



**Client Handbook**  
**Incorporation/Registration of a DIFC Entity**  
**General Partnership (GP)**



## **Contents:**

- I. Introduction**
- II. General Partnership**
- III. In Principle Approval**
- IV. Operating Location**
- V. Name Reservation**
- VI. DIFC Client Portal**
  - a. First Time Access to DIFC Client Portal**
  - b. Submission on the DIFC Client Portal**
  - c. Required Documents**
  - d. Top up your balance on the Portal**
  - e. Fees**
  
- VII. About DIFC**

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



## I. Introduction

This user guide outlines the requirements and processes for incorporating a General Partnership (GP) at the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).

## II. General Partnership (GP)

To set up an entity as a General Partnership in DIFC, it must be appoint at least 2 General Partners.

For more details about this legal structure, please refer to DIFC laws and regulations available on: <http://www.difc.ae/legal-database>

## III. In Principle Approval

Prior to applying for the registration of a GP and depending on the type of the proposed business activity, an in-principle approval should be obtained either from the DIFC Authority (DIFCA) or the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA).

*DFSA's in-principle approval* will be applicable for GPs whose proposed business scope falls under financial activities. *DIFCA's in-principle approval* is required for GPs whose proposed business scope falls under non-financial activities. For the list of non-financial activities, please visit: <http://www.difc.ae/non-financial-activities>. You may also contact the DIFC Business Development on [setup@difc.ae](mailto:setup@difc.ae) for further details.

Upon receiving the in-principle approval, the company may proceed with securing a registered address (an operating location) within the Dubai International Financial Centre either through leasing, sharing office space or purchasing a commercial/retail unit. Sharing office space is allowed only for affiliates and is subject to approval by the Business Development Department of DIFC Authority.

## IV. Operating Location

In order to complete the registration application with DIFC, please ensure that the entity's operating location is registered before submitting the application on the DIFC Client Portal:

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



- If you are operating from a leased/ subleased unit, please ensure your lease agreement is registered with the DIFC Registrar of Real Property. For more details, email [rorp@difc.ae](mailto:rorp@difc.ae). If your lease is signed with DIFC Investments LLC, lease registration will not be required as it will be completed automatically by DIFC Investments LLC.
- If you are sharing a space with an affiliate, please obtain a No Objection Letter (NOC) from DIFCA. For more information, please contact your Business Development Relationship Manager from DIFCA.
- If you are operating from a purchased unit, the unit must be owned by the entity itself or by the sole shareholder. Please contact our Registrar of Real Properties team on [rorp@difc.ae](mailto:rorp@difc.ae) to apply for “Self-Occupy”.

## V. Name Reservation (optional)

If you would like to reserve a name, before proceeding with the application for Registration of the GP, you can submit an Application for Name Reservation in hard copy along with the fees as per the table below to the DIFC Registry Services. Nonetheless, name reservation is an optional service that is provided by the DIFC Registrar of Companies. A proposed name can be reserved for a period of 90 calendar days.

Entity Type	Name Reservation Fees
Non Retail	\$800
Retail	\$340

To access the Application for Name Reservation, please visit: <http://www.difc.ae/downloads>

## VI. DIFC Client Portal

Once you obtain the in-principle approval and a registered operating location in the DIFC, you can start filling the Application for Incorporation/Registration on the DIFC Client Portal.

The DIFC Client Portal is a system developed by DIFC to extend and facilitate the services of the DIFC Registrar of Companies. If you wish to set up an entity in DIFC, you must use the DIFC Client Portal to submit your application. The sections below will guide you on the process and requirements to submit the Application for Incorporation/Registration on the portal:

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



a) *First Time Access to DIFC client portal*

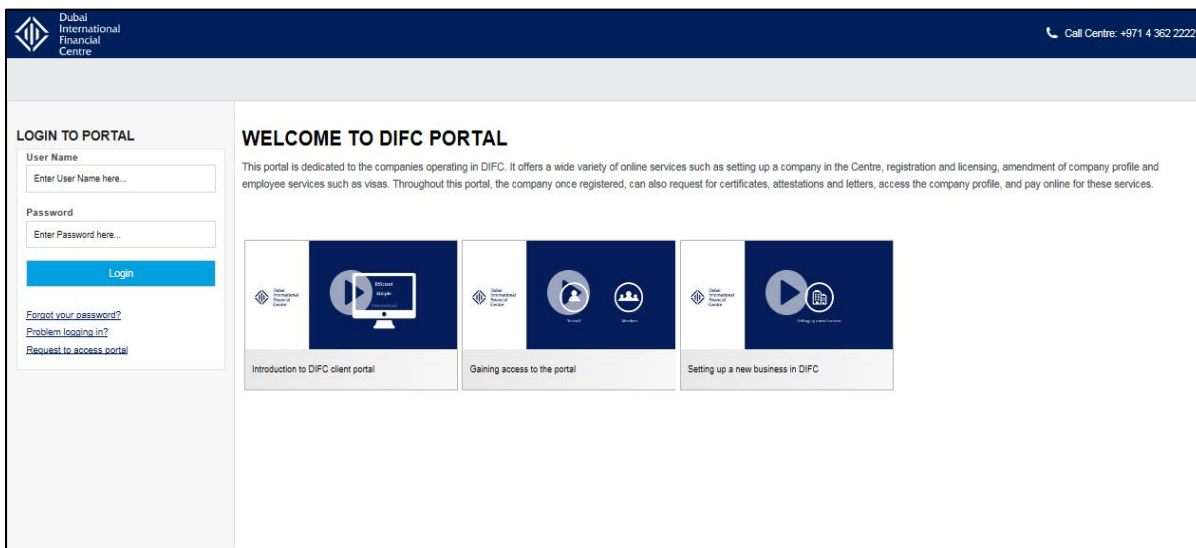
Upon receiving the in-principle approval from DIFCA or DFSA depending on the scope of the proposed business activities of the GP, the entity will be granted access to the DIFC Client Portal.

Below please find the steps in more detail:

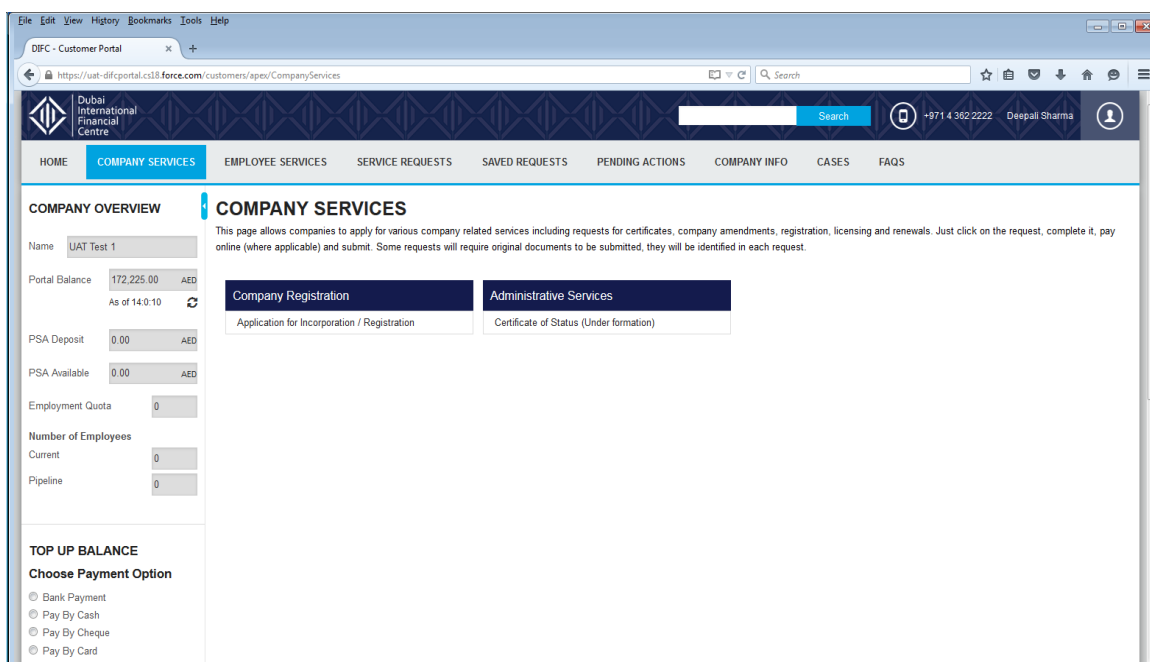
- DIFC Registry Services will send you an email requesting further details to create the entity account which include:
  - i. Entity Name
  - ii. Business Activity(s)
  - iii. Trading Name
  - iv. Entity type
  - v. Portal User First Name
  - vi. Portal User Last Name
  - vii. Portal User Email
  - viii. Portal User Phone No
- The account will be created once the details are received. The appointed person will receive an email with a link to fill a user access form.
- The appointed person must complete the details and attach a valid passport copy. On submission, the system will send the appointed person an email with the portal username and a link to set the password.
- The appointed person must use the portal username each time to login to the portal.

b) *Submission on the DIFC client portal*

- Log in to the DIFC Client Portal: <https://portal.difc.ae/> using your user name and password.



- Once logged in, navigate to Company Services by clicking on the 'Company Services' icon. For GP registration, you will need to click on 'Application for Incorporation/Registration' under Company Registration.



NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



- In the first section, you are required to select your entity's legal structure and fill information related to your entity's name. Please ensure the correct legal structure is selected as this will identify the structure of the application, the fees and the sections to be filled.

HOME	COMPANY SERVICES	EMPLOYEE SERVICES	SERVICE REQUESTS	SAVED REQUESTS	PENDING ACTIONS	COMPANY INFO	CASES	FAQS							
<b>Entity Registration Details</b>															
<p><b>Entity Registration Details</b></p> <p>Application for Registration This request is for the set up of a company in DIFC covering the registration and licensing. Just click on each of the sections shown on the left hand panel, complete it, save and press on Next. On 'Review and Finalize', make sure that you are okay with all the details of the completed sections and click on 'Finalize &amp; Proceed'. In this step, you can also cancel the request, and create a new one. On 'Upload Required Documents', you will be asked to add supporting documents for the request, some of which will be generated 'Generated Documents' of the said section. Upload all the required documents, and click on Next. Navigate to 'Submit Request' to finalize the submission.</p> <p>In this request, you are asked to submit some of the documents in original copies - they are identified in 'Upload Required Documents'. Should you have any clarifications, please email portal@difc.ae</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Save   Cancel   Next</p>															
<b>Customer Correspondence Details</b> <span style="float: right;">Required Information</span>															
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Client</td> <td>UAT Customer 74</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Email</td> <td>aiya.alzarouni@difc.ae</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobile</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>									Client	UAT Customer 74	Email	aiya.alzarouni@difc.ae	Mobile		
Client	UAT Customer 74														
Email	aiya.alzarouni@difc.ae														
Mobile															
<b>Entity Type Details</b>															
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Company Type</td> <td>Financial - related</td> <td rowspan="3"> <p>For advise on Legal Entity Type, please contact roc.helpdesk@difc.ae. In case the company is opening a branch, select the applicable Recognized legal structure. Please indicate whether you are creating a start-up or registering the transfer of an entity to the DIFC</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal Entity Type</td> <td>--None--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registration Type</td> <td>--None--</td> </tr> </table>									Company Type	Financial - related	<p>For advise on Legal Entity Type, please contact roc.helpdesk@difc.ae. In case the company is opening a branch, select the applicable Recognized legal structure. Please indicate whether you are creating a start-up or registering the transfer of an entity to the DIFC</p>	Legal Entity Type	--None--	Registration Type	--None--
Company Type	Financial - related	<p>For advise on Legal Entity Type, please contact roc.helpdesk@difc.ae. In case the company is opening a branch, select the applicable Recognized legal structure. Please indicate whether you are creating a start-up or registering the transfer of an entity to the DIFC</p>													
Legal Entity Type	--None--														
Registration Type	--None--														

- Once your legal structure is selected as 'GP', the system will load the sections to be filled. You need to complete all the mandatory fields in the first section to be able to proceed to the other section. In this section you must also indicate if you wish to apply for a new establishment card for the company. Please note that establishment card is an optional service and is required only if the entity wishes to sponsor employees. Once completed, click 'Next'.
- The following sections need to be filled on the system to submit the application. Post submission, DIFC Registry Services will process your application within five working days. In case of further information required or documents to be uploaded, the portal user will be notified by email and the same will be accessible under the 'Pending Actions' tab.

Section Name	Description
Proposed Registered Address / Operating Locations	In this section, you can add your operating location(s). In case you were operating from more than one unit, you may select one or more to be your registered address. Leased/subleased properties can be viewed only if the lease agreement is registered with the DIFC Registrar of Real Property. If your lease agreement is signed with

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



	DIFC investments LLC, the lease agreement will be registered automatically by the landlord.
Authorized Signatory Details	In this section, you need to add the authorized signatories for the proposed entity. The authorized signatories will be listed in the license issued by the DIFC. A minimum of one Authorized Signatory is required. All the details must be entered as per the passport.
Details of General Partners	In this section, you need to add a General Partner for the proposed entity. A minimum of two General Partners are required. All the details must be entered as per the passport (if the General Partner is an individual) or the certificate (if the General Partner is a body corporate).
Beneficial / Ultimate Owner Details	In this section, you need to provide details of the ultimate beneficial owners for body corporate General Partners. This section is required only if the proposed entity has a body corporate as a General Partner.
Data Protection	In this section, you need to specify whether the entity will be processing personal data or not. In case of processing personal data, you need to specify the manner of processing personal data. This section also requires the details of the Data Controller appointed by the proposed entity.
DFSA Approval	This section will be enabled for financial entities only. In this section, you can enter the date of receiving the DFSA draft license.
Declaration	In this section, you will specify the name and capacity of the person authorized to set up the proposed entity.
Government Services Authorized Signatory Details	In this section, you need to add the authorized signatories who will be responsible to sign documents related to Government Services such as salary certificate, internal transfer application etc.. It is independent from the Authorised Signatory details indicated in the earlier section. A maximum of 4 signatory can be added. All the details must be entered as per the passport.  Please note that this section will be required only if the entity is applying for an establishment card.
Review & Finalize	In this section, you will be asked to review the full application before moving to the 'upload documents' section. Please ensure all the details are accurate and

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.





	valid as changes cannot be made once the request is finalized.
Upload Required Documents	In this section, you will be required to upload all the documents as per the requirements section of this user guide. The system will generate three declarations that must be printed, signed by the authorized individuals and then uploaded as part of this section.
Submit Request	Once the required documents are uploaded, you can submit the application for registration. Upon submission, the system will direct you to the payment page to confirm deduction of the fees from your company balance. Please ensure you have enough balance prior to submitting your request.

For the purpose of opening a bank account, the GP may request a 'Certificate of Status' through the DIFC Client Portal while

under formation to facilitate the opening of the bank account.

*c) Required documents*

The following documents will be required to set up a GP in the DIFC. Please note that all the documents must be scanned and uploaded on the portal. However, a list of following documents needs to be submitted in the original format as indicated in the table below:

<b>Requirements to Incorporate a General Partnership</b>	<b>To upload</b>	<b>Original Required</b>
Approval from DIFCA (required for entities undertaking non-financial services).	Yes	No
Personnel Sponsorship Agreement. This document is generated upon finalizing the request on DIFC Client Portal and must be signed by the company's authorised signatory.  Please note that this document will be required only if the entity is applying for an establishment card.	Yes	No
Passport copies of individuals listed on the Application for Registration as Authorized Signatories, Partners and the Government Services Authorized Signatories if applicable	Yes	No
DFSA In principle Approval and Draft License ( required for Financial entities only)	Yes	No
NOC for sharing registered space issued by DIFC Authority. This is required only if the entity is sharing space with another entity.	Yes	No

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



If the entity is undertaking legal services, an NOC issued by the Legal Affairs Department of Dubai approving the entity registration in the DIFC is required	Yes	No
Relationship Declaration. This document is generated upon finalizing the request on DIFC Client Portal and must be signed by each individual appointed by the entity as Director, Company Secretary.	Yes	No
Government Services Authorized Signatory. This document is generated upon finalizing the request and must be signed by each of the individual appointed as Government Service Authorized Signatory  Please note that this document will be required only if the entity is applying for an establishment card.	Yes	No
Declaration GP. This document is generated upon finalizing the request on DIFC Client Portal and must be signed by the shareholders or the person authorized by the body corporate shareholder.	Yes	No
DP Declaration. This document is generated upon finalizing the request on DIFC Client Portal and must be signed by the appointed data controller.	Yes	No
<i>If an incorporator (i.e. Partner) is a body corporate, the documents below are required. If any documents are not in the English Language, they must be accompanied by a legal translation certified to the satisfaction of the Registrar.</i>		
A copy of the incorporator's current Certificate of Incorporation or Registration in its place of origin, or a document of similar effect, certified by the relevant authority in the jurisdiction in which it is incorporated or registered.	Yes	Yes
Resolution of the Partners of the body corporate or approval of the Partners: a) Authorizing the registration of the Partnership in the DIFC. b) Appointing the person authorized to sign documents on behalf of the body corporate in relation to the registration of the new Partnership c) Appointing the person authorized to sign documents in all matters following registration of the new Company	Yes	Yes

*d) Top Up your balance on the portal*

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



In order to submit the Application for Incorporation/Registration on the portal, the company must have sufficient portal balance. Below please find the steps to top up your portal balance:

- Log in to the DIFC Client Portal: <https://portal.difc.ae/> using your user name and password.
- To top up your balance, please enter the amount and select the payment method on the left hand panel of the screen. For wire transfers, ensure your business partner number is included in the narration provided by the bank. This will help us identify the source of the funds and top up your balance faster.

For more information, please refer to the user video guides available on the front page of the DIFC Client Portal or email us on [portal@difc.ae](mailto:portal@difc.ae).

#### e) Fees

The table below lists the fees to incorporate a General Partnership as per DIFC laws and regulations.

#### *Registrar of Companies Fees:*

<b>Service</b>	<b>Non-Retail</b>	<b>Retail</b>
Application for Registration of a General Partnership	US\$ 4,000	US\$ 1,700
Commercial License fee (payable upon registration and annual renewal)	US\$ 12,000	US\$ 5,100
New Establishment Card Fees (if applicable)	US\$ 618 (Normal) US\$ 656 (Express)	
Add Authorized Signatory	US\$ 27	
Personnel Sponsorship Agreement Deposit	US\$ 680	

*Com*

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.



*Commissioner of Data Protection Fees:*

The fees below will be decided based on the options selected on the Data Protection section at the time of filling the Incorporation/Registration Application.

<b>Services</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Non-Financial</b>	<b>Retail</b>
Entity does not intend to process personal data	Nil	Nil	Nil
Prior to or immediately upon personal data processing	\$1,000	\$500	\$200
Permit to transfer personal data outside DIFC under Article 12(1)(a) of the Data Protection Law	\$250	\$150	\$50
Permit to process sensitive personal data under Article 10(2) of the Data Protection Law	\$250	\$150	\$50

NOTICE and DISCLAIMER – This document and any attachment are to be used only for their intended purpose and may not be altered or modified in any way without prior written permission. All content in this document and any attachment is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered complete, up to date or a substitute for specific professional advice.