

## LOK ADALAT MECHANISM

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One of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanism recognized and accepted by our judicial system is the 'Lok Adalat'. In last few years it has become one of the popular mechanism of resolution of disputes amongst parties. The Lok Adalat Mechanism is available throughout the State through the Legal Services Authority for amicable settlement of cases.

Lok Adalat is presided over by a Judicial Officers (either active & retired) and they are helped by 1-2 conciliators, who are either advocates, social workers, mediators, etc in resolving the cases amicably between the parties. The Lok Adalats has jurisdiction to determine and to arrive at a compromise or settlement between the parties to a dispute in respect of any case pending before any Court or are in pre-litigation stage. In respect of cases pending before Courts, such cases can be referred to Lok Adalat if the parties agree or makes an application to the Court or the Court is satisfied that the matter is an appropriate one to be taken-up in the Lok Adalat.

The Award of the Lok Adalat shall be deemed to be a decree of Civil Court or as the case may be an order of any other Court. Every Award made by a Lok Adalat shall be final and binding on all the parties to the dispute. No Appeal shall lie to any Court against the Award of the Lok Adalat. One of the attractive part of Lok Adalat Settlement is that the Plaintiff/Petitioner is entitled to get the Court Fee that he paid refunded. No fee is required to be paid by the parties to settle their cases before Lok Adalat.