



DIFC Courts Welcome

‘The Law for Administration of Non-Muslim Estates in Dubai and Execution of their Wills’

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 1 November, 2017: The procedures for registration and enforcement of DIFC Wills through the DIFC Wills & Probate Registry and the DIFC Courts, enabling non-Muslims the freedom of choice on inheritance matters, have been strengthened following the announcement of ‘The Law for Administration of Non-Muslim Estates in Dubai and Execution of their Wills’.

Commenting on ‘The Law for Administration of Non-Muslim Estates in Dubai and Execution of their Wills’, **Michael Hwang, Chief Justice, DIFC Courts:** “we welcome this new law and applaud the Government of Dubai’s continuing commitment to offering eligible residents and investors the freedom to choose how their Dubai assets are distributed, should they pass away.”

He added: ‘The new streamlined procedure for the enforcement of DIFC registered Wills should now enable probate applications to be processed more smoothly and efficiently. We also believe that the additional clarity that this law brings will bolster confidence for people living, working and investing in Dubai.’

To date, the Registry has registered over 3,000 Wills, and ten Probate Orders have been issued by the DIFC Courts. Under the new law, DIFC Will registration will operate through a “Wills Registry for Non-Muslims”. Transitional provisions in the law state explicitly that all previously registered wills are considered valid.

The new law ensures Probate Orders follow the same system of execution in the Dubai Courts as used successfully for all other DIFC Court Orders. Since the DIFC Courts were formed, over 100 Orders have been presented to the Dubai Courts for execution through a simple, straightforward process. Locking into these tried and tested procedures will make the services

offered by the Registry even more compelling, and give further reassurance to those registering their Wills that their inheritance wishes will be upheld.

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About DIFC Wills & Probate Registry

Legal Basis

The DIFC Wills & Probate Registry (the Registry), a public entity of the Dubai Government, is an ancillary body of DIFC's Dispute Resolution Authority (DRA) established by Resolution No. 4 of 2014 issued by Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the President of the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC). The Registry is established under the jurisdiction of the DIFC Courts, allowing it to operate as a distinct entity.

The Registry provides legislative certainty that a person's Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah-based assets will be distributed as set out in their registered wills. It is the first jurisdiction in the MENA region where one can register an English language will under internationally-recognised common law.

Property Will

The Registry provides an online facility that enables eligible persons to complete and submit for registration a DIFC Will which is specific to their real estate property only. This 'Property Will' can encompass up to five real estate properties (or a share in up to five real estate properties) that are situated in either the Emirate of Dubai or Ras Al Khaimah. The online facility referred to as the 'Property Will Portal' is only available via this website. To complete the registration process you must make an appointment to attend the Registry to sign the Property Will and have it witnessed.

The online facility provides eligible resident and non-resident property owners with a simple, cost-effective way to pass on their assets. To access the template and for easy registration, appointments visit www.difcprobate.ae

Virtual Registry

The Virtual Registry enables those living overseas to create and register a DIFC Will using a broadband connection in real time. Investors and former residents can access the Virtual Registry from anywhere in the world and be connected, via video link, to a Registry Officer sitting in Dubai. Eligible individuals can register their Free Zone Company Will, Property Will, or Financial Assets Will.

For further peace of mind, registrants are encouraged to have the ID documents that they presented at the registration appointment verified within 30 days of the date of registration. This can be done for free at an overseas identity verification office operated by VFS Global,

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