

ACTIONS
SPEAK LOUDER
THAN WORDS

#RightToProtest

A quick guide on your

right to
protest



FOUNDATION FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS

You have the **right** to **protest**

But police may illegally violate this right – by arrest, use of force and criminalisation of protest.

Stand up for your **right to protest!**

Knowing your rights is the most powerful weapon you have.



Can we protest anytime?

Yes (mostly), but not if the protest is likely to be violent or seriously disrupt traffic.

Can we protest anywhere?

Yes – any public road or park. But you need permission to protest outside a court or inside private property.

Do we need a permit before we protest?

No – the Regulation of Gatherings Act says you do NOT need permission to protest.

All you need to do is to fill out a form at the municipality: choose any time and date for your protest, give 7 days' notice.

Meeting the police

- The police may call you to come to a meeting to talk about your plans for the protest and ensure everyone is safe.
- The police are allowed to make a change to the planned route of the march, or starting time.
- Be polite, but stand up for your rights!

How do police abuse the law?

The law does not allow the police to demand the following:

- Letter of permission from the local councillor or traditional authority, or a confirmation letter from the body that you are protesting against.
- Pay a fee to get approval for the protest.
- Pay a deposit or sign an indemnity in case of property damage.
- The police may even try to discourage you from protesting or tell you to go somewhere else to voice your demands rather than on the street. The police do not have the right to do this.



How do we challenge the police in court?

If you believe that your protest should not have been prohibited, you can apply to a Magistrate's Court or the High Court and ask for permission to protest. Contact a human rights lawyer at one of these organisations for help:

Right2Protest Project

Tel: 0800 212 111 (toll-free)

Centre for Applied Legal Studies

Tel: 011 717 8600

Lawyers for Human Rights

Tel: 012 320 2943

Legal Aid South Africa

Tel: 011 877 2000

Legal Resources Centre

Tel: 011 836 9831

ProBono.Org

Tel: 011 339 6080

Public Protector

Tel: 012 366 7000

Right2Know Campaign

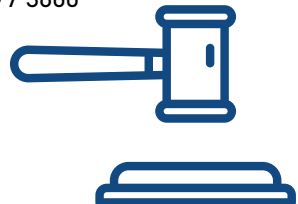
Tel: 021 447 1000

**Socio-Economic Rights
Institute of South Africa**

Tel: 011 356 5860

**South African Human
Rights Commission**

Tel: 011 877 3600







How do I protect my rights and keep myself safe?

- Plan your protest properly. You are responsible for safety as much as the police are.
- Notify the police of your protest in time.
- Keep a copy of all documents, like the notice form and minutes of meetings.
- Ask the authorities to tell you everything in writing.
- If you want to hand over a petition, then tell the target person beforehand.
- Take photos and videos and record audio of meetings with the police on your phone.
- Try to have a lawyer or a trusted comrade on hand outside the protest so they can help you if you are arrested.
- You can file a written complaint against the police with the Independent Police Investigative Directorate.



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