Law No. (12) of 2026

Concerning the

Community Development Authority in Dubai[1]

We, Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai,

After perusal of:

Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning the Rights of Children ("**Wadeema's Law**"), its amendments, and its Implementing Bylaw;

Federal Law No. (6) of 2022 Concerning Juvenile Delinquents and Juveniles at Risk of Delinquency, and its Implementing Bylaw;

Federal Law No. (9) of 2023 Regulating Places of Worship for Non-Muslims;

Federal Law by Decree No. (50) of 2023 Regulating Public-benefit Organisations and its Implementing Bylaw;

Federal Law by Decree No. (13) of 2024 Concerning Protection from Domestic Violence;

Federal Law by Decree No. (41) of 2024 Issuing the Family Law;

Federal Law by Decree No. (25) of 2025 Issuing the Civil Code;

Law No. (1) of 2012 Concerning Dubai Humanitarian and its amendments;

Law No. (7) of 2012 Concerning Financial Social Benefits in the Emirate of Dubai;

Law No. (8) of 2015 Concerning the Community Development Authority in Dubai;

Law No. (21) of 2015 Concerning Judicial Fees of the Dubai Courts and its amendments;

Law No. (1) of 2016 Concerning the Financial Regulations of the Government of Dubai, its Implementing Bylaw, and their amendments;

Law No. (13) of 2016 Concerning the Judicial Authorities in the Emirate of Dubai and its amendments;

Law No. (12) of 2017 Regulating Civil Society Organisations in the Emirate of Dubai;

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[1] *Every effort has been made to produce an accurate and complete English version of this legislation. However, for the purpose of its interpretation and application, reference must be made to the original Arabic text. In case of conflict, the Arabic text will prevail.*

Law No. (5) of 2018 Regulating Volunteer Work in the Emirate of Dubai and its Implementing Bylaw;

Law No. (8) of 2018 Concerning Management of the Government of Dubai Human Resources and its amendments;

Law No. (15) of 2020 Transferring Certain Functions of the Awqaf and Minors Affairs Foundation to the Community Development Authority in Dubai;

Law No. (5) of 2021 Concerning the Dubai International Financial Centre;

Law No. (23) of 2021 Concerning the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children;

Law No. (3) of 2022 Concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai, and its Implementing Bylaw and its amendments;

Law No. (17) of 2022 Concerning the Endowment and Minors' Trust Foundation in Dubai and its amendments;

Law No. (26) of 2023 Concerning the Executive Council of the Emirate of Dubai;

Decree No. (22) of 2009 Concerning Special Development Zones in the Emirate of Dubai;

Decree No. (9) of 2015 Regulating the Raising of Donations in the Emirate of Dubai;

Decree No. (1) of 2022 Concerning Residential District Majlis in the Emirate of Dubai;

Decree No. (9) of 2022 Placing Private Public-benefit Entities Established Pursuant to Legislation under the Supervision and Audit of the Community Development Authority in Dubai;

Decree No. (9) of 2025 Designating the Competent Government Entity in the Emirate of Dubai for Purposes of Implementing Federal Law by Decree No. (50) of 2023 Regulating Public-benefit Organisations;

Executive Council Resolution No. (20) of 2011 Regulating Social Work Professions in the Emirate of Dubai and its Implementing Bylaw;

Executive Council Resolution No. (9) of 2015 Regulating the Work of Social Service Providers in the Emirate of Dubai;

Executive Council Resolution No. (40) of 2018 Concerning the Family Village; and

The legislation establishing and regulating free zones in the Emirate of Dubai,

Do hereby issue this Law.

Title of the Law
Article (1)

This Law will be cited as "Law No. (12) of 2026 Concerning the Community Development Authority in Dubai".

Definitions
Article (2)

The following words and expressions, wherever mentioned in this Law, have the meanings respectively assigned to them, unless the context implies otherwise:

Emirate:	The Emirate of Dubai.
Ruler:	His Highness the Ruler of Dubai.
Executive Council:	The Executive Council of the Emirate.
CDA:	The Community Development Authority in Dubai.
Director General:	The Director General of the CDA.
Competent Entity:	Any Government Entity responsible under the legislation in force for any of the matters provided for in this Law.
Social Development:	An integrated system designed to promote the development of individuals, families, and the community.
Social Sector:	The system of Social Services that promote the well-being of community members and that are provided by Government Entities and private for-profit and non-profit entities, together with the policies and strategies governing such services.
Social Services:	A range of services that contribute to Social Development in general and, in particular, to the protection, Care, Social Inclusion, and Social Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable Segments and their families. These services include, without limitation, awareness programmes, counselling, training, alternative Care, Institutional Care for social purposes, home Care, social Rehabilitation, Social Empowerment, Financial Empowerment, protection from Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation, as well as material benefits, whether monetary or in-kind.
Most Vulnerable Segments:	Categories of individuals whose characteristics or circumstances render them vulnerable to social exclusion or less capable of anticipating, confronting, and resisting natural or human-induced risks. These categories include senior citizens, Persons with Disabilities, Children who have

	been subjected to Abuse, persons deprived of Care on a permanent or temporary basis, Incapacitated Persons, Partially Incapacitated Persons, Juvenile Delinquents and Juveniles at Risk of Delinquency, low-income persons, and any other categories determined by the CDA in accordance with the rules and standards adopted by the CDA in this respect.
Minor:	A person whose age is below the Age of Majority.
Incapacitated Person:	A non-discerning Child, an Insane Person, or an Imbecile.
Partially Incapacitated Person:	A discerning Child, a Spendthrift, or a Gullible Person.
Social Inclusion:	Enhancing the participation of the Most Vulnerable Segments in society and their interaction with others by removing barriers that impede their integration into society, providing them with equal opportunities, facilitating their access to services and information, and safeguarding and protecting their rights.
Social Empowerment:	Enhancing an individual's capabilities and equipping him with the knowledge and skills that enable him to make informed decisions about life, improve his quality of life, and enhance his participation in various aspects of life.
Financial Empowerment:	Enhancing an individual's financial capabilities and providing him with the knowledge and skills that enable him to achieve full or partial financial self-sufficiency.
Public-benefit Organisations:	Any private non-profit legal person licensed by the CDA in accordance with the legislation in force, established for the purpose of conducting one or more Public-benefit Activities, and taking one of the forms prescribed by the above-mentioned Federal Law by Decree No. (50) of 2023, or any other form prescribed by the legislation in force in the Emirate.

Social Service Provider:	Any licensed Professional or Establishment licensed or otherwise authorised by the CDA to provide Social Services, in accordance with the legislation in force in the Emirate.
Places of Worship:	Places designated for the performance of religious rites by non-Muslims in the Emirate who profess recognised religions. These places include courtyards, gardens, halls, auditoriums, and other facilities attached or ancillary thereto, in accordance with the controls prescribed by the CDA in this respect.
Care:	The protection, upbringing, and education of the Most Vulnerable Segments, and the fulfilment of their living, social, health, educational, and recreational needs.
Humanitarian Case:	Any exceptional situation or circumstance affecting a Family or an individual that may jeopardise their security and safety, thereby requiring the CDA to take the necessary measures to provide Social Services, relief, and assistance and to mitigate the consequences of that situation or circumstance.
Institutional Care:	Permanent or temporary Social Services provided by specialised Care institutions to members of the Most Vulnerable Segments, persons deprived of Care, and persons who are unable to Care for themselves.
District Majlis:	The Residential District Majlis regulated pursuant to the above-mentioned Decree No. (1) of 2022, the management and supervision of which are assigned to the CDA.
Community Centres:	Public centres established by the CDA in various areas of the Emirate to promote Social Cohesion and family counselling and reconciliation; to conduct social, sports, educational, and cultural activities of interest to community members; and to provide them with certain services.
Community Participation:	The voluntary contribution of community members through donations or Volunteer Work for the purpose of developing their local community.
Social Responsibility:	The voluntary participation of the private sector in Social Development through monetary or in-kind contributions to

	community programmes and projects and the adoption of responsible practices towards the community and its members.
Social Cohesion:	Strengthening the bonds of solidarity, tolerance, and acceptance of others among all segments of society regardless of race, colour, religion, gender, nationality, or other differences.
SDF:	The Social Development Fund established pursuant to this Law.

Scope of Application
Article (3)

The provisions of this Law apply to the Community Development Authority in Dubai, regulated pursuant to the above-mentioned Law No. (8) of 2015 as a public authority having legal personality and the legal capacity required to undertake all acts and dispositions that ensure achievement of its objectives and performance of its functions under this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, and other legislation in force in the Emirate.

Head Office of the CDA
Article (4)

The head office of the CDA will be located in the Emirate. The CDA may establish branches and offices within the Emirate.

Objectives of the CDA
Article (5)

The CDA aims to:

1. regulate, develop, and advance the Social Sector in the Emirate in a manner that contributes to achieving sustainable Social Development;

2. enhance the quality of Social Services in the Emirate, regulate their provision, and ensure that they are available to the various segments of society;

3. ensure the protection of the Most Vulnerable Segments and contribute to their inclusion in society;

4. contribute to the Social Empowerment and Financial Empowerment of UAE Nationals in the Emirate;

5. contribute to making the Emirate the best place to live and work;

6. contribute to strengthening Social Cohesion among the various members and segments of society; and

7. promote and encourage Community Participation and Social Responsibility among the various segments of society.

Functions of the CDA
Article (6)

a. The CDA is the Government Entity responsible for regulating and developing the Social Sector in the Emirate, including in Special Development Zones and free zones, such as the Dubai International Financial Centre, with the exception of Dubai Humanitarian.

b. For the purpose of achieving its objectives, the CDA will have the duties and powers to:

    1. prepare and develop strategic plans and social policies relating to sustainable Social Development and the development of the Social Sector, in cooperation and coordination with the Competent Entities; submit such plans and policies to the Executive Council for approval; and supervise their implementation once approved;

    2. prepare, develop, and approve the operational plans that enable the CDA to perform its functions and achieve its objectives;

    3. propose legislation related to Social Development and the regulation and development of the Social Sector in the Emirate, and submit such legislation to the Competent Entities to take the necessary action in respect thereof;

    4. license, monitor, and supervise Public-benefit Organisations, in accordance with the legislation in force; and enhance their role in achieving Social Development in the Emirate;

    5. regulate, license, monitor, and supervise Professionals, in accordance with the legislation in force;

    6. issue permits to Social Service Providers in the Emirate, in accordance with the legislation in force;

7. implement a system for accrediting and classifying Social Service Providers, in accordance with quality assurance standards and recognised best practices;

8. perform the functions assigned to it under the legislation regulating, licensing, monitoring, and supervising Places of Worship;

9. regulate Volunteer Work in the Emirate in accordance with the legislation in force, and establish the mechanisms and procedures required to promote such work;

10. develop, in coordination with the Competent Entities, the human resources necessary to meet the requirements of the Social Sector, giving priority to UAE Nationals;

11. ensure the availability of Social Services to individuals and families in general and to the Most Vulnerable Segments and their families in particular, and provide such services where necessary;

12. promote Social Empowerment and Financial Empowerment of UAE Nationals belonging to the Most Vulnerable Segments, and of their families, in accordance with the legislation in force and the rules approved by the CDA in this respect;

13. coordinate with the concerned entities to raise awareness of human rights and their underlying principles in the Emirate;

14. provide Social Services in Humanitarian Cases in accordance with the relevant controls, conditions, and standards prescribed by the CDA;

15. ensure the provision of the necessary Care to Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons, in accordance with this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, other legislation in force in the Emirate, and the judgments rendered by the competent judicial bodies, having regard to the respective functions of the concerned entities;

16. establish and develop an integrated protection system for the Most Vulnerable Segments, particularly Children and Persons with Disabilities, and supervise the implementation of that system, in accordance with best practices in this respect;

17. develop, in coordination with the Competent Entities, the plans and programmes required for the social development of young people, in a manner that protects them from harmful ideas and practices, promotes their Social Empowerment, and strengthens their sense of belonging and attachment to their national identity;

18. develop awareness-raising and educational programmes and activities aimed at promoting social values and responsible social practices;

19. develop programmes and plans designed to promote social and family cohesion in the Emirate, enhance Community Participation and Social Responsibility, and supervise their implementation in cooperation with the Competent Entities;

20. establish, manage, and supervise Community Centres and District Majlis in the Emirate, develop governance frameworks for them, and design the programmes and services provided through them;

21. implement and develop integrated systems for Community Participation and Social Responsibility adopted in the Emirate, and devise the mechanisms necessary for their implementation in a manner that enhances participation by the public and private sectors and individuals in supporting the CDA's efforts to achieve sustainable Social Development and develop the Social Sector in the Emirate;

22. conduct social studies and research aimed at developing and advancing the Social Sector and enabling the CDA to perform the functions assigned to it under this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, and other legislation in force in the Emirate;

23. establish, in coordination with the Competent Entities, a database for the Social Sector and Social Services in the Emirate;

24. train and qualify the human resources required to work in the Social Sector, in coordination with the Competent Entities;

25. own and take lease of movable and immovable property that will enable the CDA to perform the functions assigned to it under this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, and other legislation in force in the Emirate;

26. establish partnerships with the private sector, Public-benefit Organisations, and Government Entities in a manner that contributes to the comprehensive and integrated provision of Social Services and enhances their effectiveness and efficiency;

27. receive Donations, gifts, bequests, and Zakat contributions intended for the Most Vulnerable Segments and other beneficiaries of the CDA’s services, and utilise such contributions for their benefit; and

28. exercise any other duties or powers required for the achievement of the objectives of the CDA, or assigned to the CDA by the Ruler or the Chairman of the Executive Council.

Executive Body of the CDA
Article (7)

The executive body of the CDA will be comprised of the Director General and a number of technical, administrative, and finance Employees, to whom the above-mentioned Law No. (8) of 2018 and the legislation issued in pursuance thereof apply.

Appointment of the Director General
Article (8)

A Director General will be appointed to the CDA by a decree issued by the Ruler.

Functions of the Director General
Article (9)

a. The Director General will supervise the CDA and take all measures necessary for the CDA to achieve its objectives and perform its functions. For this purpose, the Director General will have the duties and powers to:

    1. approve the strategic plans and social policies aimed at achieving sustainable Social Development and developing the Social Sector in the Emirate, and submit them to the Executive Council for final approval;

    2. approve, and supervise the implementation of, the general policy, operational plans, work programmes, and projects of the CDA;

    3. approve the draft annual budget and Financial Statements of the CDA, and submit the same to the Competent Entities in the Emirate for final approval;

    4. approve the organisational structure of the CDA, and submit the same to the Executive Council for final approval;

    5. approve the resolutions regulating the administrative, financial, and technical work of the CDA;

    6. supervise the activities of the CDA's executive body and monitor its performance of the functions assigned to it in accordance with the applicable legislation and approved policies, plans, and programmes;

    7. propose fees and charges for the services provided by the CDA, and submit the same to the Competent Entities in the Emirate for approval;

8. represent the CDA before third parties and conclude the contracts, agreements, and memoranda of understanding required for the achievement of the CDA's objectives;

9. submit periodic reports on the CDA's performance to the Executive Council and provide it with any other reports it may request; and

10. exercise any other duties or powers assigned to him by the Ruler or the Chairman of the Executive Council, as required for the CDA to achieve its objectives and perform its functions.

b. The Director General may delegate any of his powers under this Law to any Employee of the CDA, provided that such delegation is specific and in writing.

Care of Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons
Article (10)

a. The CDA will be the competent Government Entity in the Emirate responsible for all matters relating to the provision of Social Services to Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons, pursuant to a decision issued by the competent judicial body or Competent Entity. For this purpose, the CDA will have the authority to:

1. take the measures and actions necessary to monitor the living conditions of a Minor and verify that he receives basic Care and that his essential living, social, health, educational, and recreational needs are met, in a manner that serves the Minor's best interests and in accordance with the legislation in force;

2. take the measures and actions necessary to verify that Incapacitated Persons and Partially Incapacitated Persons receive the Care and protection they require, including alternative Care, whether family-based Care or Institutional Care, in coordination with the Competent Entities and in accordance with the legislation in force in the Emirate;

3. determine the amount of the monthly allowances and other expenses payable out of the property of Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons under the Care of the CDA for their support, in coordination with the Competent Entities, and in accordance with the controls and standards adopted by the CDA in this respect;

4. represent Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons in matters relating to their protection and Care before Government Entities; non-government entities; courts and Tribunals of all types; and other competent

judicial bodies. This includes submitting complaints, instituting legal proceedings; appearing before such bodies and presenting arguments and defences; submitting pleadings and applications; filling appeals of all types against judgments; and submitting and signing statements of appeal. The CDA may appoint or seek assistance from any other person or entity to represent it for these purposes;

5. protect Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons from any unlawful practices to which they may be subjected by their Guardians, Trustees, Custodians, or providers of alternative Care;

6. enter into an arrangement with a member of the Family of a Minor, an Incapacitated Person, or a Partially Incapacitated Person for the provision of Care to that person, in accordance with the conditions and controls approved by the Director General by a resolution issued for this purpose;

7. place any Minor, Incapacitated Person, or Partially Incapacitated Person under its Care in a social or healthcare institution, in accordance with the conditions and controls approved by the Director General by a resolution issued for this purpose; and

8. perform any other duties related to Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons, as assigned to the CDA by the Ruler or the Chairman of the Executive Council.

b. Claims and applications filed by the CDA on behalf of low-income Minors, Incapacitated Persons, and Partially Incapacitated Persons will be exempt from judicial fees.

Low-Income Persons
Article (11)

a. The CDA will, in accordance with the criteria approved by the Chairman of the Executive Council by a resolution issued for this purpose, identify and determine the categories of low-income persons for the purposes of performing the functions vested in it under this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, and other legislation in force in the Emirate.

b. The CDA will periodically review the criteria applicable to low-income persons in the light of economic and social indicators and any other relevant considerations, and submit appropriate recommendations in this respect to the Executive Council for approval.

Social Observatory
Article (12)

a. The CDA will, in cooperation and coordination with the Competent Entities, establish a Social Observatory within its organisational structure. The Social Observatory will be responsible for studying social phenomena in the Emirate, collecting relevant data and preparing forecasts based on that data, facilitating early intervention, addressing adverse social phenomena, and preventing or mitigating their impact on society.

b. The CDA will study and analyse the social phenomena identified by the Social Observatory, determine their causes, assess their impact on society, and devise appropriate solutions thereto, in coordination with the Competent Entities.

c. The Social Observatory referred to in paragraph (a) of this Article will establish a mechanism for developing a social database covering all segments of society, particularly the Most Vulnerable Segments.

d. The Competent Entities will provide the CDA with the data and information it may require to establish and manage the Social Observatory referred to in paragraph (a) of this Article and enable it to fulfil the purposes for which it was established.

Unified Social and Humanitarian Case Management System
Article (13)

a. The CDA will, in coordination with the Competent Entities, establish a unified system for managing social cases and Humanitarian Cases requiring Social Services across the Emirate, with the aim of ensuring that the Social Services provided in those cases are integrated and comprehensive.

b. Through the unified system referred to in paragraph (a) of this Article, the CDA will study, assess, and monitor social cases and Humanitarian Cases requiring Social Services, in coordination with the Competent Entities and those providing these services, to ensure that beneficiaries receive the Social Services they require and achieve Social Empowerment.

c. The CDA will prescribe the standards and mechanisms for managing and handling social cases and Humanitarian Cases. All entities providing Social Services and Competent Entities in the Emirate must comply with these standards and mechanisms.

d. Local Government Entities providing services of a social nature must use the unified system referred to in paragraph (a) of this Article and establish an electronic connection to that system.

e. Local Government Entities and Social Service Providers in the Emirate must provide the CDA with all data and information it requests for the establishment, management, and operation of the unified system referred to in paragraph (a) of this Article.

Social Development Fund
Article (14)

a. Pursuant to this Law, a fund named the "Social Development Fund" is established within the CDA. The revenue of the SDF will be used to provide financial support to its beneficiaries and to finance projects and Social Services in the Emirate.

b. The SDF will have the following objectives:

   1. to contribute to achieving Social Development in the Emirate and building a more cohesive and stable society;

   2. to contribute to the provision of social protection and Care to the Most Vulnerable Segments and the provision of monetary and in-kind assistance to members of those categories;

   3. to provide urgent assistance to persons affected by disasters, crises, and emergencies;

   4. to provide the funding required to support vocational training programmes for unemployed persons and to prepare them for the labour market;

   5. to contribute to improving the quality of life and living standards of beneficiary categories and enhancing their role in society; and

   6. to strengthen partnerships with the private sector and encourage companies, institutions, and individuals to contribute to financing Social Development programmes.

c. The financial resources of the SDF will consist of the financial appropriations earmarked for it in the CDA's budget, as well as any grants, gifts, Endowments, Donations, and Zakat contributions made to it by entities and individuals.

d. The SDF will maintain separate accounts from those of the CDA.

e. The SDF will be regulated by a resolution issued by the Director General, which will determine its functions, beneficiary categories, management arrangements, disbursement mechanisms, and all other matters relating thereto.

Outsourcing CDA Functions
Article (15)

The CDA may, in accordance with the legislation in force, outsource any of its functions under this Law to any public or private entity pursuant to an agreement concluded for this purpose. This agreement will specify its term, the rights and obligations of the parties, and any other matters related to its implementation.

Financial Resources of the CDA
Article (16)

The financial resources of the CDA will consist of:

1. appropriations allocated to the CDA in the General Budget of the Government of Dubai;
2. fees and charges collected by the CDA in return for its services; and
3. any other resources approved by the Chairman of the Executive Council.

Accounts and Financial Year of the CDA
Article (17)

a. In managing its accounts and records, the CDA will apply the rules and principles of government accounting.

b. The Financial Year of the CDA will commence on 1 January and end on 31 December of each Year.

Issuing Implementing Resolutions
Article (18)

With the exception of the resolutions which the Chairman of the Executive Council is exclusively authorised to issue under this Law, the Director General will issue the resolutions required for implementing the provisions of this Law. These resolutions will be published in the Official Gazette of the Government of Dubai.

Supersession and Repeals
Article (19)

a. This Law supersedes the above-mentioned Law No. (8) of 2015.

b. The above-mentioned Law No. (15) of 2020 is hereby repealed. Any provision in any other legislation is also hereby repealed to the extent that it conflicts with the provisions of this Law.

c. The resolutions and bylaws issued in implementation of the above-mentioned Law No. (8) of 2015 will continue in force to the extent that they do not contradict this Law, until superseding resolutions and bylaws are issued.

Publication and Commencement
Article (20)

This Law will be published in the Official Gazette and will come into force on the day on which it is published.

Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Ruler of Dubai

Issued in Dubai on 11 May 2026

Corresponding to 24 Thu al-Qidah 1447 A.H.