



Know Your Rights

Fact sheet for Romani (Gypsy), Roma, and Irish Travellers seeking legal support

About The Traveller Movement

The Traveller Movement (TM) is a UK charity challenging discrimination and promoting inclusion of ethnic Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities. TM facilitates legal education, strategic litigation and direct advocacy to support their access to justice and fair treatment.

This factsheet is for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Travellers seeking support* from legal professionals.

Trust and cultural awareness

Find lawyers who know about your community's culture, history and traditions. If they need more information, refer them [here](#), or to the [2023 national survey](#) on racism and discrimination experienced by Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Travellers.

Practical steps

- Always ask questions; ask for an interpreter if you need one.
- Bring a trusted person if helpful.
- Prepare beforehand by asking what documents will be needed.
- Discuss the best methods for keeping in touch, such as Whatsapp, voice notes, emails, letters or phone calls. Make it clear if you struggle with reading and writing.
- Prepare a list of questions. Some examples might include the following:

My rights:

- What are my rights?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of my case?
- (Where you are considering making a complaint about any issue or about how you have been treated) what are the advantages and disadvantages of me making a complaint?

Cost:

- How much will you charge?
- Am I entitled to Legal Aid? What paperwork is needed for my Legal Aid application?
- If Legal Aid is not available, can I pay you in instalments?
- (Where a court is involved in your case) will I have to pay court costs? How much will these be? Does your firm offer alternatives – e.g. 'no win, no fee' or use of 'after-the-event insurance'?

*Legal support includes advice and representation on discrimination law, contract disputes, accommodation, family law, medical negligence, and criminal matters.

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Practical steps (continued)

Process:

- What will you do with the information I have given you?
- Who will you share it with?
- Please explain the meaning of the documents I must sign.
- Can I see the notes taken at our meeting?
- Clarify what you mean by 'confidential'?
- Do you think I will get a good outcome to my complaint?
- What steps will you take to help me?
- What will happen next?
- How long must I wait for my issue to be resolved?
- How will you keep me informed?
- When will you contact me again?

Things you should know

Lawyers' conduct is regulated by independent bodies to maintain high standards and confidentiality.

Discrimination on grounds of race, colour, ethnicity (i.e. being a Romani (Gypsy), Roma or Irish Traveller), nationality, citizenship, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, relationship status, disability, age, religion, belief or pregnancy/maternity is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

Solicitors in England and Wales are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). You have the right to complain to the SRA and to the Legal Ombudsman if dissatisfied with your lawyer's service.

Barristers in England and Wales are regulated by the Bar Standards Board (BSB). Contact the BSB if dissatisfied with your barrister's conduct.

Solicitors and barristers have duties to you and to the court and must always act with independence, honesty and integrity.

Contact The Traveller Movement on
020 7607 2002 for more help.