The Vice President and Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, in his capacity as the Ruler of Dubai has issued Law no. 21 of 2015 concerning the judicial fees applicable in the Dubai Court. The said Law came into effect on 01/09/2015, wherein the applicable judicial fee for pursuing a case in the Civil Courts of Dubai have been revised. The main criteria behind introducing this Law is to ensure that the Courts do not hear or preside over any case, application, appeal, cassation, execution or objection filed by a litigant without paying the requisite court fee unless the litigant has obtained an order from the Head of the Competent Court exempting him to pay a portion of the requisite court fee or the entire court fee. In the event of any disagreement over the quantum of the court fee to be paid by a litigant that intends to file a dispute with the Dubai Courts, the issue is referred to the Head of the Competent Court and the order issued by the respective Head of the Court will be final and binding.

However, if the competent court finds out during the course of the case, that the court fee deposited with the court at the time of registering the case does not reflect the final relief sought by the litigant or is less than the actual court fee due and payable to the Court hearing the case, the court will order the plaintiff to pay the difference in the Court fee failing which the case will not be heard. If the hearing of the case is closed and the plaintiff has not paid the full court fee, the competent court will issue an order and bind the plaintiff to pay the difference in the Court fee.

The said Law makes a provision to recover the difference in the Court fee from the judgment debtor, if the judgment creditor does not collect the judgment execution note within 60 days from the date of pronouncing the judgment. The Court Secretary/ Officer is required to calculate the court fees on the copy of the judgment and obtain an order from the Court to execute the judgment in order to recover the difference in the Court fee.

In relation to filing a case before the Reconciliation Committee, the litigant is required to pay half of the due court fee and the balance of the court fee shall be paid to the court at the time of registering the dispute with the Dubai Courts.

A new introduction in the revised applicable judicial fees is seen in the area of labour disputes wherein the Court permits an exemption of Court fees only up to a claim amount of AED 100,000/-. Any claim amount above AED 100,001/- , requires the laborer to pay a court fee of 5% of the claim amount to a maximum of AED 20,000/- as court fee.

With regards to disputes in relation to issues of domestic violence relating to children and women, the Dubai court provides for an exemption of Court fee, if the application for exemption of Court fee is approved by the Dubai Authority for Welfare of Women and Children.

Court fee structure

The Judicial Court Fee Law has revised the court fee structure due and payable by litigants in order to register their case with the relevant department of the Dubai Courts. The court fee due and payable at the first instance court stage is calculated at 6% of the claim amount with a

minimum of AED 500/- and maximum of AED 40,000/-. Below is table reflecting the first instance court fee structure, which is as follows:

Claim value	Court fee
Upto AED 500,000/-	AED 20,000/-
From AED 500,001/- to AED 1,000,000/-	AED 30,000/-
Above AED 1,000,000/-	AED 40,000/-

In relation to the application of appeal court fee, several new provisions have been introduced. The appeal court fee is set at 50% of the court fee paid at the first instance court stage except for in personal status cases. At the time of filing an appeal, the court requires the appellant to pay a sum of AED 1,000/- as security deposit. The said amount will be refunded to the appellant if he wins the case. Alternatively, the appellant will forfeit the security deposit if the appeal court does not rule in his favor. If a party is appealing only a portion of the judgment, the court fee shall be calculated on the basis of that particular appeal only. If there are several appellants and a judgment is issued against each them (not jointly or severally) then each appellant will be required to pay the appeal court fee regardless of whether or not they submit a separate appeal note. If there are several appeals on the same subject matter, then the appellant will not be required to pay additional appeal court fee for any subsequent appeal. As such, if the case at the appeal stage is referred back to the lower court, which in turns goes to appeal, the appellant will not be required to pay an additional appeal court fee.

The Cassation Court fee is set at AED 2,000/- . The litigant filing a Cassation application is required to pay a security amount of AED 3,000/- and a sum of AED 1,000/- as court fee to stay the execution of the judgment. Upon obtaining a successful in the case, the deposit of AED 3,000/- will be refunded to the litigant, if he wins the Cassation application. The Execution Court fee is set at AED 5,000/- and the Court fee for staying the execution proceedings is set at AED 1,000/-. The litigant will be required to forfeit the security paid to the Court if the Cassation is dismissed wholly or partially or is not allowed.

In relation to the execution of the court judgment, the judgment creditor is required to pay the 2% of the execution amount as the execution court fee with the minimum being AED 200/- and maximum execution court fee being AED 5,000/- If a judgment creditor intends to file for execution of a judgment for an un-estimated amount, the judgment creditor will be required pay 20% of the first instance court fee as the execution court fee.

In criminal cases, the litigant is required to pay a security deposit in the amount of AED 500/- for misdemeanor cases and AED 200/- for any violation cases. These fees are refundable if the applicant win the case, otherwise, Court will confiscate the security deposit. For the purpose of

ratifying or nullifying a final arbitral award, the court is calculated on the basis of the judgment amount. For the enforcement of a foreign judgment issued out the UAE, the court is calculated on the value of the judgment amount and if the value is unknown, the court fees will be calculated on the value of the subject matter of the dispute.

In respect of un-estimated cases, the court fee for filing an un-estimated case is set at AED 12,000/-. In an un-estimated case, the claim value is determined upon issuing of the judgment. As such, the judgment will not be executable until the requisite court fees has been paid.

If a case filed before the Dubai Courts has several fixed amount and all the claim amount stem from the same legal reason, the litigant will be required to pay the entire court fee. If a litigant seek a certain relief and also claims for a relief in the alternative, he will be required to pay the court fee in terms of the higher value of the two. If a litigant files a case comprising of a claim with a fixed amount and an un-estimated claim, the litigant will be required to pay the Court fee for the fixed value amount and the un-estimated amount.

In property cases, the percentage of the Court fee in relation to shared ownership of the property, each applicant will be required to pay one percent of the value of his share. In order to dissolve partnership in a movable or immovable property, the applicant is required to pay one percent of the value of his share.

Law no. 21 of 2015 concerning the judicial fees applicable in the Dubai Court provides for Schedule 1 and 2, which contains details of the applicable court fee for various court applications to be submitted to the concerned courts. Kindly refer to the table for further details.