Employment Law

A practical overview of **private sector employment in the UAE**: employment contracts, working hours, leave entitlements, end-of-service gratuity, termination, and dispute resolution.

CORE AREAS

CONTRACTS

Private sector employment is generally governed by Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021, except in separate regimes such as DIFC and ADGM. Employees are hired on fixed-term contracts, which may be renewed or extended.

HOURS & LEAVE

Standard working hours are generally 8 hours per day or 48 hours per week, subject to legal exceptions. Employees may be entitled to annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, parental leave, and public holidays.

GRATUITY

End-of-service gratuity is calculated by reference to basic wage and length of service. Full-time employees are generally entitled to 21 days' basic wage per year for the first 5 years, and 30 days per year thereafter, subject to the statutory cap.

TERMINATION

Employment may end by resignation, termination with notice, expiry, mutual agreement, or dismissal without notice in limited cases. Notice periods, final dues, cancellation, and work permit issues must follow the Labor Law.

KEY CONCEPTS

EMPLOYEE PROTECTIONS

- Wages are commonly paid through the Wage Protection System.
- Probation is limited to a maximum of 6 months.
- Non-compete clauses must be limited in time, place, and scope.
- Employees have statutory rights to leave, final dues, and workplace protections.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Employment complaints usually begin with MOHRE. If the dispute is not resolved, it may proceed to the Labour Court, with certain worker claims exempt from court fees under the Labour Law.

Facing a workplace challenge?

Our team can guide you through employment contracts, workplace disputes, termination, and employee and employer rights.

BOOK A CONSULTATION ↗

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