

Law No. (1) of 2021
Establishing the Dubai Digital Authority¹

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

After perusal of:

Law No. (3) of 2003 Establishing the Executive Council of the Emirate of Dubai;

Law No. (8) of 2013 Concerning Human Resource Management of Directors General in the Government of Dubai;

Law No. (11) of 2014 Establishing the Dubai Electronic Security Centre;

Law No. (26) of 2015 Regulating Data Dissemination and Exchange in the Emirate of Dubai;

Law No. (28) of 2015 Establishing the Dubai Statistics Centre;

Law No. (30) of 2015 Establishing the Smart Dubai Government Establishment;

Law No. (1) of 2016 Concerning the Financial Regulations of the Government of Dubai;

Law (2) of 2016 Establishing the Dubai Data Establishment and its amendments;

Law No. (1) of 2020 Concerning the Smart Dubai Department;

Resolution No. (2) of 2017 Approving the Policies Document on Classification, Dissemination, Exchange, and Protection of Data in the Emirate of Dubai; and

Resolution No. (15) of 2020 Forming the Board of Directors of the Dubai Electronic Security Centre,

Do hereby issue this Law.

Title of the Law
Article (1)

This Law will be cited as "Law No. (1) of 2021 Establishing the Dubai Digital Authority".

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¹Every 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. (1) of 2021 Establishing the Dubai Digital Authority

Definitions Article (2)

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

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| UAE: | The United Arab Emirates. |
| Emirate: | The Emirate of Dubai. |
| Ruler: | His Highness the Ruler of Dubai. |
| Crown Prince: | The Crown Prince of the Emirate. |
| Government: | The Government of Dubai. |
| DDA: | The Dubai Digital Authority. |
| Director General: | The director general of the DDA. |
| Local Entity: | Any of the Government departments; public agencies and corporations; councils; authorities, including the authorities supervising Special Development Zones and free zones, such as the Dubai International Financial Centre; companies owned by the Government or Government Entities, or in which the Government or Government Entities hold shares; or other entities affiliated to the Government. |
| Affiliated Entities: | The Local Entities affiliated to the DDA pursuant to this Law. |
| Smart and Digital Transformation: | All means supporting the transformation of the Emirate into a smart and digital city, including technical infrastructure; smart services and applications; smart Data platforms; and information technology and Data protection policies and strategies. |

Establishment of the DDA Article (3)

- a. Pursuant to this Law, a public authority named the "Dubai Digital Authority" is established. The DDA will have legal personality and the legal capacity required to undertake the acts and dispositions that ensure the achievement of its objectives. The DDA will be affiliated to the Crown Prince.

- b. The name "Smart Dubai Department", wherever mentioned in any legislation in force in the Emirate, is hereby replaced by "Dubai Digital Authority".

**Head Office of the DDA
Article (4)**

The head office of the DDA will be located in the Emirate.

**Objectives of the DDA
Article (5)**

The DDA aims to:

1. promote the Emirate as a digital hub and support its efforts towards achieving the Smart and Digital Transformation;
2. contribute to maintaining the high-quality digital services provided to all members and segments of the community;
3. create a safe digital environment aimed at protecting and monitoring the Data, Information Systems, and telecommunication networks of all sectors in the Emirate;
4. ensure the happiness and welfare of all members of the community through the use of digital technologies;
5. support decision makers for the purpose of formulating development policies, developing plans, and measuring the strategic performance of the Smart and Digital Transformation in the Emirate;
6. contribute to the stimulation of economic growth in the Emirate through facilitating the digital exchange of files and Data amongst Government Entities and Private Entities;
7. enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Government performance through enabling Government Entities to automate their work, activities, and services;
8. enhance public trust in digital and smart services; and
9. protect, Data, telecommunication networks, and Information Systems in the Emirate.

Functions and Organisational Structure of the DDA

Article (6)

- a. The DDA is the competent official entity in the Emirate that is exclusively authorised to represent the Government and the Local Entities before federal and local entities in the UAE, and regional and international organisations, in respect of all matters related to devising, approving, and administering plans, policies, and strategies in respect of information technology, Data, Smart and Digital Transformation, and Information Security. For these purposes, the DDA will, without limitation, have the authority to:
1. devise, develop, and standardise Data protection and Smart and Digital Transformation plans across the Emirate;
 2. coordinate and consult with the competent entities in the Emirate and the private sector in respect of establishing Data protection rules and standards;
 3. provide opinion on draft local and federal legislation and international treaties and conventions regulating the security, confidentiality, integrity, and integration of Government and personal Data, in coordination with the competent entities in the Emirate;
 4. monitor and audit Local Entities and evaluate their performance in respect of the matters that fall within the jurisdiction of the DDA, and provide them with guidance based on the observations resulting from the monitoring and audit processes; and
 5. exercise the duties and functions assigned to the Board of Directors of the Dubai Electronic Security Centre under the above-mentioned Law No. (11) of 2014, the resolutions issued in pursuance thereof, and the legislation in force in the Emirate.
- b. Effective as of the date on which this Law is issued, and for a period of six (6) months, the Director General will have the duties to:
1. restructure, in coordination with the competent entities in the Emirate, the duties and powers assigned to the Smart Dubai Department under the above-mentioned Law No. (1) of 2020, and the duties and powers assigned to the Affiliated Entities under the legislation in force; and submit a final proposal of the DDA duties and functions to the Crown Prince for approval;
 2. propose, in coordination with the competent entities in the Emirate, a mechanism for managing the financial budgets allocated to the Affiliated Entities, the employees working at these entities, and the organisational units of which these entities are comprised, as set forth in their respective organisational structures approved by the competent authority in the Emirate; and submit the final proposal in this regard to the Crown Prince for approval; and

3. review and analyse the assets owned by the Affiliated Entities as of the effective date of this Law for the purpose of determining the assets to be transferred to the DDA; and submit a final proposal in this regard to the Crown Prince for approval.

Affiliated Entities Article (7)

- a. Effective as of the date this Law comes into force, the following Local Entities are hereby affiliated to the DDA:
 1. the Smart Dubai Government Establishment;
 2. the Dubai Data Establishment;
 3. the Dubai Electronic Security Centre;
 4. the Dubai Statistics Centre; and
 5. any other Local Entity to be affiliated to the DDA pursuant to a resolution issued by the Crown Prince.
- b. Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-paragraph (b)(1) of Article (6) of this Law, an Affiliated Entity will retain the legal personality granted to it under the legislation establishing it or regulating its work; and will exercise the duties and powers assigned to it by such legislation under the DDA supervision, provided that these duties and powers do not conflict with the functions of the DDA.

Executive Body of the DDA Article (8)

- a. The executive body of the DDA will be comprised of the Director General and a number of administrative, finance, and technical employees.
- b. The employees of the DDA and Affiliated Entities will continue to be governed by the human resources legislation in force on the effective date of this Law, until a new human resources regulation is drafted by the DDA, in coordination with the competent entities in the Emirate, and is approved pursuant to a resolution issued by the Crown Prince.

Director General Article (9)

- a. A Director General will be appointed to the DDA pursuant to a decree of the Ruler.

- b. The employment rights of the Director General will be determined in accordance with the above-mentioned Law No. (8) of 2013 and the resolutions issued in pursuance thereof.
- c. The Director General will be directly responsible to the Crown Prince for performing the duties assigned to him under this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, and the legislation in force in the Emirate; and for performing any other duties assigned to him by the Ruler or the Crown Prince.

Functions of the Director General Article (10)

- a. The Director General will supervise the work and activities of the DDA; manage its affairs; and represent it in its relations with third parties. For these purposes, the Director General will have the duties and powers to:
 - 1. propose, in consultation with the competent entities in the Emirate, the general policy and strategic plans of the DDA as well as the Smart and Digital Transformation plan; present the same to the Crown Prince for approval; and follow up their implementation;
 - 2. propose digital government and Smart and Digital Transformation policies, strategies, and initiatives; review the same in consultation with the competent entities in the Emirate; and submit the same to the Crown Prince for approval;
 - 3. approve the initiatives, programmes, projects, studies, and recommendations that are related to the work and activities of the DDA, and that contribute to the achievement of its objectives;
 - 4. approve and review the work plans and programmes of the DDA, and assess their applicability on an annual basis;
 - 5. prepare the draft annual budget and financial statements of the DDA, and present the same to the competent entities in the Emirate for approval;
 - 6. submit periodic reports to the Executive Council of the Emirate of Dubai on the implementation of the Smart and Digital Transformation plan; on the approved general policies, strategies, and initiatives; and on the performance indicators and programmes related to implementation of the information technology and Smart and Digital Transformation strategic plans of the Emirate; as well as annual performance reports on the work and activities of the DDA;
 - 7. supervise the daily work and the employees of the DDA, and appoint the technical and administrative staff required to perform the work of the DDA in accordance with the legislation in force;

8. propose the organisational structure of the DDA; present it to the competent entities in the Emirate to provide their opinion in accordance with the relevant adopted procedures; and submit the same to the Crown Prince for approval;
 9. approve the bylaws and resolutions regulating the administrative, financial, and technical work of the DDA;
 10. conclude the contracts, agreements, and memoranda of understanding required for the achievement of the DDA objectives and for enabling the DDA to perform its duties and functions;
 11. form specialised permanent and temporary committees and work teams, and determine their duties and powers; and
 12. exercise any other duties or powers required for the achievement of the DDA objectives and for enabling it to perform the duties and functions assigned to it by the Ruler or the Crown Prince.
- b. The Director General may delegate any of his duties and powers under paragraph (a) of this Article to any of the Executive Directors/CEOs at the DDA, provided that such delegation is specific and in writing.

Financial Resources of the DDA Article (11)

The financial resources of the DDA will consist of:

1. the financial appropriations allocated to the DDA in the General Budget of the Government;
2. fees and charges for the services provided by the DDA; and
3. any other resources approved by the Crown Prince.

Accounts and Financial Year of the DDA Article (12)

- a. In managing its accounts and records, the DDA will apply the rules and principles of government accounting.
- b. The Financial Year of the DDA will commence on 1 January and will end on 31 December of each Year.

**Cooperation with the DDA
Article (13)**

- a. Local Entities must fully cooperate with the DDA and the Affiliated Entities; meet their requirements; and provide them with the Data, information, documents, and statistics they require and deem necessary for the achievement of their objectives and exercise of their functions under this Law, the resolutions issued in pursuance hereof, and the legislation in force in the Emirate.
- b. The DDA will inform the Local Entities of all the requirements and conditions that must be observed in respect of Data, Smart and Digital Transformation, and information technology. Where required, the DDA must submit to the Crown Prince a detailed report on the level of cooperation of the Local Entities in satisfying the relevant requirements and conditions prescribed by the DDA.

**Issuing Implementing Resolutions
Article (14)**

The Crown Prince or his authorised representative will issue the resolutions required for the implementation of the provisions of this Law.

**Repeals
Article (15)**

- a. The above-mentioned Law No. (1) of 2020 and Resolution No. (15) of 2020 are hereby repealed. Any provision in any other legislation will also be repealed to the extent that it contradicts the provisions of this Law.
- b. The legislation issued in implementation of the above-mentioned Law No. (1) of 2020 will continue in force, to the extent that they do not contradict this Law and the legislation in force in the Emirate, until new superseding legislation is issued.

**Publication and Commencement
Article (16)**

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 3 March 2021
Corresponding to 19 Rajab 1442 A.H.