

Have you been treated unfairly because of your HIV or TB status?

You are not alone

Legal Aid South Africa offers legal help, at NO COST, to anyone who has been discriminated against because of their HIV or TB status. Call the Legal Aid Advice Line on 0800 110 110 for help with your issue.

Important information to remember

- Before making a complaint, remember that the legal process can be long and difficult.
- Make sure that you get legal help within 30 days of any discrimination because of your HIV or TB status at your school/college or workplace. All other legal claims in South Africa have to be brought within 3 years of the date when the discrimination happened.

People living with HIV and TB often experience stigma and/or discrimination

Discrimination can happen in the workplace, at educational institutions, clinics and even within your family.

We are often unaware of our rights, and in some instances we cannot afford legal assistance. Legal Aid South Africa provides legal help at no cost to those who suffer discrimination on the basis of their HIV or TB status.

For any legal advice call the Legal Aid Advice Line.

Legal Aid Advice Line
0800 110 110



What is stigma?

Stigma is a form of **stereotyping** or **generalising** that happens when you **label, blame or judge** someone or others based on your own **ideas or beliefs**. You can also **blame or judge** yourself (internal stigma) or **stigmatised others** (external stigma). For example, people living with HIV (PLHIV) may blame themselves for their status or be **labelled and judged** by others. Stigma causes us to **discriminate** against ourselves or others.

Internal or 'felt' stigma

- Is part of the process of dealing with being diagnosed with HIV or TB. Feelings can include frustration, sadness, self-blame, self-doubt or regret. These feelings can bring down your self-esteem.
- Increases the fear of being discriminated against by others. Anxiety makes people change their behaviour because they think that others will discriminate against them. For example, you avoid community events or going to church or the clinic. Severe cases can lead to depression and suicidal tendencies.

External Stigma

- External stigma includes gossiping about others because of how they look or their health status. Signs of external stigma often include using hurtful words or gestures.

Discrimination

- Acting against others because of one's own biased ideas or stereotypes.
- Disrespecting the rights of others.
- Verbal or physical abuse or harassment of someone.
- Separating or isolating someone (for example, at the clinic, church or work, or ignoring a family member).
- Blaming (for example, for being HIV positive or for bringing HIV or TB into the home).

For counselling call the AIDS helpline.



AIDS helpline
0800 012 322