



# Dubai Financial Services Authority regulatory update Q1 2026

## Regulatory horizon scanning and enforcement

- On January 9, 2026, the Dubai Financial Services Authority (“DFSA”) published a [Thematic Review](#) examining how Authorised Firms in Dubai International Financial Centre (“DIFC”) identify, manage, and mitigate conflicts of interest risk. The review assessed 710 firms across various sectors and business models, providing a comprehensive view of current practices across the DIFC. The Review highlights several good practices observed within the industry, as well as areas requiring improvement. The DFSA expects Authorised Firms to review the findings and ensure their systems and controls on conflicts of interest are sufficiently robust, appropriately documented, and proportionate to the nature, scale, and complexity of their business. The Thematic Review can be accessed via the link above.
- On January 12, 2026, the DFSA brought into force its updated regulatory framework for crypto tokens in DIFC. The enhanced rules strengthen the DFSA’s regime, provide greater clarity for market participants, and support the development of a safe, transparent, and well-regulated digital assets environment. A key change under the updated regime is the shift from a DFSA-led suitability assessment to a firm-led assessment. Firms providing financial services involving crypto tokens are now directly responsible for determining – on a reasoned and documented basis – whether each crypto token they engage with meets the DFSA’s suitability criteria. As a result, the DFSA will no longer publish a list of recognised crypto tokens. To support market understanding of the updated framework and to provide a broader perspective on how the DFSA and DIFC support innovation in digital assets, the DFSA hosted a webinar on January 27, 2026.

The new rules came into force on January 12, 2026.

For full details on the updated rules on the regulation of crypto tokens, please refer to:

- › [DFSA website](#)
- › [DFSA's notice of amendments to legislation](#)
- › [DFSA's Policy Statement on Fiat Crypto Tokens](#)
- › [DFSA's Supervisory Guidelines on assessing the suitability of Crypto Tokens](#)
- On February 12, 2026, the DFSA published its crypto tokens FAQs to support implementation of the updated regulatory framework, which came into force on January 12, 2026. The FAQs are intended to provide practical clarification on the application of the DFSA Rulebook to financial services and activities involving crypto tokens in or from the DIFC. The DFSA will review and update the FAQs periodically, and firms are encouraged to refer to the latest version alongside the relevant provisions of the DFSA Rulebook, [Supervisory Guidelines on Assessing the Suitability of Crypto Tokens](#), and the [Policy Statement on Fiat Crypto Tokens](#). The crypto token FAQs are available [here](#).
- On February 26, 2026, the DFSA Board made amendments to the DFSA Rulebook to align with [Federal Decree Law No. 10 of 2025](#) that came into force on March 2, 2026, as described below.

- [ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING, COUNTER-TERRORIST FINANCING AND SANCTIONS MODULE \(AML\) RULE-MAKING INSTRUMENT \(No. 435\) 2026](#) (see [appendix 1](#) for the detailed amendments)
- [GLOSSARY MODULE \(GLO\) RULE-MAKING INSTRUMENT \(No. 436\) 2026](#) (see [appendix 2](#) for the detailed amendments)
- The rule-making instruments mentioned above and the appendices to this notice can be viewed under the "[Amendments to Legislation](#)" section of the DFSA website and the relevant modules will be replaced on the DFSA website on the date of their coming into force, as described above. Earlier versions of the relevant modules are to be found in the archive.
- On March 2, 2026, the DFSA's updated [Anti-Money Laundering, Counter-Terrorist Financing and Sanctions \(AML\) and Glossary Modules](#) of the DFSA Rulebook came into force. The DFSA's amendments were introduced to provide clarity on the anti-money laundering ("AML") regime applicable in Dubai International Financial Centre ("DIFC") and to align with Federal AML legislation. In parallel, the DFSA also issued updated [AML FAQs](#) to provide practical guidance on key areas such as AML governance arrangements, enterprise-wide risk assessments, outsourcing vs. reliance frameworks, and onboarding practices.

### Consultation papers

- During the first quarter of 2026, the DFSA issued Consultation Papers [CP170](#) and [CP171](#), proposing targeted amendments to the DFSA Rulebook. These consultations focused on refining regulatory expectations in key areas, including AML/CFT, governance frameworks, and operational clarity for DIFC-regulated firms. The proposals were intended to support alignment with UAE Federal legislation and to address practical implementation issues identified through supervisory engagement.

## Enforcement

- On February 2, 2026, the DFSA and DIFC imposed a fine of USD 455,176 (AED 1,671,633) on reinsurance brokerage [Ed Broking \(MENA\) Limited \(the Firm\)](#), for a number of contraventions of DFSA legislation, including engaging in misleading and deceptive conduct. The Firm agreed to settle the matter and pay a fine which comprises disgorgement of USD 175,343 (USD 148,039 plus interest of USD 27,304) and a penalty of USD 279,833. The fine was reduced from USD 575,104 (AED 2,112,069) because of the settlement.
- On February 6, 2026, the DFSA, and DIFC imposed a fine of USD 504,000 (AED 1,850,940) on [Ark Capital Management \(Dubai\) Limited \(ARK\)](#) for having inadequate market abuse systems and controls, and for failing to notify the DFSA of a proposed change in control.

On February 10, 2026, the DFSA announced that the Financial Markets Tribunal has dismissed a reference by [Al Ramz Capital LLC \(Al Ramz\)](#) of a [DFSA Decision Notice](#) dated June 13, 2024. On February 3, 2026, the Financial Markets Tribunal upheld the DFSA's decision to impose a USD 25,000 (AED 91,813) fine on Al Ramz for its failure to immediately report suspicious transactions that it had executed on Nasdaq Dubai on behalf of a client in April 2022.

## Matters of clarification

- On January 12, 2026, the DFSA alerted the financial services community and the public to a scam in which a [legitimate DFSA firm](#) was impersonated.
- On January 12, 2026, the DFSA alerted the financial services community and the public to a scam in which EGS Capital Limited (the Firm) was impersonated. The scammers set up fraudulent websites that used the Firm's name and address in DIFC without the Firm's permission.
- On January 14, 2026, the DFSA alerted the financial services community and the public to a scam in which a DFSA Authorised Firm, [Interactive Brokers \(U.K.\) Limited \(DIFC Branch\)](#) was impersonated. The scammers used the name "Interactive Investments & Brokerage LLC" and issued "Crypto Subscription Agreement" to the victims.
- On January 27, 2026, the DFSA alerted the financial services community and the public to a fake notice in which the DFSA and the [Chief Executive of the DFSA](#), Mark Steward, were impersonated. The scammers sent a fake notice (the 'notice') to individuals and firms giving them notice that their employees need to hold a 'regulated certification and license' under the DFSA. The DFSA strongly advises recipients not to respond to any communications regarding this scam, and under no circumstances should you send or give any money to any party connected to the scam.

### **Please note: reminder**

The DFSA strongly advises individuals and firms not to respond to any communications regarding this scam, and under no circumstances should one send or give any money to any party connected to the scam.

All alerts issued by the DFSA may be accessed by going to [Alerts](#).

For more information on these scams, please go to [How to avoid being scammed](#).

If you have any concerns about the authenticity of any correspondence or documents that purport to be issued by the DIFC Authority, DFSA or a DFSA Authorised Firm, you should direct your concerns to the DIFC Authority on Tel: +971 4 362 2222 and to the DFSA via the DFSA complaints function on [Complaints](#).

### **News/updates**

- On January 13, 2026, the DFSA announced it would host a webinar on January 27, 2026 to discuss the updated Crypto Token Regulatory Framework and to outline how DIFC supports the development of a safe, transparent, and forward-looking digital assets market. For full details on the updated crypto token rules, please refer to [DFSA's Crypto webpage](#).
- On March 3, 2026, the DFSA announced the reopening of Nasdaq Dubai, effective Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 10.00am GST, which had previously been closed since Monday March 2, 2026.



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