

# Key Facts

## DIFC Free Zone

Since its inception in 2004, the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) has become a major financial hub for the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Located midway between the global financial centres of London in the west and Singapore in the east, DIFC fills a vital time-zone gap with a workday that bridges the market and business hours of financial centres in both Asia and North America.

DIFC supports a full spectrum of financial and non-financial business activities, including banking and capital markets, professional services, insurance, wealth management, technology and trading.

Trident Trust is able to provide services to assist with the incorporation of a DIFC Free Zone company and obtaining residency visas for its shareholders and employees.

### Advantages

- 100% foreign ownership
- 50-year guarantee of zero taxes on corporate income and profits
- No restriction on capital repatriation
- Hub and spoke model
- Common law framework
- Globally recognised regulator

### Company Types

- Company limited by shares
- Limited liability company
- Foreign recognized company
- Limited liability partnership
- Recognized limited liability partnership
- General partnership

- Recognized partnership
- Limited partnership
- Recognized limited partnership
- Investment company (fund)
- Protected cell company
- Special purpose company
- Representative office

### Residency Visa

A DIFC Company may apply for shareholder and/or employee residence visas after receiving its licence. The residence permit is valid for three years for the shareholders and for two years for employees. The number of visas that may be applied for by the company depends on the size of the office (one visa per 9 sq. m.). A Flexi Office package offers up to two residence visas.

The minimum age at which a UAE residence visa can be obtained is 21 years old.

The retirement age for expatriates in the UAE is 60 years old; employment residence visas are not issued for those 60 and above. However, the shareholders of the company can still obtain a UAE residence visa regardless of age.

Holders of a residence visa must not remain outside of the UAE for more than 180 consecutive days.

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## DIFC Free Zone

### Significant Features

Company Legislation	DIFC Companies Regulations, DIFC Single Family Office Regulations
Time to Incorporate	20-40 working days
Possibility of Migration	No
Tax Rate	VAT at 5%
Shareholders	1-50
Residency Requirements	No
Share Capital	Minimum of USD50,000
Bearer Shares	No
Beneficial Ownership Disclosure	Shareholder, Director and Manager details are published on the DIFC website. Beneficial Owner details are provided to the DIFC but are not publicly available.
Director	Minimum of 2 (depends on company type)

Manager	One (individual)
Secretary	One (individual)
Local Presence Requirements	No
Availability of Shelf Companies	No
Meetings	No
Annual General Meetings	Yes
Annual Accounts	Yes
Filing of Accounts	No
Audit Requirement	Yes, must be provided to the Registrar by end of financial year
Registered Office Required	Yes

# Offices

## The Americas/Caribbean

### Bahamas

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### British Virgin Islands

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### Cayman Islands

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### Nevis

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### Meridian Trust Company Ltd

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### Panama

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### United States

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## Asia

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## EMEA

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