



**Ensuring the rules
of professional
conduct are followed
by security officials**

When it comes to the law, we are all equal.

Défenseur des droits
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

One institution, five areas of intervention

**“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 **45%**

of complaint files received by the institution on the subject of security ethics concern **violence and instances where protocol has not been followed.**

Ensuring the rules of professional conduct are followed by security officials

The rules of professional conduct governing the work of public and private security officials alike are set forth in various codes and charters. They cover such matters as professional secrecy and discretion, integrity, discernment, impartiality, respect for the population and rules governing the use of force for example.

In France, the Defender of Rights is the authority in charge of ensuring these rules of good practice are followed.

Which professionals are concerned?

- National and municipal police officers
- Gendarmes
- Prison administration staff
- Customs officers
- Public transport surveillance officers
- Private security service officials

For what types of professional misconduct?

- Disproportionate use of force
- Offensive behaviour (inappropriate words or gestures, insults, threats, disrespect)
- Abusive body search
- An identity check under abnormal circumstances
- Not enabling a formal complaint to be lodged
- Unfounded restraint measure or deprivation of freedom (arrest, detention, custody, detainment, etc.)

Under what circumstances can you refer to the Defender of Rights?

- If you consider yourself to have been a **victim** of abusive behaviour on the part of a security professional on French soil (or if you are the victim's beneficiary or heir)
- If you have **witnessed** acts constituting such misconduct



**My requests
to see a
doctor
while I was
in custody
went
unheeded**



**I was
insulted
during an
identity
check**



**I was prevented from
filming an arrest**

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**

Delegates: a unique service on your doorstep

The Defender of Rights is shored up by a network of some 500 delegates

There are Defender of Rights delegates available nationwide. Anyone looking for assistance with asserting their rights can contact them free of charge at more than **750 reception points** in mainland France and overseas. These can be found 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.

Delegates can:



**Listen
to your concerns**



**Guide you
in your procedures**



**Help you to exercise
your rights**



**Forward your case
to the Head Office in Paris**

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 during 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 statutory timeframes 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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