

Sharing a flat in Dubai illegal without landlord's approval



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LEGAL VIEW

Q: Is a landlord allowed to lease apartments to single women or men on a sharing basis? If yes, how many tenants can share an apartment? I ask this question because I live in a high-rise building on the Sheikh Zayed Road and we have been noticing many single women and men sharing apartments. They also use the gym and pool facilities along with their friends, due to which these are getting too crowded. Our residential contract clearly states that sharing is not allowed.

A: In Dubai, sharing a rented accommodation without obtaining the landlord's approval is illegal. This is in accordance with Article 24 of Law No. 26 of 2007 regulating the relationship between landlords and tenants in Dubai (Dubai Rental Law), which states: "Unless otherwise agreed in the tenancy contract, the tenant shall not assign benefit or sublease premises without obtaining the landlord's approval."

If the tenants are residing illegally, you may bring the situation to the attention of the landlord.

In Dubai, any tenant who sublets the rented premises may be evicted along with the sub-tenants. This is in accordance with Article 25 of Law No. 33 of 2008 amending some provisions of Law No. 25(1)(b) of 2007. It states that a "landlord may demand the eviction of a tenant prior to the expiry of the tenancy period if the tenant subleases the property, or part thereof, without the landlord's written approval and, in such a case, eviction shall be applicable to the tenant and the sub-tenant."

In certain designated areas, however, bachelors

and single women may share the same accommodation — as and if approved by the Dubai Municipality. The number of sub-tenants or tenants who can share an apartment depends on the area where it is located.

If the residents near your apartment are staying in the building legally — and have obtained a written approval from the landlord — they may use the facilities available in common areas. This is in accordance with Article 11 of the Dubai Rental Law, which states: "Rent value includes benefitting from property utilities, like swimming pools, playgrounds, sports halls, health club, car parking, etc., unless agreed otherwise."

However, residents, along with their visitors or friends, must not disturb others whenever they use the facilities in the common area. This is in accordance with Article 24 of Law No. 27 of 2007 on the ownership of jointly owned properties in Dubai, which states: "Subject to the association constitution, unit owners and occupiers and their guests must use the common areas ... in a way that does not compromise the rights of others to use those areas or disturb

Know the law



A landlord may demand the eviction of a tenant prior to the expiry of the tenancy period if the tenant subleases the property without a written approval.

others or put their safety or the safety of the jointly owned property at risk."

Based on the above, you may approach the landlord of your building and file a complaint, stating that some residents bring in too many people to use the pool and the gym and that some tenants are sharing an apartment without

Know the law



If you are not able to find new employment within the 30-day grace period, you are advised to leave the UAE to avoid overstay fines.

the approval of the landlord.

If the landlord does not address your concerns, you may approach the Dubai Municipality and the Rental Dispute Centre and file a complaint against the tenants and sub-tenants of such apartments.

Job hunt during visa grace period is okay

Q: My employment visa was valid till 2021, but I resigned earlier this year. My visa will expire in a few days and, after that, I will be on the visa grace period. Am I allowed to look for a job during this period?

A: You may search for new employment during your grace period stay in the UAE upon the cancellation of your work permit and employment visa. If you are not able to find new employment within 30 days, you are advised to leave the UAE to avoid overstay fines. You may approach the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs for any further queries.

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