

The Rights Removal Bill: What it means for you

An Easy Read Guide



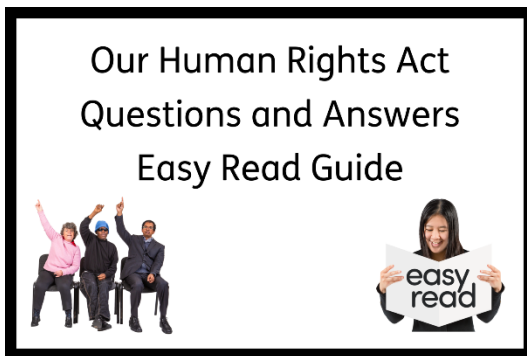
This Easy Read guide was checked by Pembrokeshire People First.

What is in this guide?



In this guide, we will tell you about the **Government's** plan to replace the Human Rights Act. This is the **law** which protects our human rights in the UK.

We will talk about how these changes could affect you.



The British Institute of Human Rights has made an Easy Read guide with lots of information about our Human Rights Act and how it works.

[Click here to read it.](#)



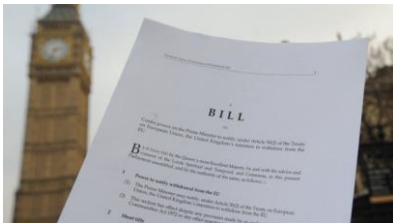
You can click on the questions below to jump to part you want to read.

What is in this guide?

- Hard words explained
- What has happened so far?
- What have people said about these changes?
- Changes to the **law** and what this means for you
 - The **duty** to protect your rights will be less important.
 - The **duty** to use other **laws** in a way that looks after human rights will be taken away.
 - Your rights could be limited without thinking about what it means for you.
 - It will be harder to challenge decisions that have not looked after your rights.
 - If your human rights have not been looked after, your past behaviour will have an impact on how things are put right.
- How will the changes affect people across the UK?
- What can you do about the Rights **Removal Bill**?

Hard Words Explained

If you read a word that is hard to understand and it is in the colour **red**, you can read the meaning of the word here.



Bill

A **Bill** is a plan to make a new **law**, or to change a **law** we already have. A **Bill** must be agreed on by **Parliament** before it can become a **law**.



Duty

An action someone must do because it is part of their job.



Expert

A person who knows a lot about something.



Government

The **Government** are the people responsible for running the country. This includes the Prime Minister, ministers and civil servants working in government departments, such as the Ministry of Justice.



Law

A **law** is a set of rules decided by **Parliament** which says what people can and cannot do. If you break the **law**, you could be punished.



Parliament

The UK **Parliament** is made up of two parts: the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They work together to make **laws** and check what the UK **Government** is doing.



Public services

Public services are organisations that serve the public. They are usually paid for by the **Government**. The NHS, local authorities, police and public schools are examples of **public services**.



Removal

Removal means taking something away.



Safeguarding

Protecting people's health, wellbeing, safety and human rights.

What has happened so far?



In 2020, the **Government** asked a team of **experts** to tell them if the Human Rights Act was working well.



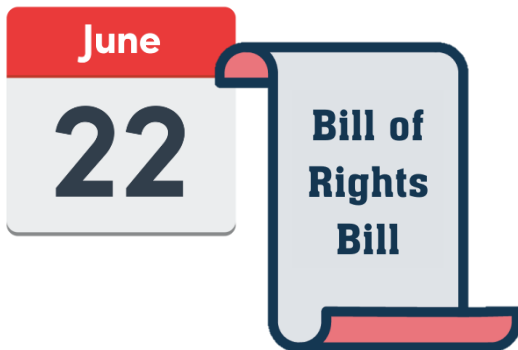
The team asked lots of people what they thought about the Human Rights Act. They wrote a report saying what they found out.



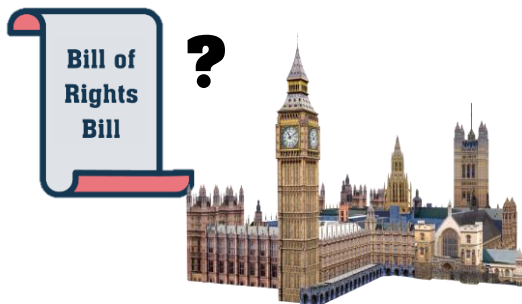
In December 2021, the **Government** shared a plan to change the Human Rights Act into a new **law** called a **Bill** of Rights.



The **Government** asked people to tell them what they thought about their plan.



On the 22nd of June 2022, the **Government** shared the new **Bill** of Rights with **Parliament** and the public.



Now **Parliament** is thinking about the new **Bill** of Rights before they decide if they want it to become a **law**.

What have people said about these new changes?



The **experts** said most people told them they like the Human Rights Act. They said no big changes were needed.



The **Government** asked people to say what they thought about a new **Bill** of Rights. The plan was not easy to understand and they made it very hard to respond.



The Joint Committee on Human Rights is a group of people in **Parliament** who look at human rights in the UK.



More than 200 people and groups signed a letter to the Joint Committee on Human Rights. The letter told them about the problems with the way the **Government** was getting people's views on their plan.



[Click here to find out more about the letter.](#)



More than 12,000 people and organisations told the **Government** what they thought about a new **Bill** of Rights.



Most people said the **law** did not need to change and thought a new **Bill** of Rights was a bad idea.



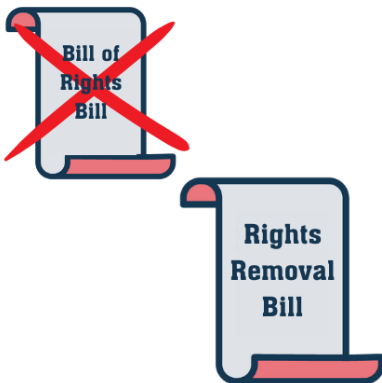
The Joint Committee on Human Rights has also said there is no need to make a new **Bill** of Rights.



The **Government** has not listened to what the **experts**, the public, and the Joint Committee on Human Rights have said.



The **Government** has decided to go ahead with their **Bill** of Rights even though most people do not want it.



Lots of people are saying that the new **Bill** of Rights should be called the Rights **Removal Bill** instead. This is because we think it will take away, or remove, our rights.

What will change and what does it mean for you?

The **duty** to protect your rights will be less important.



If we are at risk of harm, the Human Rights Act puts a legal **duty** on staff in **public services** to take action to protect our rights. This is sometimes called **safeguarding**.



The right to life

This means staff must make sure your rights are safe. For example, they must take steps to protect your life if there is a big chance you could die.

[Click here to read more about your right to life.](#)



The Rights **Removal Bill** will stop judges in courts from being able to make staff in **public services** take action to protect your rights.



It will also give staff in **public services** an excuse if they have not acted to protect someone's rights. For example, not having enough money or staff to do this.



This change will make it more confusing for staff when they make decisions about our rights.



It will mean that more people's human rights are not looked after. This puts our lives and safety at risk.

What will change and what does it mean for you?

The **duty** to use other **laws** in a way that looks after human rights will be taken away.



The Human Rights Act says that **Government** and **public services** must look after your human rights when they are using other **laws**.



Mental health **laws** give staff the power to make lots of decisions about you. They must use the Human Rights Act to help them make sure their decisions under other **laws** look after your human rights.



[Click here](#) to find out more about mental health laws in England and Wales.

[Click here](#) to find out more about mental health laws in Scotland.



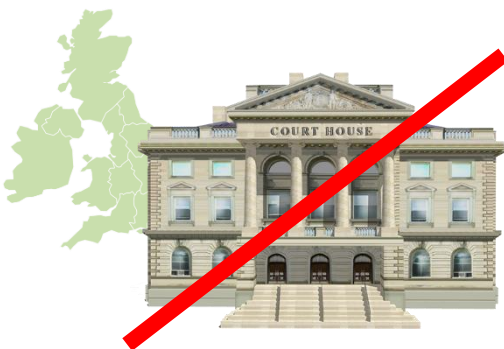
If this does not happen, you can go to a court to ask a judge to look at how the other **law** has been used.



Judges are not allowed to change **laws**. They can make sure that other **laws** are used in a way that respects your rights. Some **laws** were written a long time ago.



The Rights **Removal Bill** will get rid of this **duty**. This will mean that staff in **public services** can use other **laws** in ways that do not look after your human rights.



If you want to go to a court to challenge the way staff have made decisions about your rights using another **law**, you will not be able to do this in the UK.



You could still challenge the decision in the European Court of Human Rights, which is in France. This is very expensive and it takes a very long time.



This change will make it more confusing for staff when they are using other **laws** which could affect your rights.



It will mean that more people's human rights are not looked after. This puts our safety and wellbeing at risk.

What will change and what does it mean for you?

Your rights could be limited without thinking about what this means for you.



The **Government** and staff in **public services** can sometimes make decisions that limit some of your rights protected by the Human Rights Act.



But, they can only limit your rights if they have thought about you as an individual. They must think about all the different options and pick the best option for your freedom.

This makes sure your rights are not limited more than they need to be.



If you think your rights have been taken away, you can ask staff to tell you how they have thought about your human rights.

For example, Tim and Sylvia used this part of the Human Rights Act. They talked to their social worker to challenge a decision which took away their right to private and family life.



[Click here to watch a video about Tim and Sylvia.](#)



You can also go to court to ask a judge to look at what has happened with your rights. They can decide if your human rights were looked after.



The Rights **Removal Bill** will tell judges how to make their decision. Judges will no longer get to decide for themselves using the information they have.



This change will mean that courts will decide that the **Government** or staff in **public services** have made the right decision more often.



Decisions or policies that limit people's rights could be made in the same way for everyone, even though we are all different.



This change will make it more confusing for staff when they are making decisions that limit your human rights.



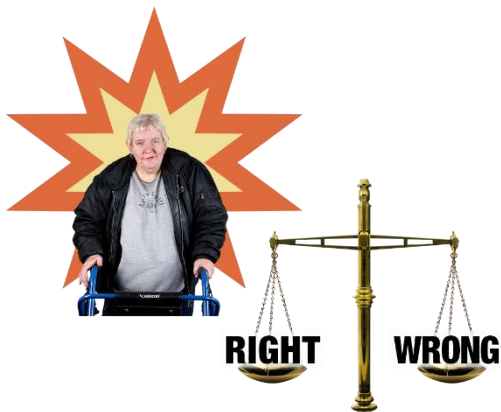
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What will change and what does it mean for you?

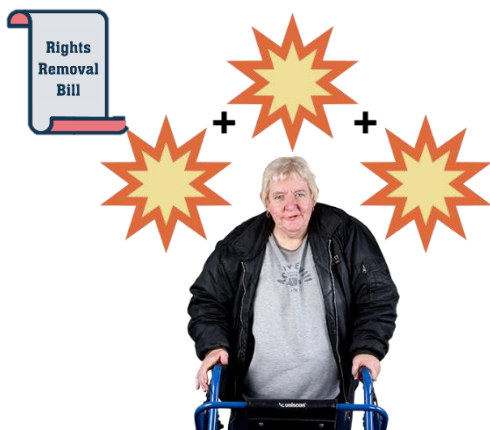
It will be harder to challenge decisions that have not looked after your rights.



If you think your human rights have not been looked after, you can ask a court in the UK to look at what has happened.



If you show that what happened made things worse for you, the judge will have to think and decide if your rights were looked after.



The Rights **Removal Bill** says that a judge will only decide if your rights were looked after if you show that the decision made things a lot worse for you.



The Rights **Removal Bill** will make it harder for you to ask a court to look at what has happened with your rights.



It will be harder to put things right where your human rights were not looked after. Or to stop the same thing happening to someone else.



You could still challenge the decision in the European Court of Human Rights. This is very expensive and it takes a very long time.



Most staff in **public services** want to look after your rights. If it is harder to get things put right in courts, staff might end up making decisions which do not look after your rights.

What will change and what does it mean for you?

If your human rights have not been looked after, your past behaviour will have an impact on how things are put right.

Human Rights Act



The Human Rights Act says that judges must try their best to put things right when your human rights have not been looked after.



For example, the decision that did not look after your rights could be changed. You could be given money to make up for how you have been treated.



Everyone should have things put right for them if their human rights have not been looked after.

Rights Removal Bill



The Rights **Removal Bill** will make judges think about your past behaviour when they are deciding how things should be put right for you.



They could think about your past behaviour, even if it was a long time ago. Even if it has nothing to do with what is happening now.



This means that things may not be put right for you properly if your human rights have not been looked after.

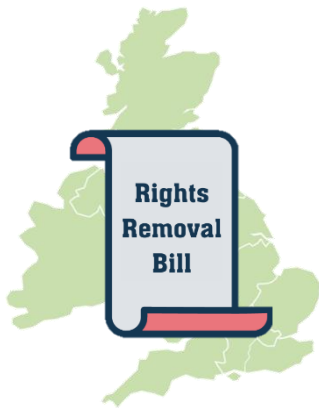


This change is not fair. It makes some people's rights more important than others.

How will the changes affect people across the UK?



The Human Rights Act is an important **law** in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.



The **Government** has not properly thought about how the changes in the Rights **Removal Bill** will work in different parts of the country.



The **Governments** in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have said they do not think the Rights **Removal Bill** is needed. The UK **Government** is not listening to them.

What can you do about the Rights **Removal Bill**?



At BIHR, we are very worried that the Rights **Removal Bill** will mean that people's rights are not looked after more often, and things will not be put right when that happens.

If you are worried as well, here are some things you can do to help:

1. [Click here to write to your MP.](#)



We have made a template letter you can send to your MP to tell them to protect our Human Rights Act.

This is not available in Easy Read.

2. Talk to people you know about the Rights **Removal Bill** and share this guide.



The more people know what is happening, the more powerful our voice will be.



3. Keep yourself updated on what happens next.

BIHR shares lots of news about the Rights **Removal Bill** and how you can take action to stop it.



- [Click here to join our mailing list.](#)
- [Click here to sign up to our monthly newsletter.](#)
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The British Institute of **Human Rights**

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