

Patent Protection in Bahrain Through the PCT: A Practical Overview

Bahrain is a PCT Contracting State, and the Directorate of Foreign Trade & Industrial Property, National Patent Office, in Manama acts as its national patent office. The WIPO PCT Applicant's Guide entry for Bahrain, valid from October 1, 2026, provides the current requirements applicable to applicants filing through Bahrain. This article summarizes the key practical points for practitioners considering PCT filings and national-phase entry in the Kingdom.

The International Phase

Bahrain's office acts as a receiving office for Bahraini nationals and residents, alongside the International Bureau of WIPO. Applications and requests may be filed in Arabic or English.

The competent International Searching Authorities are the Austrian Patent Office, the European Patent Office, the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). The Austrian Patent Office, the EPO, SAIP and the USPTO also act as International Preliminary Examining Authorities, subject to the applicable conditions, including conditions relating to the authority that carried out the international search.

The main receiving-office fees are:

- Transmittal fee: 70 BHD
- International filing fee: USD 1,667
- Fee per sheet beyond 30: USD 19
- Priority document fee: 2 BHD for natural persons and 4 BHD for legal persons

The international filing fee and excess-sheet fee are subject to a 90% reduction where the prescribed conditions are met. Bahrain also accepts international applications through ePCT-Filing. Electronic filing attracts the applicable PCT fee reduction, including a reduction of USD 251 where the request is filed in character-coded format, or USD 376 where the request, description, claims and abstract are filed in character-coded format.

Search fees depend on the International Searching Authority selected. The receiving office does not charge a fee for restoration of the right of priority and applies the "due care" criterion to such requests.

Residents of Bahrain do not need to appoint an agent. Non-residents must appoint an attorney or lawyer registered to practice before the office. A separate power of attorney is required, as the office has not waived this requirement.

The office does not accept filings by facsimile and does not participate in the WIPO Digital Access Service (DAS) for priority documents. It accepts evidence of mailing through Aramex, DHL, Federal Express and TNT. Online payment by debit or credit card is also accepted.

Entering the National Phase

The time limit for entering the Bahrain national phase is 30 months from the priority date under both Article 22(1) and Article 39(1)(a) of the PCT.

The office permits reinstatement of rights under the "due care" criterion without charging a fee. Bahrain also accepts the effect of restoration of the right of priority granted by the receiving office and entertains requests for restoration before its own office under the same "due care" standard.

The translation may be submitted in Arabic or English. It must include the request, description, claims, any text matter appearing in the drawings and the abstract. Where the claims have been amended, both the original claims and the amended claims are required.

The principal national-phase fees are as follows, with the reduced amount for individual applicants shown in parentheses:

- Patent filing fee: 540 BHD (40 BHD)
- Publication fee: 320 BHD (50 BHD)
- Second annual fee: 200 BHD (100 BHD)
- Utility model filing fee: 270 BHD (135 BHD)

The filing fee must be paid within the 30-month national-phase deadline. Examination fees, including search fees, are charged at actual cost. The office provides no fee exemptions, reductions or refunds.

Bahrain also permits protection in the form of a utility model in addition to a national patent.

Special Requirements

Where any required information or document has not already been furnished within the applicable 30-month period, the office invites the applicant to comply within two months from receipt of the invitation.

The requirements may include:

- The inventor's name and address, if these are not contained in the PCT request;
- A statement establishing the applicant's right to apply for or be granted a patent, where the applicant is not the inventor;
- A document evidencing a change in the applicant's name where the change is not reflected in a notification from the International Bureau;
- An instrument appointing an agent, in the case of a non-resident applicant;
- Verification of the translation; and
- A sequence listing in electronic form, where applicable.

The inventor details and statement of entitlement may be satisfied by a declaration made under PCT Rule 4.17.

Practical Notes

Bahrain does not provide an international-type search under its national law and does not grant provisional protection following international publication. There are also no special provisions concerning the deposit of biological material.

The WIPO PCT Applicant's Guide currently states that information concerning the detailed national-phase procedure is not yet available.

The office is closed on Fridays and Saturdays, which should be taken into account when calculating deadlines and planning filings.

Applicants should also review the office's published guidelines concerning the preparation of an invention description, including the applicable requirements for drawings and the acceptance of color drawings under national law.

For applicants managing a regional patent portfolio, Bahrain offers a relatively straightforward PCT route, with a 30-month national-phase deadline, the option of filing the required translation in either Arabic or English, and a reinstatement mechanism based on the "due care" criterion without an official fee.

The national-phase fees are significantly lower for individual applicants than for other applicants, while examination and search costs are charged separately at actual cost.

As the WIPO PCT Applicant's Guide is updated from time to time, applicants and practitioners should verify the latest requirements, fees and procedural information in the WIPO PCT eGuide before filing or entering the Bahrain national phase.