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**Ensuring your
rights are
respected
in your
*département***

When it comes to rights, we are all equal

Défenseur des droits
— RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE —

One institution, five specialist areas

**“The Defender of Rights ensures that rights
and freedoms are upheld”**

Article 71-1 of the Constitution

The Defender of Rights is an independent institution tasked with defending rights and individual freedoms within five areas of expertise as determined by the law:



**Defending the
rights of public
service users**



**Ensuring the rules
of professional
conduct are
followed by
security officials**
(police,
“gendarmes”,
private security
services, etc.)



**Defending and
promoting the
rights of the child**



**Combating
discrimination
and promoting
equality**



**Guiding and
protecting
whistleblowers**

To accomplish its duties, the Defender of Rights:

- **processes the complaints** it receives by coming up with fitting solutions;
- **works to improve equal access to rights for all** through information and training and by forging partnerships and proposing reforms.



More than **130,000**
requests for action every year

When can you contact a Defender of Rights delegate?

Whether you are an individual or legal entity, a French or foreign national, you have the possibility of contacting a Defender of Rights delegate about:

Defending the rights of public service users

If you do not agree with a decision or action on the part of a State department, local authority or any public service organisation, and the steps you have taken previously to resolve this problem have failed.

Defending the rights of the child

If you notice that the rights of a child or adolescent are not respected or that a situation seems to be at odds with a minor's interests.

Combating discrimination

If you consider that you have been treated differently during a recruitment process, at work or to access housing, a public venue or services on unlawful grounds such as your origin, disability, gender, age or sexual orientation for example.

Defending rights in the context of relations with law enforcement

If you consider yourself to have been a victim or witness of abusive behaviour on the part of security professionals (police officers, gendarmes, security or surveillance officials, etc.).

Guiding and protecting whistleblowers

If, within the organisation you work for or with, you have found out about a crime or offence or serious damage or threat to the public interest or the violation of an international commitment.



I was not hired because of my appearance



I am getting divorced and my child wants to speak to the magistrate



I am unable to receive my pension as I don't have proof that I have paid certain contributions

What can the Defender of Rights do?



Investigate



Come up with an amicable settlement



Make recommendations about a situation



Present its observations before the courts



Call for disciplinary proceedings



Put forward proposals for reforming legislation

Where can you meet with a Defender of Rights delegate?

Teams on hand across France

Almost 500 delegates across local areas

There are Defender of Rights delegates available not just across mainland France but also in the French overseas *départements* and regions. You can make an appointment free of charge with your nearest local delegate, who can be found at one of **750 reception points** in *Maisons de la Justice et du Droit* (legal advice centres/MJD), *Points d'accès au droit* (free drop-in centres for anyone looking for guidance on legal matters/PAD), prefectures or town/city halls for example. What is more, to enable prisoners to defend their rights, one or more delegates are also appointed for each prison.

Almost 300 staff working in Paris

Staff at the Defender of Rights give complainants the benefit of **their skills and expertise**. They process the cases filed with the institution and come up with **fitting solutions**.

80%

of complaints lodged with the Defender of Rights are received by the delegates at their local offices



See the list of offices:

www.defenseurdesdroits.fr

Think your rights haven't been respected?

Get in touch with the
Defender of Rights for free



Via the delegates, at:

www.defenseurdesdroits.fr /
"Comment obtenir des réponses?" (How can you get answers?) or in a reception point.



Via freepost, so no need for a stamp:

Défenseur des droits – Libre réponse 71120 –
75342 Paris Cedex 07 France



Via our online form, at:

www.defenseurdesdroits.fr /
"Saisir le Défenseur des droits" (Refer a case to the Defender of Rights)



You can also get information
by calling +33 (0)9 69 39 00 00 or making
an appointment with a delegate.



Don't forget to provide us with all the documents (copies of administrative documents, letters, emails, eye-witness accounts, etc.) that the Defender of Rights will need to examine your case.

DID YOU KNOW?

You do not have to pay anything to contact the Defender of Rights.

The Defender of Rights cannot call into question a judicial decision.

Its referral does not interrupt or suspend the time limits for civil, administrative or criminal proceedings or those concerning administrative appeals or appeals to the court.

Find out all our news at:



www.defenseurdesdroits.fr



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