

Your right to **rights**



The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities



Easy English brochure

**For more information about the Charter, contact the
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights
Commission. Look at page 6 for contact details.**



The Charter is a law in Victoria.

The government and people in charge must follow the Charter.



The Charter says you have rights

- You have the right to be treated fairly if you are accused of breaking the law. Sometimes, a lawyer from Victoria Legal Aid will be able to help you.
- If you have to go to court and cannot speak or understand English someone, like an interpreter, must help you understand.
- You must choose to have medicine or therapy or be in a science experiment, no one can force you to do these things.
- You can stay in or leave Victoria when you want to.
- You can keep your life private.
- You can keep things that belong to you.
- Sometimes, an order from the court can change these rights, but only after you have had your say in court and only if the decision is fair.

You must be free to:



- Believe what you want, for example, religion. You can do this in public or private.



- Look for information. A court order or a different law might change this.



- Join in with groups or unions.



- Take part in public life, for example, vote in elections, get a job in government.



- You are free to go where you want in Victoria. You must not break any laws.



- You are free to say what you think and want, for example, talking, writing or with art.

The Charter looks after:



- Families



- Children



- Culture. This means you can have different family, religious or language backgrounds. You can enjoy culture. You can talk about your religion and use your language.



- Aboriginal culture. This includes the language, people, land and materials.



The Charter says people must treat each other in a humane way. This means people are kind and understanding to each other.



People must not seriously hurt each other. For example **people must not:**

- Torture. This means you must not do something to badly damage a person's mind or body.
- Degrade. This means you can not bring people down by what you say or what you do. People must treat each other with respect.
- Force people into a religion.
- Force people to work. For example, make a person a slave. You are a slave when another person has complete control of you. Only an order from the court can force people to work.



Rights in the criminal system

A person in the criminal system is accused of doing a crime. The criminal system includes the police, law courts and prison.

Some of the rights in the Charter are:

- You must get fair treatment, for example, a punishment must always be correct and fair for the crime.
- You must know why the police arrest you about a crime. The police might say you are charged with a crime.
- You must get information in a way you can understand, for example, in your own language.
- A person is innocent until there is proof they are guilty.
- You will only go to court and be punished once for a crime.

What will the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission do?

- Make sure people in Victoria understand the Charter.
- Check that governments in Victoria follow the Charter.



More Information

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission



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Phone Interpreter: (03) 92801995

Please note: This information is only a guide. You might want to talk to a lawyer for more information.

Your privacy: The Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission Victoria keeps your information private. You can also look at the website, www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

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