BLOGS

BCI Mandates Implementation of Criminal Background Check System, Biometric Attendance and CCTV Cameras in Law Colleges

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BCI mandates background checks, biometric attendance, and declarations on simultaneous degrees and employment for law students across CLEs. Read more about it here!

On September 24, 2024, the Bar Council of India (BCI) issued a **press release** announcing the immediate enforcement of several new measures across all Centers of Legal Education (CLE).

These measures include the introduction of a Criminal Background Check System, declarations regarding simultaneous degree programs or other academic courses, employment status, compliance with attendance requirements, biometric attendance tracking, and the installation of CCTV cameras.

Prompted by recent judicial feedback, the BCI has put forth these regulations to enhance oversight on law students' conduct, attendance, and adherence to academic standards.

Criminal Background Check and Mandatory Declarations

To maintain the integrity of the legal profession, the BCI now requires all law students to disclose any involvement in criminal cases, including ongoing FIRs, convictions, or acquittals. This information must be submitted prior to the issuance of final academic certificates. No law degree or marksheet will be provided until such declarations are reviewed by the CLEs and BCI.

Failure to comply with this mandate may result in the withholding of academic credentials and possible disciplinary actions. All declarations are to be submitted electronically to the BCI at bciinfo21@gmail.com.

Restrictions on Simultaneous Degrees and Employment

According to Rule 6 of the Rules of Legal Education (2008), students are prohibited from pursuing more than one regular degree program along with their LLB course. Students are required to submit a declaration affirming compliance with this rule. This rule allows students to pursue short-term or part-time courses that do not interfere with their regular coursework. Violations of this rule will result in the withholding of final marksheets.

Additionally, students engaged in employment during their LL.B. studies must have obtained an official No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the BCI. Without this, students cannot receive their degrees, nor can they be enrolled in any State Bar Council.

Biometric Attendance and CCTV Surveillance

In an effort to enhance transparency, CLEs across the nation are now required to install biometric attendance systems and CCTV cameras in classrooms. These measures will ensure strict compliance with attendance requirements and maintain a greater degree of accountability amongst students. BCI has also mandated that the CCTV footage must be retained for at least one year for verification purposes.

Institutional Compliance and Penalties

Per the Bar Council press release, CLEs must immediately comply with these new directives. Institutions that fail to enforce these mandates may face severe consequences, including de-recognition by the BCI.

Non-disclosure of criminal records, employment status, or simultaneous degree programs will lead to legal and academic penalties for both- students and CLEs.

Find the Press Release by the BCI here!