Dubai Employee Relocation Checklist

For HR and mobility teams. 2026/27 edition. Seven stages, from the offer letter to the first anniversary.

Last updated 10 November 2026. Companion to the full guide at relocate2uae.com/dubai-employee-relocation-guide

Employee		Start date in Dubai	
Role and MOHRE skill level		Employing entity	
Family members moving		HR owner	

How to use it: tick each task when it is done, add an owner and a due date, and keep one copy per employee. Stages follow the 12-month plan in the guide, and every month of the year belongs to one stage.

1 Before arrival 8 to 12 weeks out

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Confirm the employing entity (mainland, DIFC or free zone) and that it can sponsor the visa	HR		
☐	Check Emiratisation and MOHRE quota position will not block the permit (mainland only)	HR		
☐	Confirm job title and MOHRE skill level	HR		
☐	Issue the offer letter (MOHRE, DIFC or free zone form); agree the basic salary and allowance split	HR		
☐	Start attestation: degree, marriage certificate, children's birth certificates	Employee, HR		
☐	Check home-country tax and social security position	Employee, adviser		
☐	Check the employee's own government travel advisory and record the check	HR		
☐	Brief the employee on medicines, banned items and the medical test	HR		
☐	Enrol the employee on DHA-compliant insurance; confirm in writing who pays for dependants' cover	HR		
☐	Apply to two or three KHDA-rated schools; check the 31 December age cut-off	Employee		
☐	Book temporary accommodation (at least 30 days for families)	HR		
☐	Apply for the work permit and entry permit (Work Bundle, Tasheel, DIFC or free zone)	HR, PRO		
☐	Pets: import permit and vaccination timeline started	Employee		

2 Arrival and legal status Month 1, weeks 1 to 4

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Employee arrives on the employment entry permit, or changes status	Employee		
☐	Medical fitness test (Dubai Health centre) in week 1	Employee		
☐	Emirates ID biometrics	Employee		
☐	Residence visa issued (GDRFA) and contract registered	HR, PRO		
☐	Local SIM card and UAE Pass set up	Employee		
☐	UAE bank account or WPS card ready for first payroll	Employee, HR		
☐	ILOE unemployment insurance registered (deadline: four months from the work permit)	Employee, HR		
☐	Emergency contacts and embassy registration recorded	HR, Employee		
☐	DIFC only: monthly DEWS contributions started	HR		

3 Home and family Month 2, weeks 5 to 8

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Tenancy signed and registered on Ejari	Employee		
☐	DEWA Move-In done; deposit paid; 5% housing fee and district cooling set up	Employee		
☐	Dependants enter; residence visas filed within 60 days of entry	Employee, HR		
☐	Dependants' DHA-compliant insurance in place before their visas	HR, Employee		
☐	School start confirmed; transport arranged	Employee		
☐	Driving licence exchanged with the RTA; Salik tag and Parkin account set up	Employee		
☐	Orientation: workplace culture, Ramadan, local law, support contacts	HR		

4 Settling in Months 3 and 4

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Settling-in check-in with the employee and partner (around week 12)	HR		
☐	Mid-probation review with clear feedback	Manager		
☐	Documents, insurance cards and payroll details checked	HR		
☐	ILOE premiums confirmed as paid	HR		
☐	DIFC only: annual leave available from day 90	HR		

5 End of probation Months 5 and 6

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Probation confirmed in writing (six months at the latest)	HR		
☐	Leave accrual of 2 days a month set up in the HR system (mainland and free zones)	HR		
☐	Ramadan and summer plans made, if they fall in the coming months	Manager		

6 Business as usual Months 7 to 9

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Second check-in with the employee and partner	HR		
☐	First annual leave and flight allowance planned	Employee, Manager		
☐	Health insurance use reviewed ahead of renewal	HR		
☐	Year-two decision made: extend, localise or end (by the end of month 9)	HR, Manager		

7 Renewals and anniversary Months 10 to 12

	Task	Suggested owner	Owner	Due
☐	Landlord's renewal notice received at least 90 days before expiry; any increase checked on the Smart Rental Index	Employee		
☐	Children re-enrolled for the next school year	Employee		
☐	Health insurance renewed and plan reviewed	HR		
☐	Tenancy renewed and Ejari registration renewed	Employee		
☐	30 days' annual leave entitlement applied from the first anniversary	HR		
☐	Gratuity eligibility recorded: 21 days' basic salary per year (DIFC: DEWS continues)	HR		
☐	Package and performance review	Manager, HR		
☐	If the assignment ends: permit and visa cancelled, final pay and gratuity settled, ILOE closed, grace period agreed	HR		

Key figures for Dubai, checked 10 November 2026

Visa processing (Work Bundle, complete file)	**Around 5 working days**
Visa and permit fees per mainland employee	**Around AED 4,000 to 7,000, market range**
Health insurance	**Employer pays for employee; sponsor insures dependants**
ILOE premium / late fine	**AED 5 or AED 10 a month / AED 400**
Emiratisation contribution (mainland, 50+ staff)	**AED 120,000 a year per unfilled role; deadline 31 December 2026**
Minimum salary to sponsor family	**AED 4,000, or AED 3,000 plus accommodation**
Housing fee / Ejari / DEWA deposit	**5% of rent / about AED 220 / AED 2,000 apartment, AED 4,000 villa**
Rent increase on renewal	**0% to 20% under the Smart Rental Index; 90 days' notice**
DIFC DEWS contribution	**5.83% of basic salary a month (8.33% after five years)**
Probation / annual leave / gratuity	**Max 6 months / 30 days after a year / 21 days' basic per year**

Official sources to check before acting

UAE Government portal: u.ae

ILOE unemployment insurance: iloe.ae

Dubai Health Authority: dha.gov.ae

KHDA: schools: khda.gov.ae

MOHRE: work permits, Emiratisation: mohre.gov.ae

GDRFA Dubai: residence visas: gdrfad.gov.ae

Dubai Land Department: Ejari: dubailand.gov.ae

DIFC Courts: difccourts.ae

Moving a team to Dubai?

Relocate2UAE connects employers with established UAE service providers for housing, insurance, schools, banking and immigration advice. Tell us about the move at relocate2uae.com/corporate-relocation. Relocate2UAE is an information platform and marketplace, not an immigration consultancy, relocation agency or law firm. Some providers pay us for listings, marketing exposure or referrals.

Rules, fees and dates change. This checklist reflects the position on 10 November 2026 and will be reviewed by 1 February 2027. It is general information, not legal, immigration or employment advice; Relocate2UAE accepts no liability for reliance on it. The full guide, with sources, the 12-month planner and the legal notice, is at relocate2uae.com/dubai-employee-relocation-guide. © 2026 Relocate 2 FZC LLC. You may copy and adapt this checklist for internal use in your organisation.