



## **DUBAI'S DIFC REGISTRY OF WILLS AND PROBATE**

**A wills and probate service for non-Muslims with assets in Dubai**

Legal uncertainties over expatriate wills in Dubai will become a thing of the past with the launch early next year of a new registry.

The Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) hopes that the DIFC WPR – open to all non-Muslim expatriates – will benefit those wishing to hold financial and real estate assets in Dubai, but who are concerned about the uneven treatment of wills by the Dubai Courts.

The new registry will allow non-Muslim expatriates over the age of 21 to register wills written in English in the DIFC Courts, doing away with the current need for translating wills into Arabic and having them attested by a local notary public.

### **What is the DIFC WPR**

An English language registry based inside the DIFC and enabling the formal registration of wills.

### **Who is aimed at**

Non-Muslim individuals over the age of 21 with assets in Dubai. The DIFC WPR is not open to Muslims.

### **What assets are covered**

Any assets physically located or registered in the emirate of Dubai. The DIFC WPR does not extend to assets located or registered in other emirates or abroad.

### **Real estate**

Dubai located real estate can be covered in a DIFC will.

### **Who can register**

UAE residents as well as non-residents can register a DIFC WPR.

### **DIFC WPR's legal framework**

The DIFC is a common law jurisdiction. The WPR's rules are based primarily on the principles contained in the UK Estates Act and Probate Rules. Shariah principles do not form part of the DIFC WPR's legal framework.

### **Any restrictions to the devolution of assets**

The DIFC WPR provides for full testamentary freedom. Some restrictions may apply depending on the testator's citizenship and/or place of residency.

### **Guardianship issues**

The guardianship of minor children habitually residents in Dubai with the testator may be specifically addressed in a DIFC will.

### **How the DIFC WPR work in practice**

An appointment is booked online ([www.difcprobate.ae](http://www.difcprobate.ae)). The execution of the will takes place at the time of registration in the presence of a registry officer and one witness chosen by the testator. The will is stored electronically at the DIFC WPR as the original.



**Who can act as executor**

A family member, a friend or a legal representative (attorney). It is possible to appoint co-executors eg a family member together with an attorney. Being appointed as executor is not neutral and comes with its set of specific duties.

Please, feel free to contact us for any question!

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