or till further orders whichever is earlier.
- 4.2 The performance of every empaneled advocate under these Guidelines shall be reviewed by the Advocate General, having regard to the number and outcome of matters conducted, punctuality of appearance, timeliness of opinions, complaints, if any, and the instances of matters lost for default subject to the approval of the Government.
- 4.3 Empanelment confers no right to renewal or to continuance. Renewal for a further term may be granted on the recommendation of the Advocate General, subject to satisfactory performance.
- 4.4 Empanelment does not create a relationship of employment, and a Panel Advocate shall not be entitled to pay, pension or any service benefit.

5. Fees and allowances

- 5.1 Panel Advocates shall be paid fees at the rates specified in the schedule of fees notified by the Law Department as revised from time to time.
- 5.2 The fee shall be paid only to the advocate to whom the brief is marked by the Advocate General and no other advocate(s) who may be appearing along with or on behalf of the advocate to whom the brief is marked shall be entitled to fee.
- 5.3 In the event the advocate to whom the brief is marked is unable to be present before the Court on account of any exigency, the Panel Advocate who is authorized by the Advocate General may appear on behalf of the advocate to whom the brief is marked and the said advocate only shall be entitled to payment of fee. In other words, only one advocate shall be entitled to fee for the said hearing.
- 5.4 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided herein, the Advocate General in his discretion can mark a brief to one or more advocates in a particular matter and only in this event, fee will be payable to more than one advocate.
- 5.5 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided herein, the Advocate General / Additional Advocate General / Senior Government Advocate / Standing Counsel may be assisted by advocate(s) from panel as desired by them. In the said event, the advocate(s) assisting the above shall be entitled to fee at the rates so notified.

6. Allotment of briefs and engagement of counsel outside the panel

- 6.1 Briefs shall be allotted by the Advocate General in respect of matters before the High Court and Supreme Court and any other forum.
- 6.2 A Panel Advocate shall not transfer, return or entrust a brief to another advocate without the prior approval of the Advocate General.
- 6.3 Where a matter/case/issue/opinion etc., in the opinion of the Government or the Advocate General, warrants engagement of a Senior Advocate or a Special Counsel/assisting counsel, the said person may be engaged from outside the panel.

7. Duties and conduct

- 7.1 A Panel Advocate shall —
 - (a) appear on every date and file pleading within the time allowed;
 - (b) intimate the Advocate General/line Department of the final order within seven days; and
 - (c) furnish, within seven days of an adverse decision, a reasoned opinion together with a note on the period of limitation to the concerned Department.
- 7.2 A Panel Advocate shall maintain strict confidentiality of all records and information received in the course of the engagement, and this obligation shall survive the cessation of empanelment.
- 7.3 The advocates who are entitled to a retainer fee from the State Government may continue private practice, provided it does not interfere with the discharge of State work and shall not appear in cases in which State is a contesting party.
- 7.4 No matter shall be permitted to be dismissed for default, nor any concession, admission or statement made on behalf of the State on a question of law or fact, without written instructions.

8. De-empanelment and resignation

- 8.1 The Government may de-empanel a Panel Advocate at any point of time in its discretion or on the recommendation of the Advocate General.
- 8.2 A Panel Advocate may resign by 15 days' notice in writing to the Government / Advocate General, and shall, on cessation of empanelment for any reason, hand over all case files, records and documents to the Office of the Advocate General within seven days, together with a status note on each pending matter. Fees not settled shall be released only after such handover.

9. Savings, transition and power to relax

- 9.1 The Government may, for reasons to be recorded in writing, relax any provision of these Guidelines.

Sd/-

Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya,
Law Department

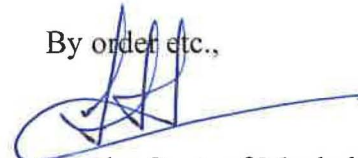
Memo No. LJ (A) 56/2026/2-A

Dated Shillong 16th September, 2026.

Copy forwarded to:-

1. The Advocate General, Meghalaya, Shillong.
2. The Additional Advocate General, High Court of Meghalaya, Shillong-793001.
3. The Registrar General, High Court of Meghalaya. Shillong.
4. The Sr. Govt. Advocate, High Court of Meghalaya. Shillong.
5. The Accountant General (A&E), Meghalaya, Shillong- 793001.
6. The Treasury Officer, Shillong South Treasury/Shillong District Treasury, Shillong.
7. The Secretary, High Court Bar Association, Shillong.
8. Law (B) Department.
9. DEO, Law Department.

By order etc.,



Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya,
Law (A) Department.