Magna Carta

The Magna Carta was sealed by King John in 1215 after he was forced to agree to the demands of his barons of England, whom he had oppressed. The document represents official recognition of the rule of law, including due process and many other legal principles we take for granted. The idea that those who have power must also follow the laws of the land has developed over 800 years, representing equality and liberty before and through the law for citizens today.

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Clause 17 Access to Justice

Communia placita non sequantur curiam nostram, set teneantur in aliquo loco certo Common pleas shall not follow our court, but shall be held in some fixed place.

Clause 20 Punishment Should Fit the Crime

Liber homo non amercietur pro parvo delicto, nisi secundum modum delicti; et pro magno delicto amercietur secundum magnitudinem delicti...

A free man is not to be amerced for a small offence except in proportion to the nature of the offence, and for a great offence he is to be amerced in accordance with its magnitude...

Clause 40 Due Process

Nulli vendemus, nulli negabimus, aut differemus rectum aut justiciam To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay, right or justice.

Clause 45 A Qualified and Independent Judiciary

Nos non faciemus justiciarios, constabularios, vicecomites, vel ballivos, nisi de talibus qui sciant legem regni et eam bene velint observare

We will appoint as justices, constables, sheriffs, or bailiffs only such as know the law of the realm and mean to observe it well.

