

CONSULTATION PAPER

Employment Regulations

1. Introduction

QFZ, in accordance with the Law No. 34 of 2005 on Free Zones (as amended) (FZ Law), has drafted Employment Regulations to regulate, among other things, the rights and duties of employers (Free Zone Entities) and employees (Free Zone Entities' employees) in the Free Zones and the relationship between them.

2. Background

In accordance with Article 19 of the FZ Law, the QFZ will aim at managing and developing the Free Zones in accordance with the best international standards, as well as encouraging and attracting the investments in the sectors of scientific research, technology, production, and exports and it has the power to formulate regulations to achieve its objectives.

Article 7 of QFZ Mandate and Powers Regulations authorises the QFZ to issue such Free Zones Legislation as it deems necessary or appropriate to facilitate the pursuit, achievement, and furtherance of its objectives, under the FZ Law.

Pursuant to Article 11 of the FZ Law, subject to the provisions of the international treaties, and the regulations issued with respect to employees in the Free Zone, the companies registered with the QFZ will have the freedom to appoint its employees and regulate their rights and statuses, subject to at least the rights prescribed in the Law No. 14 of 2004 (as amended) (Labour Law).

3. Highlighted Novelties

The proposed Employment Regulations are designed to establish a clear and consistent legal framework in line with Article 11 of FZ Law; setting as minimum the rights provided by the Labour Law and providing further rights to employees, mainly the following:

- QFZ does not require approval or deposition of employment contracts, providing a streamlined and efficient onboarding process for employees.
 - Employees enjoy the flexibility to receive their salaries in Qatari Riyal or any other currency, with the added convenience of selecting any bank account in the State or another jurisdiction.
 - While not applying the Wage Protection System, robust alternative measures are in place to ensure employees receive their salaries in full and punctually.
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- Dispute resolution provisions mandate mediation by the Qatar International Court Dispute Resolution Centre for individual labour disputes before legal proceedings are initiated, underscoring a commitment to fair and efficient conflict resolution

- A strict policy against discrimination is upheld, encompassing age, race, colour, religion or belief, gender, national or social origin, or mental or physical disability for all employees, fostering an inclusive and diverse work environment.
- The introduction of parental leave for 3 days further reflects QFZ's commitment to acknowledging the diverse needs and responsibilities of its workforce, promoting a family-friendly workplace culture.

4. Invitation

Prior to issuing of these regulations, the QFZ invites the related parties to provide their comments with respect to the draft in Appendix.

After the public consultation, QFZ may adopt the draft in whole or in part or amend it as necessary to incorporate points raised during the consultation. No action should be taken based on the draft until it has been officially issued and published on the QFZ's website.

Individuals submitting comments are required to identify the organization they represent. QFZ retains the right to publish any comments provided, including on its website, unless expressly requested otherwise during the comment submission.

The deadline for submitting comments is 10 April 2024.

Any comments should be submitted to: consultation@qfz.gov.qa

Appendix contains the draft text of the Employment Regulations.