The Human Rights Act 1993 protects people in New Zealand from discrimination in a number of areas of life. Discrimination occurs when a person is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances. The Human Rights Amendment Act 2001 made significant changes to the Human Rights Act 1993. The Human Rights Act comprises eight parts.

**Part I:**

Sets out the functions of the Human Rights Commission; the Commission was established by the Human Rights Commission Act 1977. It is empowered under the Human Rights Act to protect human rights in general accordance with United Nations Covenants and Conventions and has a range of functions and powers in order to do this. The Human Rights Amendment Act 2001 made several significant changes to the functions and powers of the Commission and also established the Office of Human Rights Proceedings.

**Part 1A:**

Sets out the Bill of Rights Act non-discrimination standard; it deals with discrimination by those in the public sector, except in relation to employment, sexual harassment, racial disharmony, racial harassment, and victimisation.

**Part II:**

Sets out the Human Rights Act non-discrimination standard; it deals with discrimination by those in the private sector, and those in the public sector in relation to employment, sexual harassment, racial disharmony, racial harassment, and victimisation; it sets out the prohibited grounds of discrimination (these are reproduced in full in [Appendix 2](http://www.justice.govt.nz/publications/publications-archived/2002/the-non-discrimination-standards-for-government-and-the-public-sector-guidelines-on-how-to-apply-the-standards-and-who-is-covered-march-2002/appendix-2-prohibited-grounds-of-discrimination)), the areas of life in which such discrimination is prohibited, and various exceptions where discrimination is lawful.

**Part III:**

Deals with complaints processes through the Human Rights Commission and remedies.

**Part IV:**

Establishes a Human Rights Review Tribunal and provides for its functions and powers.

**Part V:**

Outlines the powers of the Commission in relation to inquiries (sections 127 to130).

**Part VI:**

This part deals with the incitement of Racial Disharmony.

**Part VII:**

The part includes miscellaneous provisions.