

What is the Human Rights Commission (HRC)?

The HRC was established under section 116 of the 2009 Constitution as an independent body responsible for promoting understanding and observance of human rights in the Cayman Islands.

What do I do if my rights have been breached or infringed?

The Commission will receive 1) all complaints of breaches or infringements of any section of the Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities committed by a public official; 2) all complaints of breaches or infringements of common law and statutory human rights and freedoms committed by public officials; and 3) all complaints that any international human rights treaty extended to the Cayman Island has been breached or infringed by the actions of public officials or by legislation to which the treaty applies.

It is important to note that the Commission will only accept complaints of alleged breaches of the Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities which have occurred after 6 November, 2012. This may be a one off event that has occurred after 6 November 2012 or may be a continuing infringement of a right. In all cases, unless there is clear evidence that the alleged infringement is continuing, the Commission will not accept a complaint in relation to an alleged infringement that has taken place more than one (1) year prior to the date of the complaint.

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promoting, protecting and preserving human rights



NO PUNISHMENT WITHOUT LAW

Cayman Islands
Human Rights Commission



In Simple Terms

This right means that you cannot be found guilty of a crime which was not against the law when the crime was committed.

Under this right crimes and penalties can only be prescribed by law. Such law must be clear in its definition so that people know what acts or omissions are criminal in nature.

It is also against the law for the courts to give you a greater sentence than was prescribed by the law at the time you committed an offence.

This right is a limited right.

Type of Right

Limited Rights

Limited rights are rights where the specific circumstances in which this right can be lawfully restricted or interfered with are set out in full in the definition of the right itself.

A Few Examples

- An adult could not be found guilty and punished for consuming alcohol on a Sunday in your private home because it is not a criminal offence in the Cayman Islands.
- A person cannot be found guilty and punished for owning more than one vehicle because it is not a criminal offence in the Cayman Islands.

What are human rights?

Human rights are the essential rights and freedoms that belong to all individuals regardless of their nationality and citizenship. These rights are considered fundamental to maintaining a fair and just society. The preamble to the 2009 Constitution details the values of the Cayman Islands upon which this legislation was drafted.

How are human rights applied in the Cayman Islands?

Human rights in the Cayman Islands only apply vertically which means that a person's rights are enforced against the Government only and not against private individuals.

It should be noted however, the Government will have to take account of the human rights set out in the Constitution when passing local laws, so there will be 'indirect' horizontal application of human rights principles to private individuals. This means that they will not pass laws which knowingly allow one private individual to violate another private individual's rights even though you could not take the human rights case to court.

