



AWARENESS

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Every year, on the 21st of March, South Africa celebrates Human Rights Day. It is a day in which to commemorate the events that took place in the Sharpsville Massacre on the 21st of March 1960.

This public holiday was included in the list of national public holidays in 1994 when Nelson Mandela came into power. It is in the hope that we both remember the suffering and the sacrifice the citizens of South Africa endured to secure the rights all South Africans enjoy today.

It is also a day of reflection about how we can protect our rights in the future, and work against those who threaten to violate them.

The Constitution of South Africa includes the Bill of Rights, which has been declared the cornerstone of democracy. It is the declaration that every person has the right to be respected, treated equally, and has the right to freedom.

Here are some of the most notable parts of our Bill of Rights:

Section 8 indicates the limitations of the state in discrimination, and declares that no person may be unfairly discriminated against; directly or indirectly.

Section 11 states that everyone has the right to life. This section is also inclusive of the prohibition of the death penalty.

Section 13 states that no one is subject to slavery, servitude or forced labour. While section 14 details the right to privacy, which includes the right to refuse the search of their person or property within the limits of the law.

There are also sections on freedom of religion, expression, and demonstration. And there is a declaration that no citizen can be deprived of citizenship.

There is freedom of movement, trade and labour rights, and the right to own property within the restrictions of the law.

There's a right to housing, healthcare, food, water and social security. Children's rights, the right to education, language, culture and information are also included.

There are rights stipulated for a fair trial and the Bill of Rights ends off with the right to due process under arrest, detainment and accusation.

For more information on your rights according to the Bill, [see Chapter 7 of the Constitution, ss 7-19, here...](#)