

**1. What is Dowry?**

Dowry means, property or items of value given by one party to the marriage to the other party pursuant to a demand. Items of value can be cash, property, vehicles, livestock etc.

Any gifts given by parents or relatives of one party to the marriage, to the other party, directly or indirectly, at the time of marriage, before or after the marriage or in connection with the marriage can be seen as dowry.

**2. What does not constitute 'Dowry' as per law?**

- (a) Mahr given under Muslim Personal Law – Shariat will apply.
- (b) Presents given at the time of marriage voluntarily.

**3. Are there any rules on receiving or giving presents at the time of marriage?**

Yes. As per law, a list of all presents received at the time of marriage has to be prepared immediately after the marriage and signed by the bride and groom and notarized.

If any presents are given by the bride or her relatives, these presents should not put financial strain on the person giving them and should be customary in nature. Otherwise, the gifts may be seen as dowry.

**4. Can I get any gift made at the time of marriage back?**

Yes, you can receive gifts on your marriage provided you make a list of gifts exchanged during marriage ceremonies.

**5. Is giving and taking of dowry both offences?**

Yes. Giving and taking of dowry are both offences. Demanding dowry or helping in the giving or taking of dowry are also offences.

**6. If I gave dowry and want to make a complaint, will I be arrested?**

No. You can still file a complaint against the persons who took dowry because the statements you make to the police and to the courts cannot be used against you.

**7. Who can complain?**

- (a) A person aggrieved by a demand for dowry or dowry harassment
- (b) A parent or relative of the above person;
- (c) By a recognized welfare institution or organization recognized by the State Government in this regard.

**8. How do you register a complaint?**

- Any of the above persons can a complaint in the local police station or in the crime against women cell, who will then investigate the matter and report the facts to court which then takes notice of the matter; or
- Any of the above persons can approach the district Dowry Prohibition Officer or a recognized welfare institution or organization.

**9. If a complaint is made against someone for demanding dowry, will they be arrested immediately?**

No, while the investigation in the case can start immediately, accused can only be arrested after a warrant is given by the magistrate.

**10. What is an appropriate judicial authority?**

Metropolitan Magistrate or the Magistrate of the first class is competent to try offences related to dowry harassment.

**11. Is there a Dowry Prohibition Officer in Kadapa and Chittoor districts?**

Either the Revenue Divisional Officer/ Sub Collector act as DPOs in Andhra Pradesh.

**12. What does a Dowry Prohibition Officer do?**

The role of a DPO is to prevent the taking or supporting of dowry demand, as far as possible. These officers collect evidence, conduct preliminary inquiries on receiving complaints regarding dowry and prepare case history and help the victim in getting the case registered with the police.

**13. What can I do if the police officer denies to take down my complaint?**

In such a situation, you may contact the SP of your region or go to the Court, the court may then either itself take charge of the matter or direct the appropriate police officer to do so. You can also take help from local media and NGOs of your city.

**14. What is Section 498A?**

It is a section under Indian Penal Code, which punishes the husband of a woman or relative of the husband if he subjects her to cruelty. Cruelty will include driving a woman to commit suicide, causing grave injury to her life or health (mental or physical), making demands for dowry, having extra marital relationships etc. It is a non bailable offence.