

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was signed into law by former President Nelson Mandela on 10 December 1996.

Chapter 2 of the Constitution contains the Bill of Rights which provides for the following rights:

EQUALITY

Everyone is equal before the law and may not be unfairly discriminated against.

HUMAN DIGNITY

Everyone has inherent human dignity which must be respected.

LIFE

Everyone has the right to life.

FREEDOM AND SECURITY OF THE PERSON

You have a right to be free from all forms of violence and not be detained without trial.

SLAVERY, SERVIDUTE AND FORCED LABOUR

You may not be subjected to slavery or forced labour.

PRIVACY

Your right to privacy includes your body, home and possessions.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION, BELIEF AND OPINION

You have a right to have your own beliefs and opinions. You can follow the religion of your choice.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

All people (including the press) can say what they want.

ASSEMBLY, DEMONSTRATION, PICKET AND PETITION

You can hold a demonstration, picket and present a petition. But you must do this peacefully.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

You can associate with anyone you want to.

POLITICAL RIGHTS

You can support the political party of your choice. If you are a citizen, and at least 18 years old, you can vote.

CITIZENSHIP

Your citizenship cannot be taken away from you.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND RESIDENCE

You can live anywhere in South Africa.

FREEDOM OF TRADE, OCCUPATION AND PROFESSION

You can do any work you choose.

LABOUR RELATIONS

You may join trade unions and go on strike.

ENVIRONMENT

You have the right to a healthy environment.

PROPERTY

Your property can only be taken away from you if the proper rules are followed.

HOUSING

Everyone who is a citizen has a right to access to proper housing.

HEALTH CARE, FOOD, WATER AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Everyone has a right to food, water, health care and social security.

CHILDREN

Children under the age of 18 have special rights, like the right not to be abused.

EDUCATION

You have the right to basic education, including adult basic education, in your own language (if this is possible).

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

You can use the language you want to and follow the culture that you choose.

CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC COMMUNITIES

Communities can enjoy their own culture; practice their own religion; and use their own language.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

In order to exercise your rights, you may have access to information held by another person, organisation or by the State.

JUST ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Actions by the government must be fair.

ACCESS TO COURTS

You can have a legal problem decided by a court, or a similar structure.

ARRESTED, DETAINED AND ACCUSED PERSONS

This right protects accused people.

THE YEAR OF UNITY,
SOCIO-ECONOMIC
RENEWAL AND NATION
BUILDING.

Limitation of rights

The rights in the Bill of Rights may be limited. The limitation must be reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom.

For the full text of the Constitution go to: www.justice.gov.za • Follow us on  



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Department:
Justice and Constitutional Development
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