

Five legal provisions that every woman should know

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1. Free legal assistance

Make use of your entitlement to free legal counsel. Women frequently go to the police station without a lawyer to have their statements recorded, and they risk being misquoted or having their statements tampered with. The cops may even take the entire incident lightly and not file an FIR. As a result, you must have a lawyer present when filing the FIR. According to a Delhi High Court decision, anytime a rape is reported, the SHO must notify the Delhi Legal Services Authority.

2. Right to privacy during statement recording

A woman who has been raped can record her statement before the district magistrate when the case is being tried under section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code, and no one else needs to be present. Alternatively, she can record the statement with only one police officer and one female constable in a convenient location that is not crowded and eliminates the risk of a fourth person overhearing the testimony. The cops are required by law to respect the woman's right to privacy. It is critical that the person feels at ease and free of stress while recounting the incident.

3. After sunset, no arrests can be made

A woman cannot be arrested after sunset or before sunrise, according to a Supreme Court order. There have been several reports of women being harassed by police officers in the early hours of the morning, but all of this may be avoided if you exercise your right to be present at the police station only during the day. Even if a female cop is accompanying the officers, the police cannot arrest a woman at night. If the woman has committed a serious offence, the police must obtain written permission from the magistrate explaining why the arrest is essential at night.

4. You can't be called to the police station

Section 160 of the Criminal Procedure Code states that women cannot be summoned to the police station for questioning. This rule gives Indian women the right not to be physically present at a police station during an interrogation. The police can question a woman at her home in the presence of a female constable and family members or friends. So, the next time you're called to the police station for questions or interrogation because you've been harassed, use this Supreme Court guideline to exercise your right and remind the policemen about it.

5. Employers must safeguard

Every employer is responsible for establishing a Sexual Harassment Accusations Committee inside their organization to handle such complaints. According to a Supreme Court directive, it is obligatory for all enterprises, public and private, to establish these committees to address sexual harassment complaints. It is also required that the committee be led by a woman and have at least half of its members be women. In addition, one of the members should be from a women's welfare organization.