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COMBATING
DISCRIMINATION
AND PROMOTING EQUALITY

In the eyes of the law, we are all equal

Défenseur des droits
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTING EQUALITY

In France, the Defender of Rights is the authority responsible for defending and promoting access to rights for individuals who have been victims of discrimination. A dedicated **whistleblowing service** is available: contact our lawyers free of charge on **39 28** or via the **chat** facility on **antidiscriminations.fr**.

The alleged perpetrator of this discrimination may be a natural person (an individual) or a legal entity (an association, a company, etc.), a private entity (a company) or a public entity (a State department, a local authority, a public hospital service).

TO RECOGNISE DISCRIMINATION, THREE CONDITIONS MUST BE MET:

- less favourable treatment of a person;
- based on at least one criterion specified by law (origin, disability, sex, religion, health, etc.).
French law defines approximately 25 of them;
- and which corresponds to a situation recognised by law such as hiring, career development, access to housing, education, public services, private or public goods and services, etc.

NOT ALL DIFFERENCE IN TREATMENT IS NECESSARILY DISCRIMINATION. THE LAW ALSO PROTECTS YOU IF:

- you are a victim of harassment based on a discrimination criterion;
- you are sexually harassed;
- you are penalised for complaining about discrimination as a victim or witness.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DISCRIMINATION,
VISIT [ANTI-DISCRIMINATIONS.FR](https://antidiscriminations.fr)**

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“I WASN'T HIRED BECAUSE OF MY PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.”

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“A CREDIT INSTITUTION REFUSED MY LOAN BECAUSE OF MY AGE.”

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“WE DIDN'T GET THE APARTMENT BECAUSE WE ARE A GAY COUPLE.”

WHAT CAN THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS DO?



INVESTIGATE



PROPOSE
AN AMICABLE
SETTLEMENT



MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS



PRESENT ITS
OBSERVATIONS
BEFORE THE JUDGES



REQUEST
DISCIPLINARY
ACTION



MAKE PROPOSALS
FOR LEGAL REFORM

ONE INSTITUTION, 5 AREAS OF OPERATION

**“THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS UPHOLDS RIGHTS
AND FREEDOMS”**

Article 71-1 of the Constitution

The Defender of Rights is an independent institution responsible for defending individual rights and freedoms within the framework of 5 areas of expertise determined by law:

- ★ Defence of the rights of users of **public services**
- ★ Respect for the **ethics of security**
- ★ Defence and promotion of the **rights of the child**
- ★ Orientation and protection of **whistleblowers**
- ★ Combating **discrimination** and promoting **equality**

TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION, THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS:

- ★ **handles the claims** addressed to it by offering appropriate solutions;
- ★ **acts in favour of equal access to rights for all** through information, training, the development of partnerships and the proposal of reforms.

**MORE THAN 50% OF CLAIMS RECEIVED ON DISCRIMINATION
RELATE TO EMPLOYMENT**

DELEGATES: PROVIDING A UNIQUE LOCAL SERVICE

THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS RELIES ON A NETWORK OF ALMOST 550 DELEGATES

The delegates of the Defender of Rights are present throughout the national territory. Anyone seeking assistance in asserting their rights can contact them free of charge at **more than 870 centres** in mainland France and overseas: Maison de la Justice et du Droit (MJD), Point d'accès au droit (PAD), prefectures, town halls, etc.

DELEGATES CAN:



**LISTEN TO WHAT
YOU HAVE TO SAY**



**GUIDE YOU THROUGH
THE PROCESS**



**HELP YOU ASSERT
YOUR RIGHTS**



**FORWARD YOUR FILE
TO THE HEAD OFFICE**

**80% OF THE CLAIMS OF THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS
ARE RECEIVED BY DELEGATES WITHIN THEIR CLINIC**

SEE THE LIST OF CLINICS:

defenseurdesdroits.fr

**ARE YOU A VICTIM OF OR HAVE YOU WITNESSED
DISCRIMINATION?**

CONTACT THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS FREE OF CHARGE

 **ANTIDISCRIMINATIONS.FR**

★ **BY TELEPHONE ON 39 28**

The lawyers of the Defender of Rights will reply to you free of charge, Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 6 pm.

★ **THROUGH THE DELEGATES**

Online at anti-discriminations.fr / “Consulter l’annuaire” (Consult the directory) or at a centre.

★ **THROUGH THE ONLINE CHAT**

Online at anti-discriminations.fr.

★ **BY POST FREE OF CHARGE, WITHOUT POSTAGE**

Défenseur des droits - Libre réponse 71120 - 75342
Paris Cedex 07

**IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ATTACH ALL USEFUL DOCUMENTS
(COPY OF ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS, LETTERS, EMAILS,
TESTIMONIALS, ETC.) TO ENABLE THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS
TO PROCESS YOUR FILE.**

GOOD TO KNOW

Recourse to the Defender of Rights is free of charge. The Defender of Rights cannot challenge a court decision. Referral to it does not interrupt or suspend the limitation periods for civil, administrative or criminal actions or those of administrative or litigation appeals.