

Resolution No. (16) of 2024
Concerning the
Formation of the Divisions of the
Courts of First Instance and Determining their Jurisdictions¹

The President of the Dubai Courts,

After perusal of:

Federal Law by Decree No. (33) of 2021 Regulating Labour Relations and its amendments;

Federal Law by Decree No. (35) of 2022 Issuing the Law of Evidence Governing Civil and Commercial Transactions;

Federal Law by Decree No. (38) of 2022 Issuing the Criminal Procedure Code and its amendments;

Federal Law by Decree No. (42) of 2022 Issuing the Civil Procedure Code;

Federal Law by Decree No. (50) of 2022 Issuing the Commercial Transactions Law;

Federal Law by Decree No. (51) of 2023 Issuing the Financial Restructuring and Bankruptcy Law;

Law No. (6) of 2005 Regulating the Dubai Courts and its amendments;

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

Decree No. (25) of 2023 Establishing the Probate Court in the Emirate of Dubai;

Resolution No. (8) of 2022 Determining the Disputes Falling within the Jurisdiction of the Centre for Amicable Settlement of Disputes; and

Resolution No. (1) 2024 Assigning the Director of the Dubai Courts to Perform the Duties of the President of the Dubai Courts,

Does hereby issue this Resolution.

©2025 The Supreme Legislation Committee in the Emirate of Dubai

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.*

Resolution No. (16) of 2024 Concerning the Formation of the Divisions of the Courts of First Instance and Determining their Jurisdictions

Definitions

Article (1)

The following words and expressions, wherever mentioned in this Resolution, will have the meaning indicated opposite each of them unless the context implies otherwise:

UAE:	The United Arab Emirates.
Emirate:	The Emirate of Dubai.
Courts:	The Dubai Courts, including the Court of Cassation, the Court of Appeal, the Courts of First Instance, and any other court to be established therein.
President:	The President of the Dubai Courts.
Courts of First Instance:	These include the First Instance Civil Courts and the First Instance Criminal Courts.
First Instance Civil Courts:	These include the Civil Court, the Commercial Court, the Real Property Court, the Labour Court, the Family Court, and the Execution Court; as well as any other civil courts established within the Courts of First Instance.
First Instance Criminal Courts:	These include the Misdemeanours and Infractions Court, the Criminal Court, as well as any other criminal courts established within the Courts of First Instance.
Chief Justice:	The chief justice of any of the specialised Courts of First Instance.
Principal Lawsuit:	A lawsuit filed with the Courts of First Instance to consider the principal claims raised therein.

Formation of the Courts of First Instance

Article (2)

- a. With the exception of the Family Court and Execution Court, the Courts of First Instance will comprise small-claim and major-claim divisions formed pursuant to a resolution of the Chief Justice, subject to the approval of the Chief Justice of the Courts of First Instance.
- b. The First Instance small-claim divisions will comprise a single Judge, whose grade is not lower than that of a senior First Instance Judge.
- c. The First Instance major-claim divisions will comprise three (3) Judges, whose grades are not lower than that of a First Instance Judge.

- d. The Family Court and Execution Court will comprise small-claim divisions formed of a single Judge. Major-claim divisions of these Courts may be formed of three (3) Judges, pursuant to a resolution issued by the President. The Court formation resolution must determine the respective jurisdictions of these Courts.

Jurisdiction of Small-claim Divisions of the Courts of First Instance Article (3)

Without prejudice to the rules of jurisdiction governing the federal and local judiciary in the UAE, the rules of jurisdiction of other judicial bodies in the Emirate, and the rules of allocation of jurisdictions among the Courts of First Instance, the small-claim divisions of the First Instance Civil Courts will have the exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine the following claims and applications:

1. civil, commercial, labour, or real property claims not exceeding one million dirhams (AED 1,000,000.00);
2. family lawsuits;
3. Bankruptcy applications, disputes, and claims;
4. counterclaims of any value that are related to Principal Lawsuits and that fall within the jurisdiction of these small-claim divisions;
5. execution applications, disputes, and claims; and
6. claims and applications that fall within the jurisdiction of these small-claim divisions under the legislation in force in the Emirate.

Jurisdiction of Major-claim Divisions of the Courts of First Instance Article (4)

Without prejudice to the rules governing the jurisdiction of federal and local judiciary in the UAE, the jurisdiction of other judicial bodies within the Emirate, and the rules of allocation of jurisdictions among the Courts of First Instance, the major-claim divisions of the First Instance Civil Courts will have the exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine the following claims:

1. civil, commercial, labour, or real property claims exceeding one million dirhams (AED 1,000,000.00) and claims of unquantified value;
2. administrative claims of any value;
3. counterclaims of any value that are related to Principal Lawsuits and that fall within the jurisdiction of these major-claim divisions;

4. claims that do not fall within the jurisdiction of small-claim divisions of the Courts of First Instance; and
5. claims that fall within the jurisdiction of these major-claim divisions under the legislation in force in the Emirate.

Jurisdiction of First Instance Criminal Courts Article (5)

- a. The small-claim divisions at the Misdemeanours and Infractions Court of the First Instance Criminal Courts will have the jurisdiction to hear and determine misdemeanours and infractions.
- b. The major-claim divisions at the Criminal Court of the First Instance Criminal Courts will have the jurisdiction to hear and determine criminal offences.
- c. One or more major-claim divisions may be formed pursuant to a resolution issued by the Chief Justice of the First Instance Criminal Courts, subject to the approval of the Chief Justice of the Courts of First Instance, to hear and determine misdemeanours of a special nature or that are considered significant.

Referral Article (6)

Except for those reserved for judgement, the lawsuits being heard by the divisions of the Courts of First Instance will be referred, in their current state, to the competent division for determination, in accordance with the rules of jurisdiction stipulated herein.

Lack of Jurisdiction Article (7)

Where it is established, at any stage of the proceedings, to a division that it lacks jurisdiction to hear a lawsuit as per the rules of jurisdiction stipulated herein, that division must, even on its own motion, decline jurisdiction and refer the lawsuit in its current state to the competent division or Court.

Applicability of General Rules Article (8)

Where this Resolution is silent, the general rules stipulated in the above-mentioned Federal Law by Decree No. (42) of 2022 and other legislation in force in the Emirate will apply.

Issuing Implementing Resolutions Article (9)

The Chief Justice of the Courts of First Instance will, in coordination with the chief justices of the specialised Courts of First Instance and the concerned organisational units at the Courts, issue the resolutions required for the implementation of the provisions of this Resolution.

Repeals Article (10)

Any provision in any other resolution is hereby repealed to the extent that it contradicts the provisions of this Resolution.

Commencement and Publication Article (11)

This Resolution comes into force on 1 November 2024, and will be published in the Official Gazette.

Acting President of the Dubai Courts

Issued in Dubai on 14 August 2024
Corresponding to 10 Safar 1446 A.H.