

GCC IP Update: Extensions Granted for POA Submissions in UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain

As the GCC region is grappling with steep, never-before-seen challenges owing to the ongoing tough times, the IP offices of the region have stepped forward in order to mitigate the impact of these happenings on the trademark rights owners, by introducing temporary extensions for the submission of Powers of Attorney (POA) and legalized documents for IP matters. These measures, implemented by the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain, aim to address ongoing logistical challenges and provide greater flexibility to applicants and IP practitioners. The move comes in response to operational disruptions and remote working arrangements, ensuring that applicants and rights holders are not adversely impacted by delays in document legalization and filing processes.

UAE:

The UAE Ministry of Economy issued Administrative Decision No. (2) of 2026, introducing a temporary extension system for submitting legalized documents in trademark matters.

Key highlights include:

- The standard 90-day deadline for submitting legalized POAs remains in place
- Applicants may request monthly extensions after the initial deadline
- Additional 30-day grace periods can be granted upon request
- Importantly, no additional official fees are imposed for these extensions

In parallel, earlier guidance confirms that even where extensions are exceptional, authorities may allow an additional 30-day extension beyond the standard period to accommodate delays in document legalization.

Qatar:

While no single unified decision mirrors the UAE announcement, Qatar has adopted a more flexible approach in practice regarding POA legalization requirements.

Authorities have shown leniency in accepting delayed legalized POAs, particularly in light of regional and logistical constraints. Extensions and procedural accommodations are being applied to ensure continuity of IP filings and prosecution.

The Qatar IP office has issued official notification confirming the following measures:

- A trademark application can be submitted with a POA, temporarily authenticated by the Qatari Embassy, or even without the POA, but with an undertaking to submit the original, legalized POA later
- A period of 90 days shall be granted from the date of application submission to complete the authentication by the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs and submit the original copy of the POA. The Department may extend this period as necessary.
- The application examination and acceptance procedures shall be completed, provided that the original copy of the POA is presented before the final registration procedures are finalized.

Bahrain:

Bahrain has taken a more formal legislative approach through Ministerial Decision No 13 of 2026, effective March 17, 2026.

Key features:

- A temporary extension of up to 90 days for submitting legalized documents, including POAs
- Applicants may file without legalization initially, provided justification is given
- The extension applies to trademarks, patents, utility models, and industrial designs

Failure to comply with the extended deadline may result in the application being treated as not filed.

The introduction of POA submission extensions across the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain reflects a pragmatic and business-friendly approach by regional IP offices. By easing strict procedural timelines, these jurisdictions are supporting applicants while maintaining the integrity of their IP systems.

As these measures are temporary, stakeholders are advised to remain vigilant and prepare for a potential return to standard requirements once conditions stabilize.