

Overview	Legal Change	Action required
<p>Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC) Changes to employment law in the DIFC free-zone.</p>	<p>The DIFC is one of the free-zones in the UAE. Free-zones are mainly free to set their own rules and regulations. The DIFC has announced its intention to consult on introducing new labour laws that will bring it more into line with the Federal Labour Laws of the UAE, which currently do not apply in the DIFC.</p> <p>The potential changes are set out below. The date they come into force is not yet known.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Application</p>	<p>The new law will apply to short and part-time employees; those who can show a close connection to the DIFC; those who have agreed to the new law in their employment contract; and employees seconded to the DIFC.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Duties of Employees</p>	<p>Employees are stated to have duties to the employer, including: to serve faithfully; to comply with reasonable instructions; to exercise reasonable skill and care; and to keep confidential the employer's confidential information.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Family Friendly Benefits</p>	<p>Paternity leave of up to 5 days for male employees to whom a child is born or adopted under 5 years old. Male employees entitled to time off to attend antenatal care examinations or adoption proceedings with wives.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Sick Pay</p>	<p>The minimum standards will be: > first 10 days of sick leave – full pay > next 20 days at half pay > additional leave - unpaid You have of course flexibility to agree more favourable terms.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Discrimination</p>	<p>Age and pregnancy will become protected characteristics for discrimination, in addition to the existing categories: sex, race, marital status, nationality, disability or religion. Discrimination claims must be started within 6 months of the event complained of. Employees will be able to require information from the employer to support or determine whether there has been discrimination.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Dismissal</p>	<p>The new law will introduce a reasonableness test for both employer and employee in the dismissal event. It also introduces the concept of a constructive dismissal.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Compensation</p>	<p>The new law will require employers to pay compensation even when the dismissal is 'for cause'.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>
<p>Whistleblowing</p>	<p>The new law will introduce protection for whistleblowers: > from civil or contractual liability for disclosures made; > from dismissal or other detrimental action; and > imposes fines on employers for breaches of up to USD30,000.</p>	<p>Keep informed of developments in anticipation of the new rules.</p>

This is a high level general update only. Legal advice should be obtained on specific circumstances.