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**LAW REGULATING  
ISLAMIC FINANCIAL BUSINESS**

**DIFC LAW No.13 of 2004**

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## **PART 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **1. Title**

This Law may be cited as “Law Regulating Islamic Financial Business 2004.”

### **2. Legislative Authority**

This Law is made by the Ruler of Dubai.

### **3. Application of the law**

This Law applies in the jurisdiction of the DIFC.

### **4. Date of enactment**

This Law is enacted on the date specified in the Enactment Notice in respect of this Law.

### **5. Commencement**

This Law comes into force on the date specified in the Enactment Notice in respect of this Law.

### **6. Interpretation**

Schedule 1 contains:

- (1) interpretative provisions which apply to this Law; and
- (2) a list of defined terms used in this Law.

### **7. Administration of this Law**

This Law is administered by the DFSA.

### **8. Relationship between this Law and the Regulatory Law and the Markets Law**

The provisions of this Law are additional to the provisions of the Regulatory Law 2004 and the Markets Law 2004, and the provisions of those Laws, as far as they are applicable, shall apply accordingly.

## **PART 2: CONDUCT OF ISLAMIC FINANCIAL BUSINESS**

### **9. Prohibition from conducting Islamic Financial Business**

- (1) An Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution shall not hold itself out as conducting Islamic Financial Business unless it has an endorsed Licence authorising it to conduct Islamic Financial Business:
  - (a) as an Islamic Financial Institution; or
  - (b) by operating an Islamic Window.
- (2) The Council of the DFSA may make Rules prescribing circumstances in which an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution will be taken to, or will be taken not to, hold itself out as conducting Islamic Financial Business.

### **10. Islamic Financial Business**

- (1) Conducting Islamic Financial Business means carrying on one or more Financial Services in accordance with Shari'a.
- (2) Islamic Financial Institution means an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution whose entire business operations are conducted in accordance with Shari'a.
- (3) An Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution, other than an Islamic Financial Institution, operates an Islamic Window if it conducts Islamic Financial Business as part of its overall business operations.

### **11. Application for an endorsement**

- (1) An application for an endorsement on a Licence authorising an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution to conduct Islamic Financial Business may be made to the DFSA by any:
  - (a) body corporate;
  - (b) partnership; or
  - (c) unincorporated associationwhen applying for a Licence under Article 45 of the Regulatory Law 2004.
- (2) An Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution may apply to the DFSA for an endorsement to conduct Islamic Financial Business or to vary such an endorsement.
- (3) The Council of the DFSA may make Rules providing that certain persons or categories of person may not be granted an endorsement in relation to Islamic Financial Business.
- (4) The Council of the DFSA may make Rules:
  - (a) prescribing the requirements an applicant applying for an endorsement must meet before an endorsement can be granted by the DFSA. Such Rules may include requirements relating to the legal form an applicant must adopt;

- (b) providing for such requirements referred to in Article 11(4)(a) to be varied in cases where an application is made by a person which is, at the time of application, regulated in a jurisdiction other than the DIFC;
  - (c) prescribing certain persons or categories of person to be exempted from the requirements referred to in Article 11(4)(a); and
  - (d) providing for any such exemptions to be:
    - (i) limited to certain Islamic Financial Business activities or specified circumstances; or
    - (ii) subject to certain conditions and restrictions.
- (5) The DFSA may in its absolute discretion refuse to grant an application for an endorsement or for a variation to an endorsement.
- (6) Upon refusing to grant an endorsement or a variation to an endorsement, the DFSA shall without undue delay inform the applicant in writing of such refusal and, if requested by the applicant, the reasons for such refusal.
- (7) The Regulatory Appeals Committee has jurisdiction to hear and determine any appeal in relation to a decision to refuse an application for an endorsement or a variation to an endorsement made under this Article.

## 12. **Endorsements**

- (1) The DFSA may endorse the Licence of an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution authorising it to conduct Islamic Financial Business as an Islamic Financial Institution or by operating an Islamic Window.
- (2) Subject to Articles 12(3) and (4), the DFSA may at any time by written notice to an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution;
- (a) impose conditions and restrictions or additional conditions and restrictions in relation to an endorsement;
  - (b) vary or withdraw conditions and restrictions imposed in relation to an endorsement.
- (3) The DFSA may act under Article 12(2) on its own initiative or at the request of an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution.
- (4) Subject to Article 12(5), the DFSA may only impose conditions and restrictions or additional conditions and restrictions or vary or withdraw conditions and restrictions in relation to an endorsement if it has given the relevant Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution a suitable opportunity to make representations in person and in writing to the DFSA in relation to the proposed changes.
- (5) The requirement imposed on the DFSA under Article 12(4) shall not apply:
- (a) in relation to the imposition of conditions and restrictions when a Licence is first endorsed;
  - (b) where the relevant person has requested the imposition, variation or withdrawal of conditions and restrictions under Article 12(3); or

- (c) where the DFSA concludes that any delay likely to arise as a result of such requirement is prejudicial to the interests of the DIFC.
- (6) Where pursuant to Article 12(5)(c) the DFSA imposes, varies or withdraws a condition or restriction without providing a prior opportunity to make representations, the DFSA shall:
  - (a) provide the relevant Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution an opportunity to make representations in person and in writing to the DFSA within the period of 14 days, or such further period as may be agreed, from the date on which such condition or restriction is imposed, varied or withdrawn; and
  - (b) provide a response to any such submission, and make any consequential imposition, variation or withdrawal of the condition or restriction, without undue delay.
- (7) The Regulatory Appeals Committee has jurisdiction to hear and determine any appeal in relation to a decision to impose, vary or withdraw a condition or restriction made under this Article.

13. **Requirements to conduct Islamic Financial Business**

- (1) An Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution which has an endorsed Licence authorising it to conduct Islamic Financial Business shall appoint a Shari'a Supervisory Board.
- (2) The Council of the DFSA may make Rules prescribing the appointment, formation, conduct and operation of a Shari'a Supervisory Board.

**SCHEDULE 1**  
**INTERPRETATION**

**1. Rules of interpretation**

- (1) In the Law, a reference to:
  - (a) a statutory provision includes a reference to the statutory provision as amended or re-enacted from time to time;
  - (b) a person includes any natural person, body corporate or body incorporated, including a company, partnership, unincorporated association, government or state;
  - (c) an obligation to publish or cause to be published a particular document shall, unless expressly provided otherwise in the Law, include publishing or causing to be published in printed or electronic form;
  - (d) a day shall refer to a business day, being a normal working day in the DIFC;
  - (e) a calendar year shall mean a year of the Gregorian calendar; and
  - (f) a reference to the masculine gender includes the feminine.
- (2) The headings in the Law shall not affect its interpretation.

**2. Legislation in the DIFC**

References to legislation and Guidance in the Law shall be construed in accordance with the following provisions:

- (a) Federal Law is law made by the federal government of the United Arab Emirates;
- (b) Dubai Law is law made by the Ruler, as applicable in the Emirate of Dubai;
- (c) DIFC Law is law made by the Ruler (including, by way of example, the Law), as applicable in the DIFC;
- (d) the Law is The Law Regulating Islamic Financial Business, DIFC Law No.13 of 2004 made by the Ruler;
- (e) the Rules are legislation made by the DFSA under the Law and are binding in nature;
- (f) Guidance is indicative and non-binding and may comprise (i) guidance made and issued by the Chief Executive under the Law; and (ii) any standard or code of practice issued by the Council which has not been incorporated into the Rules; and
- (g) references to “legislation administered by the DFSA” are references to DIFC Law and Rules conferring functions and powers on the DFSA.

### 3. Defined Terms

In the Law, unless the context indicates otherwise, the defined terms listed below shall have the corresponding meanings:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Authorised Firm	a person who holds a Licence to carry on one or more Financial Services prescribed pursuant to Article 42(1) of the Regulatory Law 2004.
Authorised Market Institution	a person who is licensed by the DFSA in relation to the carrying on of one or more Financial Services prescribed pursuant to Article 42(1) of the Regulatory Law 2004.
Council of the DFSA	the governing body of the DFSA, established under Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the Regulatory Law 2004.
DFSA	the DIFC Financial Services Authority.
DIFC	the Dubai International Financial Centre.
Financial Service	is an activity prescribed in the Rules made under Article 41 (3) of the Regulatory Law.
Law	the Law Regulating Islamic Financial Business 2004.
Licence	a Licence granted by the DFSA under Chapter 2 of Part 3 of the Regulatory Law.
Markets Law	the Markets Law 2004.
Regulatory Law	the Regulatory Law 2004.
Rules	has the meaning given in Article 2 of Schedule 1 to the Regulatory Law 2004.
Shari'a Supervisory Board	a board appointed by an Authorised Firm or Authorised Market Institution pursuant to Article 13(1) of this Law.