RELOCATE2UAE · RELOCATION GUIDES · 2026/27

Leaving the UAE: The Complete Exit Checklist

Everything to close, cancel, claim and ship before you move home. Visa cancellation, gratuity, banks, tenancy, deposits, your car, shipping and tax when you return.

- ☑ Visa
- ☑ Gratuity
- ☑ Banks
- ☑ Tenancy
- ☑ Deposits
- ☑ Car
- ☑ Shipping
- ☑ Tax

Last verified 23 November 2026 · Next review 23 February 2027
relocate2uae.com/leaving-the-uae-exit-checklist

Contents

How to read this guide . . . 3
1. Your exit timeline at a glance . . . 5
2. The order that matters . . . 5
3. Cancelling your residence visa . . . 6
4. Employment termination and your final settlement . . . 8
5. Bank accounts, loans and credit cards . . . 10
6. Ending your tenancy, utilities and subscriptions . . . 12
7. Recovering your deposits . . . 14
8. Your car: sell, export or hand back . . . 15
9. Shipping your belongings home . . . 17
10. Family, schools, health cover and documents . . . 19
11. Tax and residency when you return home . . . 20
12. Common mistakes that cost leavers money . . . 22
13. Interactive tool: UAE Exit Planner . . . 23
14. Frequently asked questions . . . 24
15. Primary sources . . . 27
About this guide . . . 28
Legal notice . . . 29

Leaving the UAE: The Complete Exit Checklist

Everything to close, cancel, claim and ship before you move home, 2026/27

Leaving the UAE takes more planning than arriving. Your residence visa, your bank, your landlord, your utilities and your car are all linked, and closing them in the wrong order can freeze your gratuity, block your deposit refund or leave you with a debt that follows you home. This guide gives you the right order, the official process for each step, and the questions to settle with your home country's tax authority before you land.

Last verified 23 November 2026 · Next review 23 February 2027 · Relocate2UAE Editorial Team

Most online leaving checklists are written by a mover, a bank or a property portal and cover only their own part of the move. This guide puts the whole exit in one place, says which authority decides each step, and flags where published sources disagree so you know what to double-check.

The short answer

- **Start three months before you leave.** Book movers, give notice on your home and school places, and map every loan, card and deposit. MARKET
- **Close things in this order:** debts and cards, then utilities and tenancy, then your car, then dependants' visas, then your own visa, and your last bank account only after every refund has arrived. OFFICIAL REPORTED
- **Your sponsor cancels your visa,** not you. Dependants' visas must be cancelled before the sponsor's own. OFFICIAL
- **Do not sign the work permit cancellation** until you have been paid. Your signature confirms you have received all your dues, and end-of-service payments are due within 14 days of your contract ending. OFFICIAL LAW
- **Gratuity is 21 days' basic salary for each of your first five years, then 30 days a year,** with at least one year of service and a cap of two years' pay. OFFICIAL
- **After cancellation you have a grace period to leave,** from 30 to 180 days depending on your visa category. Check your exact date on the ICP File Validity service. Overstaying costs AED 50 a day. REPORTED VERIFY
- **Keep one UAE bank account open until the end.** DEWA refunds deposits by IBAN, and Abu Dhabi's TAQA Distribution refunds by bank transfer only, with no overseas transfers. OFFICIAL REPORTED
- **Do not leave with unpaid debt.** Debt is a civil matter, but it can lead to a travel ban, a frozen gratuity and collection action abroad. Get a clearance letter from every bank. REPORTED
- **Your home country's tax rules decide what happens next,** not the UAE's. Check split-year treatment, how investments are valued when you return, and when to receive your gratuity, before you move. OFFICIAL

How to read this guide

Every factual claim carries a source tag so you can see how much weight it will bear.

Tag	What it means
LAW	Set by UAE federal or emirate legislation, or by the law of the home country named. Stable until the law changes.

Tag	What it means
OFFICIAL	Published by a government body, such as u.ae, ICP, MOHRE, DEWA, TAQA Distribution, KHDA, the Federal Tax Authority, HMRC, Revenue, the ATO, CBSA or CBP.
MARKET	Current practice among banks, landlords, movers, schools or dealers. Varies between providers.
REPORTED	Reported consistently by reputable UAE news or professional sources but not confirmed on a primary government page we could access.
VERIFY	Rules differ between sources or change often. Confirm with the named authority before you act.
ESTIMATE	Our own worked example. Useful for planning, not a quote.

Important information

This guide is general information only. It is not legal, immigration, employment, tax, financial or customs advice, and it does not take your personal circumstances into account. Rules, fees and procedures change, and authorities can apply them differently from how they are published. Before you sign a settlement, cancel a visa or make a tax decision, check the current position with the relevant authority and take advice from a qualified professional. For employment, tenancy or immigration questions in the UAE, Davidson & Co. (a Relocate2UAE partner) is one firm that advises on these matters. For tax in your home country, speak to a tax adviser qualified there. Relocate2UAE accepts no responsibility for any loss arising from reliance on this guide. Please read the full Legal notice at the end.

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1. Your exit timeline at a glance

Use this as your master plan. Each row links to the section with the detail. If you have less time than this, do the same steps in the same order, faster.

When	What to do	Section
3 months or more before	Decide your leaving date. Read your employment contract, tenancy contract and school terms for notice periods. List every loan, card, cheque, subscription and deposit. Get three mover surveys. Check your home country's customs, pet and tax rules.	2, 4, 5, 9, 11
2 months before	Resign or agree your end date in writing. Give the school written notice. Give your landlord written notice if your contract requires it. Decide whether to sell or export your car. Start pet export paperwork.	4, 6, 8, 9, 10
1 month before	Book the mover and your flights. Settle or agree a plan for every loan and card. Ask each bank for a liability letter. Cancel subscriptions, gym and club memberships. Apply for a UAE Tax Residency Certificate if you will need one at home.	5, 6, 11
2 to 3 weeks before	Packing and shipment. Sell or export the car. Book DEWA, TAQA Distribution or your utility's move-out for the day you hand back the keys. Arrange short-term accommodation for the final days if you need it.	6, 8, 9
Final week	Move-out inspection and key handover. Collect clearance certificates. Receive your final settlement and check it. Cancel dependants' visas, then sign your own cancellation. Check for any travel ban.	3, 4, 6, 7
Last days	Close your remaining bank accounts once deposits are refunded, or arrange a non-resident account. Cancel your mobile line last. Download every statement and certificate.	5, 6
After you leave	Confirm your visa shows as cancelled, your car is out of your name and your accounts are closed. Track your shipment through customs. File your home-country tax registrations.	3, 8, 9, 11

2. The order that matters

Most exit problems come from doing the right things in the wrong order. These dependencies are the reason.

1. **Banks before visa.** UAE banks link your accounts to your residence. Once your visa and Emirates ID are cancelled, banks may restrict or freeze your accounts, so close or settle cards and loans while your status is active. REPORTED
2. **Debts before gratuity arrives.** If your salary account is with the bank that holds your loan or card, your end-of-service payment can be used to clear the balance, and banks may place a hold on it. REPORTED
3. **Utilities before tenancy.** In Dubai, the DEWA clearance certificate is shared with the tenant and RERA so the Ejari can be cancelled. In Abu Dhabi, cancelling the tenancy on Tawtheeq starts the TAQA Distribution account closure automatically. OFFICIAL
4. **Refunds before your last bank account.** Utility deposits are refunded to a UAE account. TAQA Distribution says it refunds by bank transfer only and does not make overseas transfers. OFFICIAL REPORTED

5. **Car before visa.** Selling or exporting needs a valid registration, your Emirates ID and fines cleared in every emirate. REPORTED
6. **Dependants before sponsor.** The sponsor must cancel the visas of a spouse, children and other dependants before their own. OFFICIAL
7. **Payment before signature.** Your signature on the MOHRE cancellation acknowledges receipt of all your labour dues. OFFICIAL
8. **Mobile number last.** Your UAE number receives the one-time passwords for UAE Pass, your bank and government services. Keep it until everything is closed. REPORTED

3. Cancelling your residence visa

3.1 Who cancels it

Your sponsor cancels your residence visa. You cannot apply to cancel it on your own. OFFICIAL

Your visa	Who cancels
Employment visa, mainland or free zone	Your employer, through MOHRE (mainland) or the free zone authority, then ICP or, for Dubai-issued visas, GDRFA OFFICIAL
Family visa (spouse, children, parents)	The family sponsor OFFICIAL
Domestic worker you sponsor	You, as the sponsor (Section 3.7) OFFICIAL
Self-sponsored: Golden Visa, Green Visa, freelance, retirement, property, investor or partner	You, through ICP, GDRFA or a typing centre, usually with your company or licence closed first if the visa depends on it REPORTED VERIFY

3.2 How an employment visa is cancelled

1. **The employer applies to MOHRE** to cancel your work permit and employment contract. You sign the application. OFFICIAL
2. **MOHRE checks the conditions:** fines for late work permits are paid, the employer has declared that your wages and end-of-service benefits have been paid, and you have signed to confirm you agree and have received all your dues. OFFICIAL
3. **MOHRE processes it,** normally within two working days once everything is in order. The service is free on the MOHRE website and app; business service centres may charge up to AED 72. OFFICIAL
4. **The employer applies to ICP or GDRFA** to cancel the residence visa, online or through an ICP-registered typing centre. OFFICIAL

Free zone employees follow the free zone's own process, which ends with the same immigration cancellation. REPORTED

> **Read before you sign**
>
> Your signature on the work permit cancellation confirms that you have received all your labour dues. If your final settlement has not been paid or is wrong, do not sign. Ask HR in writing for the calculation, and if it is not resolved, file a complaint with MOHRE on 80084 or through the MOHRE app. A labour complaint about money can suspend the cancellation until it is settled. OFFICIAL REPORTED

3.3 Cancelling family visas

- **Dependants first.** A sponsor must cancel the residence visas of their spouse, children and other dependants before their own visa can be cancelled. OFFICIAL
- **If your family is leaving first,** cancel their visas when they go, or check whether their visas can stay valid until you leave. Residence lapses automatically after more than six months outside the UAE, unless an exception applies. OFFICIAL
- **If one parent is staying,** a family can usually transfer the children's sponsorship to the parent who stays, provided that parent meets the salary and housing conditions. REPORTED VERIFY
- **Children finishing a school year** after both parents' visas are cancelled is a common question with no single published answer. Ask ICP or GDRFA, or Davidson & Co. (a Relocate2UAE partner), before you plan around it. REPORTED VERIFY

3.4 Your grace period after cancellation

Once your visa is cancelled, you have a grace period to leave the UAE or change your status. Its length depends on your visa category. The categories below were introduced in the 2022 visa reforms and are still reported in 2026, but published lists differ slightly, so always check your own date. REPORTED VERIFY

Visa category	Grace period
Golden Visa and Green Visa holders and their family members	180 days
Widows and divorcees of a foreign resident	180 days
Students sponsored by a UAE university or college, after completing their studies	180 days
Skilled professionals at MOHRE skill levels 1 and 2	180 days
Skilled professionals at MOHRE skill level 3, and property owners	90 days
Residence visas issued with a sponsor or host, including most dependants	60 days
All other categories	30 days

How to check your exact date: on the ICP Smart Services website (smartservices.icp.gov.ae), choose File Validity under Public Services, select Residency, enter your passport or Emirates ID details, and search. The result shows how many days you are allowed to stay. Your cancellation paper also shows the date by which you must leave or change status. REPORTED

3.5 Overstay fines

If you stay beyond your grace period, the fine is AED 50 for each day, the same rate for residence, work and visit visas. Fines must be paid before you can leave or apply for a new visa. REPORTED VERIFY

> **2026: temporary waivers have ended**
>
> After airspace closures and flight suspensions from 28 February 2026, ICP waived overstay fines for people who could not leave the UAE, then gave a final 30-day window from 10 June to 9 July 2026 to regularise or exit without fines. That waiver has now ended, and normal overstay fines apply. REPORTED
> Always check current advisories from ICP before you rely on any concession.

3.6 If you have already left the UAE

- **Your employer can still cancel your work permit.** MOHRE does not require the worker's signature if the worker is outside the UAE. OFFICIAL Agree your final settlement in writing before you go, because you lose the protection of the signature step.
- **If no one cancels it,** a residence visa is cancelled automatically when the holder lives outside the UAE for more than six months continuously, unless an exception applies. OFFICIAL An uncancelled visa can cause problems if you later want to return on a new visa, so ask your sponsor to cancel it properly. REPORTED
- **Emirates ID:** once your residence is cancelled, your Emirates ID no longer proves residence. Keep the card and a copy of your cancellation paper as a record. REPORTED

3.7 If you sponsor a domestic worker

Cancel your domestic worker's visa before your own, as their sponsor. Pay all their dues, including unpaid salary, leave and end-of-service benefits, and keep signed receipts. Under the domestic workers law, the employer is generally responsible for the worker's return ticket home. LAW REPORTED VERIFY If the worker wants to stay in the UAE with a new employer, a transfer may be possible instead of cancellation. Our Hiring a Maid, Nanny or Domestic Worker guide explains the rules.

3.8 Golden Visa and other long-term visas: cancel or keep?

If you hold a Golden Visa, think before you cancel. The six-month absence rule that cancels most residence visas does not apply in the same way to Golden Visa holders, so many people keep it as a route back. REPORTED VERIFY Keeping it has consequences you should weigh: it may affect how your home country views your tax residence (Section 11), you may need to renew your Emirates ID, and some visas depend on keeping an asset such as property. Ask ICP or Davidson & Co. (a Relocate2UAE partner) about your category before you decide.

3.9 If you own a UAE company

If your visa is linked to a company or freelance licence you own, the licence usually has to be renewed, transferred or formally cancelled. Free zone and mainland authorities generally require liabilities, employee visas and fees to be cleared first, and some require a formal liquidation. REPORTED VERIFY Start this months ahead, because a licence left to expire keeps building fines. Business setup providers such as Creative Zone (a Relocate2UAE partner) can advise on closing or transferring a licence. See our UAE Business Setup Guide.

4. Employment termination and your final settlement

4.1 Notice periods

Either side can end an unlimited employment contract for a legitimate reason with written notice of between 30 and 90 days, as set in your contract. During notice you keep working and are paid in full. The notice period can be reduced or waived by mutual agreement. If you leave without serving the agreed notice, you can owe your employer pay for the notice you did not serve, and the same applies the other way round. OFFICIAL

4.2 Your end-of-service gratuity

Rule	The position for mainland and most free zone private sector employees
Who qualifies	Foreign employees with at least one year of continuous service OFFICIAL
Years 1 to 5	21 days' basic salary for each year OFFICIAL
After year 5	30 days' basic salary for each further year OFFICIAL
Part years	Paid in proportion, once you have completed the first year REPORTED
Based on	Your last basic salary only. Housing, transport and other allowances are excluded OFFICIAL
Cap	Total gratuity cannot exceed two years' wages OFFICIAL
Unpaid leave	Days of unpaid absence do not count as service OFFICIAL
Deductions	The employer may deduct money you owe it from your gratuity OFFICIAL
Resignation	Under the 2021 labour law, resigning does not reduce your gratuity as it did under the old law LAW REPORTED
When it is paid	Within 14 days of your contract ending OFFICIAL
Part-time	A proportion of the full-time gratuity, based on contracted hours OFFICIAL

Worked examples. A day's basic pay is commonly calculated as your monthly basic salary divided by 30. REPORTED VERIFY For a basic salary of AED 15,000 a month, that is AED 500 a day. ESTIMATE

Service	Days of gratuity	Gratuity at AED 15,000 basic
11 months	None, under one year	AED 0
18 months	31.5 days (1.5 × 21)	AED 15,750
3 years	63 days (3 × 21)	AED 31,500
7 years	165 days (5 × 21, plus 2 × 30)	AED 82,500
12 years	315 days (5 × 21, plus 7 × 30)	AED 157,500

These are illustrations only ESTIMATE. Use the gratuity estimator in our UAE Exit Planner for your own figures, and check the result against your employer's calculation.

4.3 What your final settlement should include

- **Salary** up to your last working day. LAW
- **Unused annual leave,** paid in lieu on termination, calculated on basic salary. LAW REPORTED
- **Notice pay,** if your employer ended your contract without letting you serve notice. OFFICIAL
- **End-of-service gratuity** (Section 4.2). OFFICIAL
- **Return ticket.** The labour law generally makes the employer responsible for the cost of the worker's return to their home country when employment ends, unless the worker joins another employer. Check your contract, which may be more generous. LAW REPORTED VERIFY
- **Contractual extras** such as a bonus, commission, repatriation allowance or shipping allowance, only if your contract or policy promises them. MARKET

Less any lawful deductions, such as money you owe the company, unpaid ILOE (unemployment insurance) fines, or notice pay you owe if you left without serving notice. Unpaid ILOE fines can be

deducted through payroll or from your gratuity. OFFICIAL REPORTED

Final settlement checklist

- Ask HR for the written calculation at least two weeks before your last day.
- Check the basic salary used against your contract and latest payslip.
- Check the start date used for your service, and any unpaid leave deducted.
- Check the leave balance and the notice period figures.
- Ask when and how it will be paid, and to which account.
- Do not sign the MOHRE cancellation until the money has arrived.

4.4 If you are not paid

Raise it in writing with HR first, then file a complaint with MOHRE through its app, website or 80084. MOHRE decides claims of AED 50,000 or less itself, workers do not pay court fees on claims under AED 100,000, and you have two years from the end of your employment to claim. OFFICIAL LAW Our UAE Emergency and Problem-Solving Guide walks through the complaint process.

4.5 DIFC, ADGM, government and other schemes

- **DIFC employees** do not receive a lump-sum gratuity for service since 1 February 2020. Instead, employers pay monthly into the DIFC Employee Workplace Savings plan (DEWS) at 5.83% or 8.33% of basic salary, depending on length of service. When you leave you can withdraw your savings or leave them invested. Contact the plan administrator before you leave the UAE. REPORTED
- **ADGM employees** are covered by ADGM's own employment regulations and courts. Check your entitlement against them. REPORTED VERIFY
- **Employer savings schemes.** MOHRE runs an optional savings scheme that some mainland and free zone employers use instead of holding gratuity on their books. If your employer has joined it, your savings are paid out when your service ends. OFFICIAL
- **Government and semi-government employers** may have their own end-of-service rules. Ask HR for the policy. REPORTED

4.6 Lost your job rather than resigned?

If your employment ended involuntarily and you were subscribed to the ILOE scheme for at least 12 months in a row, you may be able to claim unemployment benefit. Claims must be made within 30 days of your employment ending, at iloe.ae. OFFICIAL REPORTED VERIFY Check the scheme's current conditions before you leave the UAE. Our UAE Employment Guide covers termination, redundancy and ILOE in detail.

5. Bank accounts, loans and credit cards

5.1 Map everything you owe and own

Write a single list of every account, loan, credit card, overdraft, car finance agreement, buy-now-pay-later plan, and every security or post-dated cheque you have given to a bank, landlord or business. REPORTED Missing one is the most common way leavers end up with a debt they did not know about.

5.2 Settle, then get it in writing

1. **Ask each bank for a settlement figure** for loans and cards, including early settlement charges, in writing. REPORTED
2. **Settle or agree a plan.** If you cannot clear a debt before you leave, agree a written repayment plan with the bank. Banks sometimes accept less for a lump sum. REPORTED
3. **Formally close credit cards.** Closing a current account does not automatically close a card with the same bank, and annual fees and interest keep running on an open card. REPORTED
4. **Cancel direct debits and standing instructions,** for example for utilities and subscriptions. REPORTED
5. **Return unused cheque books** and ask for any security cheques you gave the bank to be cancelled or returned. Many banks need unused cheques back before they close an account. REPORTED
6. **Get a liability or clearance letter** from every bank, confirming a zero balance and cancelled security cheques. Keep it permanently. REPORTED

Your gratuity and your bank

If you have a loan or card with the bank that receives your salary, it may place a hold on your final settlement equal to the amount you owe, and some banks freeze funds against a card's credit limit even when nothing is owed. Settle debts before your gratuity is paid, or ask your employer to pay the final settlement into an account at a bank where you owe nothing. Keeping accounts at two banks gives you a fallback. REPORTED

5.3 Keep one account open until the end

Close accounts you do not need two to three months before you leave, but keep one UAE dirham account open until every refund has arrived: utility deposits, your rental deposit, your final settlement and any insurance refund. REPORTED DEWA refunds deposits to an IBAN in your name, and TAQA Distribution in Abu Dhabi refunds by bank transfer to a UAE account only, with no cash or overseas transfers. OFFICIAL REPORTED If the last account is already closed, you may forfeit the refund or need a power of attorney so it can be paid to someone else. REPORTED

5.4 Closing an account

- **Go in person if you can.** Most UAE banks ask you to start the closure at a branch, with your Emirates ID or passport, your cards and any unused cheques. Some accept a closure request by registered email from abroad. Joint accounts need every holder. REPORTED
- **The balance must be zero.** Transfer or withdraw the money first. REPORTED
- **Allow three to five working days,** and start while your Emirates ID is still valid. REPORTED
- **Download every statement** before you close. You may need a year of statements for a mortgage, a rental application or a tax return at home. REPORTED
- **Or keep a non-resident account.** Some banks let you keep an account after you leave. Ask about fees, minimum balances and how you will receive one-time passwords without a UAE number. MARKET

5.5 Moving your money home

Compare the exchange rate and fees of your UAE bank, your home bank and a specialist transfer provider before you move a large sum. The difference on a final settlement can be significant. MARKET Banks with an international network can make it easier to move money and keep an account history across countries; HSBC UAE (a Relocate2UAE partner) is one example. Ask any bank what it offers before you close. Large transfers may trigger source-of-funds questions at your home bank, so keep your settlement letter, gratuity calculation and sale agreements. MARKET Our UAE Banking Guide covers transfers and fees.

5.6 What happens if you leave with debt

Unpaid bank debt is a civil matter, not a crime, but it does not disappear when you leave. Debts of AED 10,000 or more can lead to a travel ban that you may only discover at a UAE airport on a future visit, and banks use cross-border collection agencies. REPORTED A security cheque that bounces because you emptied or closed the account can create a separate problem. REPORTED If a case is already open, a UAE lawyer can usually settle it for you under a power of attorney. REPORTED

Check for a travel ban before you fly. Dubai Police offers a free check for financial-case travel bans through its app and website, and Abu Dhabi's Judicial Department shows claims through its Estafser service. OFFICIAL

6. Ending your tenancy, utilities and subscriptions

6.1 Ending your tenancy

Read your contract first. It decides your notice period and whether you can leave early.

- **Dubai.** Under Dubai Law No. 26 of 2007, a valid tenancy cannot be ended by one side during its term, except as the law allows or by agreement. To leave early you need an early termination clause, your landlord's written agreement, or legal grounds. There is no fixed statutory penalty; exit clauses commonly set one or two months' rent. LAW REPORTED
- **Abu Dhabi.** Tenancies are governed by Law No. 20 of 2006 and registered on Tawtheeq. Early exit depends on your contract or your landlord's agreement. LAW REPORTED
- **At the end of the term.** Most contracts require written notice, often 60 or 90 days before the end date, if you will not renew. Send it in writing and keep proof. MARKET
- **Get any early exit agreed in writing,** including the end date, any penalty, and how the security deposit will be treated. REPORTED
- **Post-dated rent cheques.** Ask for any cheques for periods after you leave to be returned or destroyed, and get that in writing. MARKET

6.2 Dubai: DEWA, Ejari and district cooling

1. **Book the DEWA move-out** through the DEWA app or website, with UAE Pass or your DEWA login, or using your contract account and premise number. Pay any unpaid bills first, choose the move-out date and time and your refund method, and attach proof of an IBAN in the same name as the DEWA account. OFFICIAL
2. **Disconnection** happens within 24 working hours of the date you choose. The fee is AED 125 for small meters or AED 300 for large meters, plus AED 20 in knowledge and innovation fees. OFFICIAL
3. **The final bill** arrives by email and SMS within 24 working hours. Your security deposit is set against it, and any balance is refunded automatically to your IBAN, or paid as a cheque for refunds over AED 200,000. OFFICIAL
4. **The clearance certificate** is emailed once the final bill is settled, and for eligible cases is shared with the tenant and RERA so the Ejari can be cancelled. OFFICIAL
5. **Cancel the Ejari** through the Dubai Land Department or the Dubai REST app once the tenancy has ended. Your landlord or agent may do this for you. REPORTED
6. **District cooling.** If your building uses Empower, Emicool or another cooling provider, request a move-out and final bill separately. Landlords usually ask for the cooling clearance too. REPORTED
7. **Gas.** If you have a piped gas account, close it with the building's supplier and recover any deposit. MARKET

6.3 Abu Dhabi: TAQA Distribution and Tawtheeq

TAQA Distribution (formerly ADDC) supplies electricity and water in Abu Dhabi city and its region.

1. **Request the move-out** through the TAQA Distribution website or app, by calling 800 2332 from your registered mobile, or by email. If your tenancy is still active, cancelling it on Tawtheeq creates the closure request automatically. OFFICIAL
2. **Meter reading.** Smart meters are read automatically; manual meters need a technician visit, so make sure the meter is accessible. OFFICIAL
3. **Pay the final bill.** The account only closes when dues are cleared. OFFICIAL
4. **Clearance certificate** by email and SMS. OFFICIAL
5. **Deposit refund.** TAQA Distribution refunds deposits by bank transfer to a UAE account only. Other options are a transfer to another account or a donation to the Emirates Red Crescent. It does not refund in cash or overseas. REPORTED

Al Ain and the Al Dhafra region have their own TAQA distribution company, and **Sharjah** (SEWA) and the **northern emirates** (Etihad Water and Electricity) have their own closure processes. Our UAE Utilities Guide lists each provider.

6.4 Phone, internet and everything else

Service	What to do
Home internet and TV	Request disconnection from e& or du, return the router and set-top box, and keep the return receipt. Check for early termination charges on a contract. MARKET
Mobile line	Cancel last, after your bank, UAE Pass and government accounts are closed. Pay the final bill. REPORTED
Salik (Dubai tolls) and Darb (Abu Dhabi tolls)	Deactivate or transfer the tag when you sell the car, then close the account and ask for any balance back. REPORTED VERIFY
Nol card (Dubai transport)	Use up the balance, or ask RTA about a refund for personalised cards. REPORTED VERIFY
Gym, club and beach memberships	Check notice terms and give notice in writing. Many renew automatically. MARKET
Streaming, delivery and app subscriptions	Cancel each one, or switch it to your home country. Remove your UAE card from each app. MARKET
Insurance (car, home contents, life, health)	Cancel and ask for a pro-rata refund. Keep life cover in place until you have replacement cover at home. MARKET
School bus, nursery, clubs and activities	Give written notice in line with each provider's terms. MARKET

6.5 If you own property in the UAE

You can keep, let or sell UAE property after you leave. If you are selling, start early, because a sale takes time and a mortgage must be cleared or transferred before the title moves. If you are letting, appoint a licensed agent or property manager and decide how you will receive rent. A property may also affect your tax position at home (Section 11). Altura Property (a Relocate2UAE partner) advises on selling and letting in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. See our Buying Property in the UAE guide for the ownership rules.

7. Recovering your deposits

You can recover thousands of dirhams in deposits, but only if you plan the timing and keep a UAE account open to receive them.

Deposit	How to get it back	Watch out for
Rental security deposit	Refunded at the end of the tenancy, less the cost of damage beyond normal wear and tear LAW REPORTED	Ask for itemised deductions with invoices. Take dated photos and video at move-out and compare them with move-in
DEWA (Dubai)	Set against your final bill; the balance goes to your IBAN automatically OFFICIAL	IBAN name must match the DEWA account name
TAQA Distribution (Abu Dhabi)	Bank transfer to a UAE account REPORTED	No overseas transfers. Keep an account open

Deposit	How to get it back	Watch out for
District cooling and gas	Request a final bill and refund from the provider REPORTED	Some providers need the landlord's or building's confirmation
School re-registration deposit (Dubai)	Refundable in full with at least 60 days' written notice before the start of the next academic year OFFICIAL	Less than 60 days' notice and the school can keep it
Car lease or subscription	Returned after the car is inspected and fines are cleared MARKET	Fines and Salik charges can arrive weeks later
Internet and TV equipment	Returned when equipment is handed back MARKET	Keep the return receipt
Club and membership deposits	Per the club's terms MARKET	Notice periods often apply
Salik and nol balances	Ask the operator before you leave REPORTED VERIFY	Small amounts, easy to forget

Protecting your rental deposit

- Clean the property thoroughly, or use a professional move-out clean if your contract requires it.
- Repair your own damage before the inspection, and get receipts.
- Be present at the inspection, take dated photos and video, and ask the landlord or agent to sign the inspection report.
- Hand back every key, access card and parking tag, and get a signed receipt.
- Ask in writing when and how the deposit will be refunded, and to which account.
- If it is not returned, file with the Rental Disputes Center in Dubai or the Rental Dispute Settlement Committees in Abu Dhabi, ideally before you leave. OFFICIAL REPORTED

8. Your car: sell, export or hand back

8.1 Sell or export?

For most people moving to the UK, Ireland or Australia, selling in the UAE is simpler. UAE cars are left-hand drive, these countries drive on the left, and importing a car brings registration, testing and compliance costs on top of shipping. MARKET REPORTED Exporting can make sense for a high-value or classic car, or a move to a country that drives on the right. Get a full landed cost from a shipper and check the import rules at home before you decide.

8.2 Selling your car in Dubai

1. **Clear every fine** in every emirate, and any Salik and parking charges. Unpaid fines in any emirate block the transfer. REPORTED
2. **Settle the car loan** if you have one. Ask the bank for a liability letter, pay it off, and the bank releases the mortgage to the RTA electronically, usually within one to five working days. REPORTED
3. **Check the vehicle status** on the RTA app or Dubai Drive, so you know no blocks remain. REPORTED
4. **Get an inspection** if the car is more than three years old; the certificate is valid for 30 days. REPORTED
5. **Complete the transfer** with the buyer at an RTA customer happiness centre or approved centre. Both parties attend, unless one holds a notarised power of attorney. Bring the original registration card (Mulkiya), your Emirates ID and driving licence, and the bank release if the car was financed. REPORTED VERIFY
6. **Agree what happens to your plates.** At the counter you can keep, transfer or return them. REPORTED
7. **Get paid safely.** Accept a manager's cheque, a cleared bank transfer or cash counted at the centre, and keep the keys and Mulkiya until the transfer is confirmed. REPORTED
8. **Cancel your insurance** and ask for a pro-rata refund, less any cancellation fee. MARKET
9. **Check the car has left your traffic file** a week or two later, and keep the sale agreement and transfer receipt for at least three years in case a later fine is wrongly sent to you. REPORTED

Selling to a dealer is faster. Dealers and online car buyers handle the transfer and can settle a bank loan directly, but usually pay less than a private buyer. MARKET

In **Abu Dhabi**, vehicle services run through TAMM and Abu Dhabi Police, and transfers between emirates need a vehicle clearance certificate. REPORTED VERIFY Our UAE Driving and Vehicle Guide covers registration and transfers emirate by emirate.

8.3 Exporting your car

Step	Detail
Export certificate	In Dubai, the RTA issues an export certificate online, through the RTA app or at a customer happiness centre. You need a vehicle clearance certificate, your Emirates ID, the car's plates and a mortgage release if the car was financed. The fee has been reported at AED 100 for a light vehicle, plus AED 70 for export plates and AED 20 in knowledge and innovation fees. REPORTED VERIFY
Export plates and insurance	Export plates and export insurance are valid for a short period only, reported as 14 days for insurance. REPORTED VERIFY
Abu Dhabi and other emirates	Apply to the licensing authority of the emirate where the car is registered, through TAMM in Abu Dhabi or the relevant police service. REPORTED VERIFY
Shipping	A licensed car shipper handles port documents, container or roll-on roll-off shipping and insurance. Get the quote in writing, including destination port charges. MARKET
Import at home	UK: a NOVA notification and import declaration, and a car may qualify for transfer of residence relief (Section 9.4). Ireland: VRT applies, with a separate transfer of residence relief for vehicles. Australia: strict vehicle import approval rules apply. Check before you ship. OFFICIAL VERIFY

8.4 Leased, rented or subscription cars

Return the car, get a signed inspection report, and ask when the deposit will be refunded. Fines and toll charges can arrive after you return the car, so ask the company to confirm in writing when the account is clear. MARKET

8.5 Your UAE driving licence

Keep your UAE licence. It does not need to be cancelled, and some countries let you exchange it or use it for a period after you arrive. Check your home country's licensing authority. REPORTED VERIFY

9. Shipping your belongings home

9.1 Sell, ship, store or give away

Moving home is a good time to cut what you ship. Shipping is priced by volume, so large furniture, appliances and anything cheap to replace often costs more to move than to buy again. MARKET

- **Sell** furniture, appliances and cars through online marketplaces and community groups. Allow time; good items sell quickly, bulky ones do not.
- **Give away** to charities and community donation drives. The Emirates Red Crescent accepts donations. REPORTED
- **Store** in the UAE only if you expect to return.
- **Ship** what you will use, what has sentimental value, and what is expensive to replace.

Check voltage before you ship electricals. The UAE uses 230V and 50Hz, the same as the UK, Ireland and Australia, so most appliances work there with a plug change. North America uses 120V and 60Hz, so many UAE appliances will need a transformer or replacing. REPORTED

9.2 Choosing a mover

- **Get at least three surveyed quotes,** in person or by video, not estimates from a phone call. MARKET
- **Use an accredited international mover,** for example one with FIDI-FAIM accreditation, with its own agent in your destination country. MARKET
- **Compare like for like:** sea or air, shared or sole container, door to door, destination charges, customs clearance, storage and unpacking. MARKET
- **Insure the shipment** for its replacement value, and read what is excluded, such as owner-packed boxes. MARKET
- **Book six to eight weeks ahead,** earlier for June to August, when demand peaks as families leave at the end of the school year. MARKET

2026 shipping conditions

Since late February 2026, disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has changed routing for many containers to and from Jebel Ali and Khalifa Port, with some cargo moved through east-coast ports such as Khor Fakkan and Fujairah. Expect longer transit times and possible surcharges, and ask every mover for a current written routing and surcharge statement. REPORTED Our Moving and Logistics Guide tracks the position.

9.3 Never put these in your shipment

- Passports, visas, original certificates and your final settlement documents
- Medicines you need in the first weeks, with prescriptions
- Cash, jewellery and irreplaceable valuables
- Alcohol, flammables, aerosols, gas canisters, paint and chemicals
- Perishable food
- Weapons, ammunition and replica weapons
- Anything your destination country prohibits or restricts, such as certain plants, wooden items, seeds or soil for Australia

9.4 Customs when you arrive home

Most countries let returning residents bring used household goods in free of duty if conditions are met. The conditions are strict, and your mover's destination agent will need your forms before the shipment arrives.

Destination	Main conditions for duty-free import of household goods
United Kingdom	Transfer of residence relief: you must have lived outside the UK for at least 12 consecutive months, have had the goods for at least 6 months, and import them within 12 months of moving. Apply on form ToR1 before the goods are shipped and quote the reference on the import declaration. Goods cannot be sold, lent or hired out for 12 months. OFFICIAL
Ireland	Transfer of residence relief: you must have lived outside the EU for at least 12 continuous months and have possessed and used the goods for 6 months. Goods can arrive up to 6 months before or 12 months after your move. Selling, lending or hiring them out within 12 months means paying the import charges. OFFICIAL
Australia	Unaccompanied goods do not get the same concessions as goods you carry. They may be subject to duty and tax unless you have owned and used them for at least 12 months. Biosecurity rules are strict, so clean outdoor furniture, bikes and garden tools. OFFICIAL
United States	Household effects actually used abroad for at least one year can enter duty-free, declared on CBP Form 3299, provided they are not intended for sale. LAW OFFICIAL
Canada	Former residents absent for at least a year can import personal effects owned, possessed and used abroad for at least 6 months duty- and tax-free. List goods following later on form BSF186 at your first entry. Items over CAN$10,000 pay duty on the excess. OFFICIAL
Other countries	Most have a similar transfer of residence or returning resident relief. Ask your mover's destination agent and check the customs authority's own website. MARKET

9.5 Pets

Pets need an export certificate from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE) as well as meeting your destination's import rules, which can include microchipping, rabies vaccination at least 21 days before travel, a rabies antibody blood test and waiting periods. REPORTED VERIFY Some destinations need several months of preparation, so start as soon as you know your date. Our UAE Pet Relocation Guide has a full section on leaving the UAE with a dog or cat.

10. Family, schools, health cover and documents

10.1 Schools

- **Give written notice** in line with the school's terms. In Dubai, refunds are calculated from the withdrawal date in your formal written request, not your child's last day, and cannot be backdated. OFFICIAL
- **Dubai refund rules.** If your child leaves before the academic year starts, tuition fees are refunded in full. Once term has started, the school can charge the full term's fees if your child was enrolled two weeks or less, one month's fees for two weeks to a month, and two months' fees after that. OFFICIAL
- **Re-registration deposits** in Dubai are refundable in full only with at least 60 days' written notice before the next academic year starts. OFFICIAL
- **Transfer certificate.** Ask the school for a withdrawal or transfer certificate and copies of reports. A school may hold the certificate until fees are paid, but must issue it once they are settled. OFFICIAL
- **Abu Dhabi and other emirates** have their own fee and refund policies set by ADEK and the Ministry of Education. Ask the school for its policy in writing. REPORTED VERIFY
- **Attest documents** your home school or university may need, such as UAE school certificates, while you are still in the UAE. REPORTED

10.2 Health insurance and medical records

- **Your UAE health cover usually ends** when your employment or visa ends. Ask your insurer or HR for the exact date, and whether cover continues during your grace period. REPORTED VERIFY
- **Cover the gap.** If you have no cover from the day UAE insurance ends until you are entitled to care at home, buy short-term international health or travel cover. A broker can compare options; Pacific Prime (a Relocate2UAE partner) is one broker that arranges international health insurance. MARKET
- **Collect medical records,** vaccination records for every family member, and enough prescription medicine for the first weeks, with prescriptions. Some medicines that are prescribed in the UAE are controlled elsewhere, so check before you travel. REPORTED
- **Pregnancy.** If you are pregnant, check airline rules on late pregnancy and when you will be covered at home. MARKET

10.3 Documents to collect before you leave

Some documents are much harder to obtain once you have gone. Collect originals or certified copies of:

- UAE birth certificates for children born here, and marriage certificates registered here, attested for use abroad by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs REPORTED VERIFY
- Your employment contract, final settlement letter, gratuity calculation and experience or service letter
- Salary certificates and payslips, useful for a mortgage or job at home
- Bank liability and clearance letters, and a year of statements
- Tenancy contract, move-out inspection report and deposit refund confirmation
- Utility clearance certificates
- Visa cancellation papers for every family member
- Car sale or export documents

- School reports and transfer certificates
- A UAE Tax Residency Certificate, if you will need one (Section 11.1)
- Your UAE will, if you registered one, and advice on whether it still reflects your wishes

10.4 Wills

If you registered a will in the UAE, for example with the DIFC Courts or the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department, it may still cover any UAE assets you keep. Review it with your home-country will at the same time, so the two do not contradict each other. REPORTED

11. Tax and residency when you return home

11.1 What the UAE side looks like

The UAE does not tax employment income, and there is no exit tax when you leave. OFFICIAL The rules that matter are your home country's. They decide when you become resident again, what income is taxed in the year you return, and how any investments are valued.

Get a Tax Residency Certificate before you leave if you may need one. The Federal Tax Authority issues certificates to individuals through EmaraTax (trc.tax.gov.ae), signing in with UAE Pass. It can cover the current or a past period of up to 12 months, not a future one. The fees are AED 50 to submit plus AED 1,000 for the review and electronic certificate, and it takes around 10 business days. You need your Emirates ID or passport and an official entry and exit report, plus proof of employment or residence if you spent fewer than 183 days in the UAE. OFFICIAL Apply while your UAE Pass and Emirates ID still work.

Five tax questions to answer before you move

1. On what date will I become tax resident at home, and does the year of my return split into a UAE part and a home part?
2. Should I receive my gratuity, bonus and final salary before or after that date?
3. Will investments I bought while abroad be valued at what I paid, or at their value on my return?
4. Should I sell, keep or restructure any UAE savings plans, offshore bonds or property before I return?
5. What do I need to report in my first tax return at home, including UAE accounts I keep open?

11.2 United Kingdom

- **Statutory residence test and split-year treatment.** If you return part way through a UK tax year (6 April to 5 April), split-year treatment can divide the year into an overseas part and a UK part, so that income from the overseas part is generally treated as that of a non-resident. Several separate "cases" apply to people arriving, with their own conditions. OFFICIAL
- **Temporary non-residence.** If you were UK resident in at least 4 of the 7 tax years before you left and you return within five years, certain gains and income from your time abroad, such as gains on assets you owned before leaving, can be taxed in your year of return. OFFICIAL
- **The 4-year foreign income and gains (FIG) regime.** Since 6 April 2025, someone who becomes UK resident after at least 10 consecutive tax years of non-residence can claim relief on eligible foreign income and gains for up to four years. Claiming means giving up certain tax-free allowances. Foreign employment income is excluded, though Overseas Workday Relief may apply. OFFICIAL
- **No reset of investment values.** There is no general rule that rebases investments to their value on your return, so a gain built up while you were abroad can be taxed when you sell after returning. Some advisers suggest considering sales before you return. Take advice first. REPORTED

See our Moving From the UK to the UAE guide for the outbound side of these rules.

11.3 Ireland

- **Split-year treatment in the year of arrival.** If you were not Irish resident in the previous year, are resident in the year you arrive, and expect to be resident the following year, employment income you earned abroad before you arrived in that year is ignored for Irish tax. It applies to employment income only, not to other income. Claim it through MyEnquiries or, for moves after 31 December 2024, on your income tax return. OFFICIAL
- **Investment income and gains** are not covered by split-year relief, so take advice on the timing of disposals and the treatment of any UAE savings plans. OFFICIAL VERIFY

11.4 Australia

- **Becoming resident again.** When you become an Australian resident, most of your CGT assets are treated as acquired at their market value on that day, so gains from your time abroad are generally not taxed in Australia. This does not apply to taxable Australian property, such as Australian real estate, which keeps its original cost base. OFFICIAL
- **If you made a choice when you left** to disregard gains on becoming non-resident, your assets may have been treated as taxable Australian property while you were away. Check your position with a tax agent. OFFICIAL

See our Moving From Australia to the UAE guide.

11.5 Canada

When you become resident in Canada, property you own is generally treated as sold and immediately bought back at its fair market value on the day your residence starts. Record those values, because they become your cost for future gains. OFFICIAL

11.6 United States

US citizens and green card holders are taxed on worldwide income wherever they live, so moving home does not change what you must report, only how. Your Foreign Earned Income Exclusion is prorated in the year you return, your state may tax you again from your return, and you still report any UAE accounts open at any point in the year on the FBAR. OFFICIAL See our Moving From the USA to the UAE guide.

11.7 Every returner

- **Keep evidence of your UAE residence:** tenancy contracts, entry and exit records, salary certificates and the Tax Residency Certificate. Tax authorities at home may ask for them. OFFICIAL REPORTED
- **UAE savings plans and offshore investments** can be taxed very differently at home. Take advice before you return, not after. MARKET
- **Do not rely on the UAE's double taxation agreements** to settle your position; they apply to specific situations and do not override your home country's residence rules. OFFICIAL VERIFY

Our UAE Taxation Guide and UAE Wealth Management for Expats guide cover cross-border tax and investments in more depth.

12. Common mistakes that cost leavers money

1. **Signing the MOHRE cancellation before you are paid.** Your signature confirms you have received your dues. OFFICIAL
2. **Closing your only bank account too early,** then losing a DEWA or TAQA Distribution refund. OFFICIAL REPORTED
3. **Leaving a credit card open** because the current account was closed. Fees and interest keep running. REPORTED
4. **Owing money to the bank that pays your salary,** so your gratuity is held. REPORTED
5. **Cancelling your own visa before your family's.** The system will not allow it. OFFICIAL
6. **Missing your grace period** and paying AED 50 a day. REPORTED
7. **Handing over car keys before the RTA transfer is complete,** then receiving the buyer's fines. REPORTED
8. **Shipping goods before applying for transfer of residence relief** at home, then paying duty. OFFICIAL
9. **Giving the school notice too late** and losing the re-registration deposit. OFFICIAL
10. **Cancelling your mobile number first,** then being unable to receive bank and UAE Pass passwords. REPORTED
11. **Receiving a bonus or gratuity at the wrong time** for your home tax year. REPORTED
12. **Leaving with unpaid debt** and finding a travel ban on your next visit. REPORTED

13. Interactive tool: UAE Exit Planner

Use our free **UAE Exit Planner**. Enter your leaving date, emirate, visa type and what you need to close, and it builds a dated checklist in the right order. It also estimates your end-of-service gratuity and tracks the deposits you are owed. It runs in your browser, stores nothing and works offline once loaded. You can print it or copy it.

Related Relocate2UAE guides

If you need	Read
Visa types, grace periods and Emirates ID	UAE Visa Requirements Guide
Notice, termination, gratuity and ILOE	UAE Employment Guide
Salary certificates and package benchmarks	UAE Salary Guide
Accounts, cards and transfers	UAE Banking Guide
Tenancy rules and deposits in Dubai	Complete Dubai Tenant Guide
Tenancy rules and deposits in Abu Dhabi	Complete Abu Dhabi Tenant Guide
DEWA, TAQA, cooling and internet	UAE Utilities Guide
Selling, transferring or exporting a car	UAE Driving and Vehicle Guide
Movers, containers and customs	Moving and Logistics Guide
Taking a dog or cat with you	UAE Pet Relocation Guide
Tax residency and cross-border tax	UAE Taxation Guide
Investments and savings plans	UAE Wealth Management for Expats
A dispute with an employer or landlord	UAE Emergency and Problem-Solving Guide

14. Frequently asked questions

How do I cancel my UAE residence visa when leaving permanently?

Your sponsor cancels it. For an employment visa, your employer first cancels your work permit with MOHRE, which needs your signature confirming you have received your dues, then cancels the residence visa with ICP or GDRFA. Family sponsors must cancel dependants' visas before their own. OFFICIAL

How long can I stay in the UAE after my visa is cancelled?

It depends on your visa category: 30 days for most categories, 60 days for visas issued with a sponsor or host, 90 days for skill level 3 professionals and property owners, and 180 days for Golden and Green Visa holders and some others. Check your exact date on the ICP File Validity service. REPORTED VERIFY

What is the overstay fine in the UAE?

AED 50 for each day you stay beyond your visa or grace period, for residence, work and visit visas alike. Fines must be paid before you leave. REPORTED VERIFY

Can my visa be cancelled after I have left the UAE?

Yes. MOHRE does not need the worker's signature if the worker is outside the UAE, so your employer can cancel your work permit and visa after you leave. A residence visa is also cancelled automatically after more than six months continuously outside the UAE, unless an exception applies. OFFICIAL

How is end-of-service gratuity calculated in the UAE?

You need at least one year of continuous service. You receive 21 days' basic salary for each of your first five years and 30 days' basic salary for each year after that, capped at two years' pay. Allowances are not included. OFFICIAL

Do I lose my gratuity if I resign?

No. Under the 2021 labour law, resigning does not reduce your gratuity as it did under the old law, provided you have completed at least one year of service and serve your notice. LAW REPORTED

When must my employer pay my final settlement?

Within 14 days of your contract ending. That covers outstanding wages and end-of-service benefits. If it is not paid, file a complaint with MOHRE through its app, website or 80084. OFFICIAL

Should I sign the visa cancellation form before receiving my gratuity?

No. Your signature on the MOHRE work permit cancellation confirms you have received all your labour dues. Wait until the payment has arrived. OFFICIAL

Do DIFC employees get gratuity?

DIFC employees have been covered since February 2020 by the DEWS workplace savings plan instead of a lump-sum gratuity. Employers contribute 5.83% or 8.33% of basic salary each month, and you can withdraw the savings when you leave. REPORTED

Do I need to close my UAE bank account before leaving?

You do not have to, but you should settle and close cards and loans, and close accounts you do not need. Keep one account open until your deposits and final settlement have been refunded, or ask your bank about a non-resident account. Get a clearance letter from every bank. REPORTED

What happens if I leave the UAE with unpaid credit card debt?

The debt remains. It is a civil matter, but debts of AED 10,000 or more can lead to a travel ban, and banks use collection agencies abroad. Contact the bank before you leave and agree a settlement or repayment plan in writing. REPORTED

How do I check if I have a travel ban before leaving?

Dubai Police offers a free check for financial-case travel bans through its app and website. In Abu Dhabi, the Judicial Department's Estafser service shows claims against you. For other emirates, contact the Public Prosecution. OFFICIAL

Can I break my tenancy early in Dubai?

Only if your contract has an early termination clause, your landlord agrees in writing, or you have legal grounds. A tenancy cannot be ended by one side during its term under Dubai Law No. 26 of 2007. Exit penalties are commonly one or two months' rent. LAW REPORTED

How do I get my DEWA deposit back when leaving Dubai?

Book a move-out on the DEWA app or website, pay any outstanding bills and add an IBAN in the same name as the account. DEWA sets the deposit against your final bill and refunds the balance to the IBAN automatically. OFFICIAL

How do I get my TAQA or ADDC deposit back in Abu Dhabi?

Request a move-out on the TAQA Distribution website or app, on 800 2332, or by cancelling your tenancy on Tawtheeq. After the final bill is paid, the deposit is refunded by bank transfer to a UAE account. TAQA Distribution does not make overseas transfers. OFFICIAL REPORTED

Can I take my car home from the UAE?

Yes, with an RTA export certificate and export plates in Dubai, or the equivalent in your emirate, then a shipper and your home country's import process. For the UK, Ireland and Australia, the car will be left-hand drive, and import costs and approvals often make selling in the UAE more practical. REPORTED MARKET

How do I sell my car before leaving the UAE?

Clear fines in every emirate, settle any car loan so the bank releases the mortgage, get an inspection if the car is over three years old, and complete the transfer with the buyer at an RTA centre. Keep the keys until the transfer is confirmed. REPORTED

Do I pay import duty on my household goods when I move home?

Usually not, if you qualify for your country's transfer of residence or returning resident relief. In the UK, you must have lived abroad for 12 months, owned the goods for 6 months, and applied on form ToR1 before shipping. Ireland, Australia, the US and Canada have their own conditions. OFFICIAL

Will I pay tax on my UAE gratuity when I return home?

It depends on your home country's rules and on when you receive it. Under split-year rules in the UK and Ireland, employment income from the overseas part of the year is generally outside the home tax net, so timing matters. Take tax advice before your final settlement is paid. OFFICIAL VERIFY

Do I need a UAE tax residency certificate when I leave?

Only if your home tax authority or a bank asks for proof of UAE tax residence. Apply through EmaraTax before you leave, while your UAE Pass works. The fees are AED 50 plus AED 1,000, and it takes around 10 business days. OFFICIAL

Should I keep my Golden Visa when I leave?

Many people keep it as a route back, because the six-month absence rule does not apply to it in the same way. Consider how it affects your home tax residence and any conditions, such as owning property, before you decide. REPORTED VERIFY

How far in advance should I start planning to leave the UAE?

Start at least three months ahead. That gives you time to serve notice at work, give notice on your home and school, sell or export your car, book a mover and settle every account in the right order. MARKET

15. Primary sources

UAE federal

- u.ae: Cancelling your residence visa; Visa rules for UAE residence visa holders travelling abroad; End of service benefits for workers in the private sector; Terminating employment contracts
- Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE): Cancellation of Work Permits and Employment Contracts service; labour complaints, 80084
- Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 on the regulation of labour relations, as amended
- Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security (ICP): Smart Services, File Validity
- Federal Tax Authority: Issuance of Tax Residency Certificates (service card, August 2026)
- Ministerial Resolution No. 604 of 2022 on the unemployment insurance scheme

UAE emirates

- Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA): Deactivation of electricity and water (move-out); clearance certificate; refunds
- TAQA Distribution (formerly ADDC): Closing an account
- Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA): A parent's guide to fees, deposits and refunds
- Dubai Law No. 26 of 2007 regulating relations between landlords and tenants, as amended
- Abu Dhabi Law No. 20 of 2006 concerning leasing, as amended
- Dubai Police and Abu Dhabi Judicial Department: travel ban checks

Home countries

- GOV.UK: Transfer of residence to Great Britain; HMRC RDR3 Statutory residence test; HS278 Temporary non-residents and Capital Gains Tax (2026); Check if you can claim the 4-year foreign income and gains regime
- Revenue (Ireland): Moving to live in Ireland from outside the EU, rules for transfer of residence relief; Split-year treatment in your year of arrival
- Australian Border Force: Duty-free concessions and unaccompanied goods
- Australian Taxation Office: How changing residency affects CGT
- Canada Border Services Agency: Moving or returning to Canada
- Canada Revenue Agency: Completing your return for newcomers
- US Code of Federal Regulations, 19 CFR 148.52; US Customs and Border Protection Form 3299

We also reviewed guides and articles from UAE newspapers (Gulf News, Khaleej Times, The National, Emirates 24|7), law firms, accountancy firms, banks, movers, car marketplaces and property portals. We treated them as leads, not sources, and checked their claims against the primary sources above where those pages were available. Where only reputable secondary reporting was available, the claim is tagged REPORTED, and where sources disagree we say so in the text. Two examples: published grace period lists differ on which skilled professionals receive 90 days, and the reported RTA export certificate fees date from 2021 to 2022.

About this guide

Written and verified by the Relocate2UAE editorial team. Last verified 23 November 2026. Next review 23 February 2027, or sooner if a fee, procedure or rule changes. If you spot something out of date, tell us at info@relocate2uae.com and we will check it.

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