



NEW UAE CYBERCRIME LAW COMES INTO FORCE



MennaTullah Naser

Legal Counsel

T: +971 7 233 8927
 F: +971 7 233 0044
 E: mtnaser@slglaw.cc
 www.slglaw.cc

The new UAE Cybercrime Law (Federal Decree Law No. 5 of 2021) takes effect this January 2, 2022 bringing major amendments to Federal Law 5 of 2012. The new reforms aim to protect the rights of citizens and residents against cybercrimes.

Here are some of the major penalties brought by the new law:

1. Cryptocurrency

- Promoting, advertising and engaging with unlicensed cryptocurrencies can be subject to detention and, or a fine between Dh20,000 and Dh500,000.
- Promoting an electronic currency or creating a fake company online to collect money from the public without a license for the purpose of investment faces a five-year prison term or a fine starting from Dh250,000 fine up to Dh1 million or both.

2. Fake News

- Publishing and circulation of fake news and rumors on social media could result to a minimum fine of Dh100,000 and one-year jail sentence. The penalty increases to two years in prison and a minimum Dh200,000 fine if the crime is committed during pandemics, emergencies and crises.
- Using or modifying electronic robots to share, re-share or circulate fake news can result to a prison term of two years or a fine not less than Dh100,000 up to one million, or both.
- Publishing information that does not meet media content criteria can result to a fine ranging from Dh30,000 to Dh300,000, or both.



3. Fake emails, websites and impersonation

- Fake email, account or website in impersonation of another person are subject to a fine ranging from Dh50,000 to Dh200,000 or a jail term or both. The penalty increases to two years in prison if the offender used the fake account to defame the impersonated.

4. Online surveys and polls

- Conducting online surveys and polls without a permit can result to a jail term or a fine starting from Dh100,000 to Dh500,000 or both penalties.

5. Online begging

- Using online platforms to beg for money or seek illegitimate help from federal and local authorities can land the offender in prison for three months or a minimum fine of Dh10,000 or both.

6. Defamation

- Defaming a foreign country can result in a jail term of six months or a fine ranging from Dh100,000 to Dh500,000 or both.

7. Interfering with government property

- Anyone who intentionally damages, suspends or stops a website of a government entity or vital facility can be jailed and fined between Dh500,000 and Dh3 million.

8. Taking pictures of others

- Taking pictures of someone in public without permission is now a punishable crime in the UAE with six months jail time or a fine between Dh150,000 to 500,000 or both

Offenders of the law can file a grievance request to the relevant authority within three days of their knowledge of the verdict. In case the grievance request gets rejected, the offender is given the right to appeal in the federal court in Abu Dhabi within a week of receiving the rejection.

Under the new law, the court is allowed to place the offender under surveillance, prohibit the use of social media or online platforms, shut down online platforms permanently or partially, or place the offender under rehabilitation. The court also has the authority to confiscate the devices, software, content or other means used in committing the crime, and delete any breaching material used. The law also allows the authority of the General Attorney to issue a case to block a website or platform that violates the law or commits any of the cybercrimes directed at UAE, regardless whether or not the platform is in the UAE or abroad.