

**Federal Decree-Law No. (13) of 2024  
on the Protection Against Domestic Violence**

**We, Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates;**

- Upon reviewing the Constitution;
- Federal Law No. (1) of 1972 Concerning the Competencies of Ministries and the Powers of Ministers, and any amendments thereto;
- Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 on the Child Rights Law “Wadeema Law” and any amendments thereto;
- Federal Decree-Law No. (10) of 2019 On the Protection Against Domestic Violence;
- Federal Decree-Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law, as amended;
- Federal Decree-Law No. (38) of 2022 Promulgating the Criminal Procedure Law, as amended;
- Based on the Proposal of the Minister of Community Development, and the Cabinet Approval,

**Have promulgated the following Decree-Law:**

**Article (1)**

**Definitions**

In application of the provisions of this Decree-Law, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings assigned to each of them, unless the context otherwise requires:

<b>State</b>	: United Arab Emirates (UAE).
<b>Ministry</b>	: Ministry of Community Development.
<b>Minister</b>	: Minister of Community Development.
<b>Competent Authority</b>	: The local authority concerned with community affairs.

- Social Support Centre** : A centre that is dedicated to receive reports about domestic violence at the Ministry of Interior, federal and local Police Headquarters.
- Victim** : A family member who is subject to domestic violence pursuant to provisions of this Decree-Law.
- Shelter Centre** : A centre dedicated for receiving, caring and qualifying victims of domestic violence in accordance with legislations applicable in the State.
- Child Protection Specialist** : The person who is licensed and assigned by the competent authority to maintain child's rights and protect the child within the limitations of his jurisdiction.
- Restraining Order** : An order issued by the Public Prosecution or the competent court in accordance with the provisions of this Decree-Law.

## **Article (2)**

### **Decree-Law Objectives**

This Decree-Law shall aim to achieve the following:

1. To protect the family from the dangers of domestic violence, thereby preserving its integrity and social cohesion.
2. To provide the necessary legal protection for the victim.
3. To evaluate harmful behaviours affecting the family as a whole, combat manifestations of domestic violence, and create a safer environment for them.
4. To enhance social awareness among individuals regarding domestic violence issues and the ways for addressing such issues.

## **Article (3)**

### **Family Concept**

In the application of the provisions of this Decree-Law, "family" refers to a group of individuals who are connected by kinship, marriage, or legal responsibility, and includes the following:

1. Husband, wife and children.
2. The spouse of the mother or the spouse(s) of the father.
3. Children of one spouse from another marriage.
4. Relatives by blood or marriage up to the fourth degree.
5. Those linked by guardianship, custody, or legal authority.
6. A child covered by the custody of a foster family in accordance with applicable legislations.

## **Article (4)**

### **Domestic Violence**

For the purposes of applying this Decree-Law, domestic violence is defined as any act, omission, statement, or threat thereof, neglect, sexual or economic exploitation committed or shared by one or more family members against another, exceeding the guardianship, authority or responsibility held by the perpetrator. This behaviour results in or aims to cause physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm.

## **Article (5)**

### **Reporting Domestic Violence**

1. The victim has the right to report an incident of domestic violence.
2. Anyone who becomes aware of an incident of domestic violence, whether a family member or any provider of health, education, social, psychological, or sports services, by virtue of their work or profession, or any other members of community, must promptly report the incident.
3. The incident of domestic violence shall be reported to the Ministry, the competent authority, or the social support centre, which shall take the necessary legal actions in response.

4. The Police station shall be reported about the incident of domestic violence if the act constitutes physical or sexual violence, and the station shall take the necessary legal actions in response.
5. The Ministry and the competent authority shall provide effective channels and means of communication for receiving reports of domestic violence, including electronic channels, and shall inform the community about these channels and methods and raise awareness regarding them.
6. If, during a case at bar before any competent court of family and personal status matters, a case of domestic violence involving persons lacking capacity or having limited capacity is identified, the court may provide the Ministry or the competent authority with a copy of the case file through the Public Prosecution.
7. Identity of those reporting incidents of domestic violence may not be disclosed unless required by judicial procedures, and such disclosure shall be made by the Public Prosecutor or his delegate.

## **Article (6)**

### **Procedures for Handling Domestic Violence Reports**

Upon receiving a domestic violence report, the Ministry, the competent authority, and the Social Support Centre shall promptly take the following actions:

1. Record the report in the register stated in Article (19) of this Decree-Law, including the name of the reporter or the reporting entity, the subject of the report, and the details of the domestic violence incident.
2. Take the necessary measures to protect the victim, including placing the victim in a shelter or with a relative if needed.
3. Listen to the parties and witnesses, including children, in an environment that is suitable for giving their statements freely, ensuring privacy and confidentiality, and document their statements either in writing or using audio or visual means, as the case may be, and verify the

accuracy of their statements, as well as seek assistance from a child protection specialist if necessary.

4. Refer the victim to a healthcare facility if needed, and the facility shall prepare a medical report on the case.
5. Prepare a report on the incident, including its details, the parties involved, the circumstances, and the actions taken. This report shall be attached to the medical report issued by the healthcare facility and shall be referred immediately to the Public Prosecution, with a recommendation either to initiate a criminal case or to grant the parties time for reconciliation. The report shall also include the report of the social worker or child protection specialist, as the case may be.

## **Article (7)**

### **Engagement of a Child Protection Specialist**

The competent court and the Public Prosecution shall engage a child protection specialist in investigations and trials related to domestic violence when one of the parties involved is a child. Additionally, a social worker may be called upon to attend any of the investigation procedures in domestic violence cases.

## **Article (8)**

### **Restraining Order Issued by the Public Prosecution**

1. The Public Prosecution may issue a restraining order on its own, based on a request from the Social Support Centre that received the domestic violence report, or from the Ministry, the competent authority, or at the request of the victim.
2. The Public Prosecution may require the social worker or child protection specialist to prepare a report accompanied by recommendations on the case of the domestic violence presented to the Public Prosecution.

3. The Ministry, the competent authority, or the Public Prosecution shall inform the victim with the available legal measures and the possibility that the victim would obtain a restraining order in accordance with the provisions of this Decree-Law.

## **Article (9)**

### **Duration of Restraining Order Issued by the Public Prosecution**

1. Duration of the restraining order issued by the Public Prosecution shall not exceed (30) thirty days, and it may be extended for two similar periods.
2. If the periods referred to in clause (1) of this Article expire, the restraining order shall be extended by a decision to be issued by the competent court, not exceeding (6) six months or until the judgment becomes final.
3. The request for the extension stated in clause (2) of this Article shall be submitted by the Public Prosecution to the competent court, and the court shall consider the request and decide what it deems appropriate regarding the extension of the restraining order.

## **Article (10)**

### **Restraining Order Issued by the Competent Court**

The competent court, on its own, at the request of the victim or his/her representative, may issue a restraining order for a period not exceeding six (6) months or until the judgment becomes final if the competent court finds evidence of domestic violence while hearing any criminal case. If it is necessary to extend the restraining order after the final judgment has been issued, the competent court may order an extension for a period not exceeding (12) twelve months, upon the request of the Public Prosecution or the victim. The request for a restraining order is exempt from court fees.

## **Article (11)**

### **Restraining Order Measures**

1. The Public Prosecution or the competent court may include one or more of the following measures in the restraining order:

- a. Prohibiting the offender from contacting the victim by any means.
  - b. Prohibiting the offender from approaching designated places for the protection of the victim or any other location mentioned in the restraining order, including the victim's residence and workplace, according to the distance and time specified by the Public Prosecution or the competent court.
  - c. Referring the victim, upon his/her consent, to a shelter, a kin's home, or any other safe place determined by the Public Prosecution or the competent court, if necessary, and in coordination with the Ministry or the competent authority, as the case may be.
  - d. Obligating the offender to provide the necessary financial support for the victim and pay for medical expenses resulting from the committed domestic violence.
  - e. Preventing any harm to the victim's interests, including his/her property and personal belongings.
  - f. Obligating the offender to attend social or psychological counselling sessions in coordination with the Ministry or the competent authority.
  - g. Any other measures the Public Prosecution or the competent court deems necessary to provide effective protection for the victim, witnesses, or any family member at risk of harm due to their relationship with the victim.
2. The Public Prosecution shall legally notify both the offender and the victim of the restraining order and the measures included.
  3. The Ministry or the competent authority shall regularly follow up the implementation of the protection measures in the restraining order. In case of any violation of these measures, the Ministry or the competent authority shall immediately report it to the Public Prosecution or the competent court that issued the restraining order.

## **Article (12)**

### **Appealing the Restraining Order**

Any stakeholder may file an appeal against the restraining order before the competent court to have it revoked or modified, within (7) seven days from the date of becoming aware of its issuance.

## **Article (13)**

### **Family Reconciliation**

1. The Ministry, the competent authority, or the Social Support Centre shall offer family reconciliation in cases of domestic violence within (14) fourteen days from the date of the report, provided that both the offender and the victim or their legal representatives agree. The presence of a social worker and a child protection specialist is required if the victim is a child, provided that it shall be documented in an official record and signed by the parties, who shall be obliged to adhere to the agreed terms.
2. The report shall be referred to the Public Prosecution along with the family reconciliation record and signed by the parties for approval, or if one party expresses unwillingness to complete the reconciliation.
3. Family reconciliation may not be offered if the act constitutes a felony. The Ministry or the competent authority shall refer the report to the Public Prosecution to take necessary legal actions.
4. The Ministry or the competent authority shall regularly follow up the implementation of the family reconciliation procedures to ensure compliance and non-violation of its provisions.

## **Article (14)**

### **Penal Reconciliation**

1. Without prejudice to the provisions set forth in Federal Decree-Law No. (38) of 2022, the Public Prosecution or the competent court may, as the case may be, take measures for penal reconciliation in cases of domestic violence, where penal reconciliation is permissible, to



amicably resolve the dispute, provided that consent of both parties or their legal representatives exists.

2. Penal reconciliation shall be proposed to the offender and the victim or their legal representatives, in the presence of a social worker and a child protection specialist if the victim is a child. The specialist may express his justified opinion, either supporting or opposing the penal reconciliation, and the Public Prosecution may take or disregard the specialist's opinion.
3. Penal reconciliation shall arrange for the expiration of the penal case or the stay of the judgment issued therein, as the case may be.

## **Article (15)**

### **Special Chambers for Domestic Violence Cases**

The Federal Judiciary Council and local judicial authorities, each according to its jurisdiction, may establish specialized judicial chambers to adjudicate cases of domestic violence for the purposes of implementing the provisions of this Decree-Law.

In all cases, adjudication of domestic violence cases shall be expedited.

## **Article (16)**

### **Shelters**

Shelters shall receive victims referred to them by the Ministry, the competent authority, the Public Prosecution, or the competent court. Shelters shall undertake the following:

1. Record the case, all related data and information in the database designated thereto.
2. Provide necessary shelter and care for the case.
3. Develop appropriate intervention plans for the case, ensuring that discussions with parties involved in domestic violence occur in a private room that guarantees the safety, security, and privacy of the victim and the persons working at the competent authority.
4. Offer social and psychological counselling services as well as rehabilitation services for the offender and the victim or any family members of the victim, using all possible methods, including modern technologies, and shall coordinate with relevant authorities when needed.

5. Provide legal consultancies and assistance to the victim when needed.
6. Provide the Ministry or the competent authority with statistics and periodic reports that relate to the cases recorded in their database.
7. Any other obligations determined by the Ministry or the competent authority.

## **Article (17)**

### **Emergency Shelter**

The Ministry, the competent authority, or the Social Support Centre, upon receiving reports of domestic violence, may take the measure of referral to the shelter immediately in any of the following cases:

1. Arresting while committing a domestic violence crime in the act.
2. Violation of the restraining order is proved.
3. If the case of domestic violence requires urgent shelter.

The decision of referral to the shelter shall be presented to the Public Prosecution immediately upon issuance. The Public Prosecution shall issue its decision to either continue, cancel, or modify the detention within (24) twenty-four hours of receiving the referral decision.

## **Article (18)**

### **Obligations of the Ministry and the Competent Authority**

The Ministry and the competent authority shall take all necessary measures to maintain the family entity and protect it from all forms of domestic violence. To this end, they shall:

1. Raise awareness of the concept of domestic violence, its forms, dangers, and its negative impacts on individuals and society, as well as methods for dealing with it.
2. Organize training programs for all those involved in dealing with cases of domestic violence, in coordination with relevant government entities.
3. Take necessary actions to address behavioural phenomena in community that contribute to the occurrence of domestic violence cases.

4. Exchange data, information, and statistics that relate to domestic violence and utilize them in conducting studies and establishing effective mechanisms to combat domestic violence.

## **Article (19)**

### **Establishment of the Electronic Register and Data Linking and Sharing**

1. An electronic register shall be established at the Ministry and the competent authority, where all data, information, and statistics that relate to cases of domestic violence, as well as any changes or updates, shall be recorded.
2. The competent authority shall link and share the data, information, and statistics referred to in Paragraph (1) of this Article with the Ministry.
3. Data and information that must be recorded in the register shall be determined by a resolution to be issued by the Minister upon coordination with the head of the competent authority.
4. The Ministry and the competent authority shall share and link all data recorded in the electronic register, and any changes or updates that occur, with the electronic databases of the relevant entities in charge of implementing the provisions of this Decree-Law, in a manner that ensures real-time linking of such data.
5. Everything that is recorded in the register shall be confidential and may only be accessed by authorized personnel for work purposes or upon request from the judicial authority.

## **Article (20)**

### **Application of the More Severe Penalty**

The imposition of the penalties stipulated in this Decree-Law shall not prejudice any severer penalty stipulated in any other law.

## **Article (21)**

### **Penalty for the Crime of Domestic Violence**

Any person who commits the crime of domestic violence stipulated in Article (4) of this Decree-Law shall be punished by imprisonment and a fine not exceeding (50,000) fifty thousand Dirhams, or by either of these penalties.

If the victim is one of the parents, an ascendant of the perpetrator, a person over (60) sixty years old, a pregnant woman, a child, a person with disabilities, or someone who is legally incapacitated, or if the perpetrator commits a domestic violence crime within one year of the previous act, this shall be considered an aggravating circumstance.

In addition to the penalties prescribed in this Article, the competent court shall obligate the perpetrator of domestic violence to participate in rehabilitation courses against violence at specialized centres.

## **Article (22)**

### **Penalty for Non-Compliance with Reporting Provisions**

A fine not less than on five thousand AED (5,000) and not exceeding ten thousand AED (10,000) shall be imposed on any person who:

1. Fails to report a domestic violence incident immediately upon becoming aware of it, in accordance with the provisions of Article (5) of this Decree-Law.
2. Submits a false or malicious report regarding a domestic violence incident.

## **Article (23)**

### **Penalty for Violating the Restraining Order**

Anyone who violates a restraining order issued in accordance with the provisions of this Decree-Law shall be punished with imprisonment and a fine of not less than five thousand AED (5,000) and not exceeding ten thousand AED (10,000), or with one of these penalties.

If the violation of the restraining order is associated with the use of violence or coercion against any of those included in the provisions of this Decree-Law, the penalty shall be imprisonment for

a period of not less than (6) six months and a fine of not less than ten thousand AED (10,000) and not exceeding one hundred thousand AED (100,000), or with one of these penalties.

### **Article (24)**

#### **Penalty for Disclosing Data and Information**

Anyone who discloses any confidential data or information that relate to a domestic violence case such person becomes aware of due to his work or reveals the identity of the victim shall be punished with imprisonment and a fine of not less than twenty thousand AED (20,000), or one of these two penalties.

### **Article (25)**

#### **Penalty for Coercion to Withdraw a Report**

Anyone who uses force or threat against the victim in a case of domestic violence with the intent of compelling the victim to withdraw his report shall be punished with imprisonment and a fine of not less than ten thousand AED (10,000) and not exceeding fifty thousand AED (50,000), or one of these penalties.

### **Article (26)**

#### **Alternative Penalty**

The court may obligate the convicted person to perform a community service in accordance with the applicable legislations in this respect.

### **Article (27)**

#### **Granting the Capacity of Judicial Control Officers**

Employees designated by a resolution issued by the Minister of Justice or the head of the local judicial authority, in agreement with the Minister or the Head of the competent authority, may

have the capacity of judicial control officers in recording all violations, within their jurisdiction, of the provisions of this Law and the resolutions issued in the implementation thereof.

## **Article (28)**

### **Repeals**

Federal Decree-Law No. (10) of 2019 On the Protection Against Domestic Violence shall hereby be repealed, as well as any provision that contradicts or conflicts with the provisions of this decree-law.

## **Article (29)**

### **Publication and Entry into force of Decree-Law**

This Decree-Law shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall enter into force as of the date of its publication.

**Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan,  
President of the United Arab Emirates**

Issued by us at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi:

On: 07 Rabia I 1446 A.H.

Corresponding to: 10 September 2024 AD