



Qatar enforces Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Trademark Law

On August 10, 2023, Qatar has become the most recent among the six GCC member states to adopt the GCC Trademark Law. To that effect, the Qatari Minister of Commerce and Industry had issued the Decree No. 56 of 2023, which was published in Qatar Official Gazette No. 9 of 2023 dated July 9, 2023.

The GCC Trademark Law is a unified trademark law that was enacted by the Gulf Cooperation Council to create uniformity between the trademark laws of its member states and thereby to promote harmony in the procedures for registration and enforcement of trademark rights across the region. However, under the arrangement no unified filing procedure has been adopted and applicants are required to seek protection of their marks separately in each of the member states that has promulgated the GCC Trademark Law.

While already effective in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia, and now Qatar has also joined this list, UAE is the only remaining GCC member country where the GCC Trademark Law is not yet in force.

As a result of coming into force of the GCC Trademark Law in Qatar, the following major changes may be noted in general:

- 1.Replacement of the trademark related provisions included in the Qatari law no.9 of 2002 pertaining to trademarks, trade names, geographical indications and industrial designs by the GCC Trademark Law.
- 2.Expanded definition of trademark in the GCC trademark law permitting inter alia registration of sound and smell marks as well
- 3.Introduction of new deadlines (mostly shorter deadlines) relating to several procedures including the following:

Legal Period related to	Old Deadline	New Deadline
Compliance with the official requirements	6 months	90 days
Payment of publication fee	no deadline	30 days
Payment of registration fee	no deadline	30 days
Filing of opposition to trademark registration	4 months	60 days
Filing of counter-statement to opposition	2 months	60 days

Increase in the official fees for certain services and decrease in the official fees for others.

Item	Old Fee	New Fee
Publication fee	QAR325	QAR500
Registration fee	QAR2025	QAR3000
Renewal fee	QAR2025	QAR3000
Late renewal with surcharge	QAR3000	QAR4000

The unified provisions of the GCC Trademark Law across all the GCC member countries may simplify and enhance brand owners' understanding of their legal rights/ obligations in relation to their trademarks and facilitate management of large trademark portfolios in the region substantially.