

8. Law and Order

The Irish Police Service

The police service in the Republic of Ireland is called An Garda Síochána (The Guardians of the Peace), usually referred to as the Garda or plural Gardaí (pronounced as gar-dee). It is responsible for all criminal investigations, the enforcement of all traffic law, the maintenance of public order, immigration control and it enforces drug laws. The force is unarmed and very friendly and serves the whole community. However it does not always require a crisis to contact the Gardaí – if you find yourself in difficulty you can contact the Gardaí and you will find them co-operative and helpful. The Garda emergency numbers are 999 or 112.

Any person who is a victim of crime will receive prompt attention from the Gardai who will address their needs in an understanding manner. If you are a victim and are unable to communicate in English, Gardai will provide free translation services so that you will receive the same quality of service.

If you are stopped by the Gardai, you should co-operate and supply all the identification or documentation asked of you. It is advisable to be polite and stay calm at all times. The Garda should tell you the reason you are being stopped – if not, you should ask. In the unlikely event that you are arrested you must be treated fairly, politely and with respect. You will be informed of the reason for arrest and cautioned. The Gardaí are governed by a strict code of

behaviour that recognises your rights, including the right to legal advice (see below). An Ethnic Liaison Officer can be contacted at your local Garda station or at any of the regional headquarters listed below.

Contact Details

An Garda Síochána

Carlow

Tel: 059 9131505

Kilkenny

Tel: 056 7775000

Tipperary

Tel: 0504 25100

Wexford

Tel: 053 9165200

Waterford

Tel: 051 874888

Garda Confidential Line

Free phone: 1800 666 111

Garda Racial and Intercultural Office

Harcourt Square

Dublin 2

Tel: 01 6663150

Legal Advice

If you are in need of legal advice, you can contact a solicitor. The contact numbers and addresses can be found in the Golden Pages. If you can't afford a solicitor, you may qualify for legal aid, usually in civil cases only. In criminal cases, legal aid is awarded by a judge. Legal aid is available to any foreign national, regardless of their status, if their income is below a certain level (although it should be noted that there are often lengthy waiting lists). Free Legal Advice Clinics are often held in CICs.

If you are an asylum seeker going through the asylum process you can access free legal services from the Refugee Legal Service (see Chapter 10 Immigration Issues). For your nearest Legal Aid Board see web address on this page or contact your local CIC.

Contact Details

Free Legal Advice Clinics

Carlow

Tel: 059 9138750 or 1800 747 748

Kilkenny

Tel: 056 7762755 or 1800 222 121

North Tipperary

Tel: 0504 22399

South Tipperary

Tel: 052-22267

Waterford

Tel: 051 351133

Wexford

Tel: 053 9142012

Legal Aid Board

www.legalaidboard.ie



Discrimination

The law says you cannot be discriminated against directly or indirectly in the provision of a wide range of goods and services (such as accommodation, entertainment, credit and banking facilities, transport and education) on any of the following grounds: gender, marital status, family status, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or race. There is also a law that bans the public use of words, written material or behaviour, which may result in hatred of particular groups.

If you are being harassed, you can contact the Gardaí for advice.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, you can complain to the service provider within two months of the incident, and if their response is not satisfactory, to the Equality Tribunal within 6 months. For initial advice on any case, you can contact the Equality Authority.

If you are of a victim of, or a witness to a racist incident, you can report it to the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI). This is a government body that monitors the level of racism in Irish society, and they can refer you to all the relevant authorities.

Contact Details

Equality Authority

2 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2
Tel.: 01 4173333
Lo-call No. 1890 245545
www.equality.ie

Equality Tribunal

3 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2
Tel.: 01 4774100
Lo-call No. 1890 344424

NCCRI

3rd Floor
Jervis House
Jervis Street
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 858 8000
Email: info@nccri.ie
www.nccri.ie