

The Freedmen's Bureau, formally known as the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, was established in 1865 by Congress to help millions of former black slaves and poor whites in the South in the aftermath of the Civil War. The Freedmen's Bureau provided food, housing and medical aid, established schools and offered legal assistance. It also attempted to settle former slaves on land confiscated or abandoned during the war. However, the bureau was prevented from fully carrying out its programs due to a shortage of funds and personnel, along with the politics of race and Reconstruction.

List 3 items the Freedmen's Bureau Provided for African Americans following the Civil War

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Freedmen's Bureau's Successes and Failures

The bureau's achievements varied from one location to another and from one agent to the next. Over its course of existence, the bureau was underfunded and understaffed, with just 900 agents at its peak.

Bureau agents, who acted essentially as social workers and were frequently the only federal representatives in Southern communities, were subjected to ridicule and violence from whites (including terrorist organizations such as the [Ku Klux Klan](#)), who viewed the agents as interfering in local affairs by trying to assist blacks. While some agents were corrupt or incompetent, others were hardworking and brave people who made significant contributions.

During its years of operation, the Freedmen's Bureau fed millions of people, built hospitals and provided medical aid, negotiated labor contracts for ex-slaves and settled labor disputes. It also helped former slaves legalize marriages and locate lost relatives, and assisted black veterans.

The bureau also was instrumental in building thousands of schools for blacks, and helped to found such colleges as [Howard University](#) in Washington, D.C., [Fisk University](#) in Nashville, [Tennessee](#), and [Hampton University](#) in Hampton, Virginia. The bureau frequently worked in conjunction with the American Missionary Association and other private charity organizations.

Additionally, the bureau tried, with little success, to promote land redistribution. However, most of the confiscated or abandoned Confederate land was eventually restored to the original owners, so there was little opportunity for black land ownership, which was seen as a means to success in society.

List 3 successes of the Bureau

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List 2 Failures of the Bureau

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRf2sYOF8oQ>

Why Did Congress end the Freedmen's Bureau? (2 reasons)

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odDH2n8bHCE>

What obstacles did schools face in the South?