

On 11 May 2020, the Dubai Department of Economic Development (“**DED**”) made amendments to the guidelines for the reopening of malls and other businesses (“**Guidelines**”). The Guidelines were first issued on 22 April 2020 after three straight weeks of complete lockdown in the Emirate to ensure a gradual and safe reopening of economic activity. The Guidelines among others specified the opening hours, precautionary measures, scope of economic activity, number of allowed visitors etc.

The amendments have been made to the Wholesale and Retail Trade and Offices, Office Buildings and Social Welfare sectors in order to kick off the stalled commercial activities and to allow a gradual transition to normalcy. However, despite these amendments the health & safety measures aimed at curbing the spread of Covid-19 remain paramount as restrictions with regard to a 30% ceiling on the staffing capacity, refusal of entrance of elderly and children to shopping malls are still very much in place. Furthermore, businesses are still required to adhere to all the precautionary and sterilization measures announced under the initial guidelines. The following are notable amendments made to the Guidelines:

Wholesale and Retail Trade

- Businesses to revert back to normal operating hours post Ramadan.
- Restrictions on Sales and Promotion are lifted.
- Restriction on “No Refund / No Return Policy” removed.
- Retail shops are allowed to utilize changing and fitting rooms.

Offices, Office Buildings and Social Welfare

- Businesses to revert back to normal operating hours post Ramadan
- Opening of pantry and coffee stations at/around the offices.

The above-stated amendments clearly highlight the DED’s eagerness to restore the business activity in the Dubai while adhering to the newly implemented health and safety standards. It is expected that in coming days further relaxations will be introduced by the DED in a pursuit to take Dubai’s economy to a pre pandemic situation.

We will keep you abreast of the evolving situation. For further updates please visit our COVID-19 Legal Resource Centre.

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