

Law of the Judiciary

Chapter One: Independence of the Judiciary and its Guarantees

Article 1

Judges shall be independent and, in the administration of justice, they shall be subject to no authority other than the provisions of Sharia and applicable laws. No one may interfere with the judiciary.

Article 2

Judges are not subject to removal from office except in the cases set forth in this Law.

Article 3

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 49 of this Law, judges may not be transferred to other positions except with their consent or by reason of promotion, in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Article 4

Without prejudice to Article 68 of this Law, judges may not be sued for acts carried out in the performance of their duties except in accordance with the conditions and rules pertaining to the disciplining of judges.

Chapter Two: Supreme Judicial Council

Article 5

The Supreme Judicial Council shall be composed of a chairman to be appointed by royal order and 10 members as follows:

- a) President of the Supreme Court.
- b) Four full-time judges of the rank of president of a court of appeals to be appointed by royal order.
- c) Vice-Minister of Justice.
- d) Chairman of the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution.
- e) Three members satisfying the conditions required for an appeals judge to be appointed by royal order.

The term of the Chairman of the Council and the members provided for in paragraphs (b) and (e) shall be four renewable years .

Article 6

In addition to the other powers provided for in this Law, the Supreme Judicial Council shall:

- a) attend to judges' personnel affairs such as their appointment, promotion, discipline, assignment, secondment, training, transfer, leaves, termination of service, and the like, in accordance with established rules and procedures, in such a way so as to guarantee the independence of the judiciary.
- b) issue regulations relating to the personnel affairs of judges upon the approval of the King.
- c) issue judicial inspection regulations.
- d) establish courts in accordance with the nomenclatures provided for in Article 9 of this Law, merge or cancel them, determine their venue and subject jurisdictions without prejudice to Article 25 of this Law, and constitute circuits therein.
- e) supervise courts and judges and their work within the limits stated in this Law.
- f) name chief judges of courts of appeals and their assistants from among the appeals judges and chief judges of courts of first instance and their assistants.

- g) issue rules regulating the jurisdiction and powers of chief judges of courts and their assistants.
- h) issue rules specifying the selection process of judges as well as the procedures and requirements pertaining to their study leaves.
- i) regulate the work of trainee judges.
- j) determine equivalent judicial work required to fill judicial ranks.
- k) make recommendations relating to the Council's established jurisdiction.
- l) prepare a comprehensive report at the end of each year including achievements, obstacles, and relevant recommendations, and bring the same before the King.

Article 7

Headed by its Chairman, the Supreme Judicial Council shall convene at least once every other month and whenever the need arises. Its meeting shall be valid if attended by the majority of its members, and its decisions shall be taken by majority vote of the Council. In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, the President of the Supreme Court shall act on his behalf.

Article 8

1. The Supreme Judicial Council shall have its own budget which shall be issued in accordance with the rules governing issuance of the State budget.
2. The Supreme Judicial Council shall have a General Secretariat and the Council shall select the Secretary General from among the judges.
3. A sufficient number of researchers, specialists, and administrators shall be appointed at the Council. Pursuant to its decision, the Council may seek the assistance of whomever it deems necessary. They shall be supervised by the Chairman of the Council.
4. The Council shall issue internal regulations to regulate its work and duties.

Chapter Three: Courts and Jurisdiction

Section One: Hierarchy of Courts

Article 9

Courts shall consist of the following:

1. The Supreme Court.
2. Courts of appeals.
3. First instance courts, which are:

- a) General courts.
- b) Penal courts.
- c) Family courts.
- d) Commercial courts.
- e) Labor courts.

Each shall have jurisdiction over matters brought before it in accordance with this Law, the Law of Procedure before Sharia Courts, and the Law of Criminal Procedure. The Supreme Judicial Council may establish other specialized courts upon the approval of the King.

Section Two: The Supreme Court

Article 10

1. The Supreme Court shall be seated in the City of Riyadh.
2. The President of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by royal order at the rank of minister, and his services may not be terminated except by royal order. He shall satisfy the conditions required to fill the post of president of a court of appeals. In his absence, the most senior of the chief judges of the Supreme Court circuits shall act on his behalf.

3. The Supreme Court shall be composed of a president and a sufficient number of judges of the rank of president of a court of appeals. Appointment of members shall be by royal order pursuant to a recommendation by the Supreme Judicial Council.
4. Without prejudice to the provision of Article 13 of this Law, the Supreme Court shall exercise its jurisdiction through specialized circuits as needed; each of these circuits shall be composed of three judges except the penal circuit that reviews sentences of death, amputation, stoning, or *qisas* (lex talionis retribution) for criminal homicide or lesser injuries which shall be composed of five judges and each circuit shall have a chief judge.
5. Appointment of the president and members of each of the Supreme Court circuits shall be pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council upon the recommendation of the President of the Supreme Court.
6. There shall be a sufficient number of employees in the Supreme Court including researchers, specialists, administrators, clerks, registrars, and others, as needed.

Article 11

In addition to the powers provided for in the Law of Procedure before Sharia Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure, the Supreme Court shall oversee the proper application of the provisions of Sharia and the laws issued by the King which are not inconsistent with Sharia in cases within the jurisdiction of general courts in relation to the following:

1. Review of judgments and decisions issued or supported by courts of appeals relating to sentences of death, amputation, stoning, or *qisas* in cases of criminal homicide or lesser injuries.
2. Review of judgments and decisions issued or supported by courts of appeals relating to cases not mentioned in the previous paragraph or relating to *ex parte* cases or the like without dealing with the facts of the cases whenever the objection to the decision is based upon the following:
 - a) Violations of the provisions of Sharia or the laws issued by the King which are not inconsistent with Sharia.

- b) Rendering of a judgment by a court improperly constituted as provided for in the provisions of this Law and other laws.
- c) Rendering of a judgment by an incompetent court or circuit.
- d) An error in characterizing the incident or improperly describing it.

Article 12

Each of the Supreme Court circuits shall convene headed by its president with all its members attending. If a member is absent or is impeded from attending, the President of the Supreme Court shall replace him by a member of other Court circuits.

Article 13

1. The Supreme Court shall have a general panel headed by the President of the Court, with all its judges as members.
2. The General Panel of the Supreme Court shall undertake the following:
 - a) Determining general principles in issues relating to the judiciary.

- b) Reviewing matters assigned to it by this Law or other laws.
- 3. The meeting of the General Panel shall not be valid unless attended by at least two thirds of its members, including the President or whoever acts on his behalf.
- 4. The decisions of the General Panel shall be taken by majority vote of the members in attendance. In case of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote, and its decisions shall be final.

Article 14

If a supreme court circuit decides – in connection with a case before it – not to follow a precedent adopted by it or by another circuit in the same court, or if a court of appeals circuit decides not to follow a precedent established by a supreme court circuit, the matter shall be put before the President of the Supreme Court to refer it to the General Panel of the Supreme Court to decide it.

Section Three: Courts of Appeals

Article 15

1. There shall be one court of appeals or more in each province which shall exercise their work through specialized circuits. Each circuit shall be composed of three judges with the exception of the penal circuit that reviews cases of death, amputation, stoning, or *qisas* in cases of criminal homicide or lesser injuries, which shall be composed of five judges. The rank of judges in a court of appeals shall not be lower than the rank of an appeals judge, and each circuit shall have a chief judge.
2. One or more specialized appeals circuits may be established in the counties attached to the province where there is a court of appeals.
3. The president of each circuit and its members shall be appointed pursuant to a decision by the president of the court of appeals. The president of the court, or a designee from among court members, shall preside over the circuit in the absence of its chief judge.

Article 16

The courts of appeals circuits are:

1. Jural circuits.
2. Penal circuits.
3. Family circuits.
4. Commercial circuits.
5. Labor circuits.

Article 17

Courts of appeals shall review appealable judgments rendered by first instance courts and shall decide, after hearing the statements of litigants, in accordance with the procedures provided for in the Law of Procedure before Sharia Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure.

Section Four: First Instance Courts

Article 18

First instance courts shall be established in provinces, counties, and districts as needed.

Article 19

General courts in provinces shall consist of specialized circuits that include circuits for execution and for ex parte cases and the like – which are outside the

jurisdiction of other courts and notaries public – and to decide on traffic accident cases and violations provided for in the Traffic Law and its Implementing Regulations. Each circuit therein shall consist of a single judge or three judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 20

A penal court shall be composed of specialized circuits as follows:

- a) Circuits for *qisas* and *hadd* (Qur’anic prescribed punishment) cases.
- b) Circuits for *ta'zir* (discretionary punishment) cases.
- c) Circuits for juvenile cases.

Each circuit shall be composed of three judges except for cases determined by the Supreme Judicial Council which shall be reviewed by one judge.

Article 21

A family court shall be composed of one or more circuits, and each circuit shall consist of one or more judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council and may include specialized circuits as needed.

Article 22

A commercial court and a labor court shall be composed of specialized circuits, and each circuit shall consist of one or more judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 23

A general court in a county or district shall be composed of one or more circuits; each circuit shall consist of one or more judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council. Specialized penal, commercial, labor, and family circuits may be established, whenever necessary, in the general courts of counties and districts where no specialized courts are established. Said circuits shall have the powers of specialized courts.

The Supreme Judicial Council shall determine the cases to be reviewed by the general courts of one judge.

Article 24

The chief judge, members, or judge of each circuit shall be appointed pursuant to a decision by the court's chief judge. The president of the court or his designee from

among the court members- shall preside over the circuit in the absence of its chief judge.

Section Five: Court Jurisdiction

Article 25

Without prejudice to the provisions of the Law of the Board of Grievances, courts shall have jurisdiction to decide all cases in accordance with the rules governing the jurisdiction of courts set forth in the Law of Procedure before Sharia Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure.

Article 26

1. In cases other than those requiring inspection of the site of dispute, courts may not hold their hearings in locations other than their respective seats. Nevertheless, they may - when necessary- hold their hearings in locations other than their usual seats, even if outside their area of jurisdiction pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council.
2. If necessary, the Supreme Judicial Council shall, pursuant to a decision issued by it, assign one or more circuits to review cases relating to Hajj and

Umrah pilgrims. Regulations shall be issued pursuant to a decision by the Council to regulate the work of these circuits and determine their venue and subject jurisdictions.

Article 27

If a case is brought before a court subject to this Law and the same case is also brought before a court of the Board of Grievances or any other authority having jurisdiction to decide on certain disputes, and if both courts insist on reviewing the case, or both decline to do so, a petition shall be submitted to the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee at the Supreme Judicial Council for the designation of the competent authority. This Committee shall be composed of three members: a member from the Supreme Court to be selected by the President of the Court, a member from the Board of Grievances or from the other authority to be selected by the President of the Board of Grievances or the other authority, as the case may be, and a member from among the full-time members of the Supreme Judicial Council to be selected by the Chairman of the Council, who shall head this Committee. This Committee shall also have jurisdiction to decide the dispute which arises in respect of

execution of two conflicting final judgments, one of which is rendered by a court subject to this Law and the other by a court of the Board of Grievances or the other authority.

Article 28

In the cases mentioned in Article 27 of this Law, a petition shall be submitted to the Secretariat General of the Supreme Judicial Council. Such petition shall include a sufficient description of the case in which the dispute, abstention or the two conflicting judgments occurred, in addition to particulars related to the litigants names, their respective capacities, places of residence, and the subject matter of the petition. The petitioner shall file as many copies of this petition as there are litigants, along with the documents supporting his petition. The Chairman of the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee shall designate one of its members to prepare the case and present it for litigation. The Secretariat shall notify the litigants by serving them with copies of the petition and it shall summon them to appear at the hearing set for the preparation of the case. Following such preparation, the case shall be presented to the Chairman of the Committee, who shall set a

hearing before the Committee for the parties to litigate the subject matter of the case.

Article 29

Filing the petition to the Committee referred to in Article 27 of this Law shall stay the proceedings of the case in respect of which the petition was submitted. If the petition is submitted after a judgment has been rendered in respect of the case, the Chairman of the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee may stay the execution of either conflicting judgments or both.

Article 30

The decision of the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee on the petition shall be issued by majority vote and shall not be subject to objection.

Chapter Four: Judges

Section One : Appointing and Promoting Judges

Article 31

To be appointed as a judge, a candidate shall fulfill the following requirements:

- a) He shall be of Saudi nationality by descent.
- b) He shall be of good character and conduct.
- c) He shall be fully competent to hold the position of judge in accordance with Sharia.
- d) He shall hold a degree from one of the colleges of Sharia in the Kingdom or any equivalent degree, provided that, in the latter case, he shall pass a special examination to be prepared by the Supreme Judicial Council.
- e) He shall not be less than 40 years of age if he is to be appointed at the rank of an appeals judge, and not less than 22 years if he is to be appointed at any other rank in the judiciary.
- f) He shall not have been convicted of a crime impinging on religion or honor or been the subject of a disciplinary action dismissing him from a public office, even if rehabilitated.

Article 32

Ranks of the judiciary are as follows:

Trainee Judge, Judge C, Judge B, Judge A, Vice-President of Court B, Vice-President of Court A, President of Court B, President of Court A, Appeals Judge, President of a Court of Appeals, and President of

the Supreme Court. These positions shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Article 33

To hold the rank of Trainee Judge, a candidate must, in addition to the requirements listed in Article 31, hold a Bachelor's degree with a GPA not lower than (Good) and a grade not lower than (Very Good) in Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) and its principles (Usul al-Fiqh).

Article 34

To hold the rank of Judge C, a candidate shall have spent at least three years at the rank of Trainee Judge.

Article 35

To hold the rank of Judge B, a candidate shall have spent at least one year at the rank of Judge C or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least four years, taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least four years, or obtained a Master's degree from the High Judicial Institute or from a Sharia college in the Kingdom in the field of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles or a Legal Studies Diploma from the Institute

of Public Administration from among holders of a degree from a Sharia college in the Kingdom with a GPA not lower than (Good) and a grade not lower than (Very Good) in Islamic jurisprudence and its principles.

Article 36

To hold the rank of Judge A, a candidate shall have spent at least four years at the rank of Judge B, worked in comparable judicial positions for at least eight years, taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least eight years, or obtained a Doctoral degree from the High Judicial Institute or from a Sharia college in the Kingdom in the field of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles.

Article 37

To hold the rank Vice-President of Court B, a candidate shall have spent at least three years at the rank of Judge A, or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least 11 years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least 11 years.

Article 38

To hold the rank of Vice-President of Court A, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Vice-President of Court B, worked in comparable judicial positions for at least 13 years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least 13 years.

Article 39

To hold the rank of President of Court B, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Vice-President Judge of Court A, worked in comparable judicial positions for at least 15 years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least 15 years.

Article 40

To hold the rank of President of Court A, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of President of Court B, worked in comparable judicial positions for at least 17 years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least 17 years.

Article 41

To hold the rank of Appeals Judge, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of President of Court A, worked in comparable judicial positions for at least 19 years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least 19 years.

Article 42

To hold the rank of President of a Court of Appeals, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Appeals Judge.

Article 43

The Master's degree and diploma provided for in this Law shall be equivalent to four years of service in comparable judicial positions, and the Doctoral degree provided for in this Law shall be equivalent to six years of service in comparable judicial positions.

Article 44

1. The probation period for a trainee judge shall be two years from the date of assuming his position

pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council to appoint him to this position. If, during this period, he is deemed unfit for the judiciary, the Supreme Judicial Council shall issue a decision to dismiss him from the judiciary.

2. A newly appointed judge shall be under probation for one year, and if he is not proven fit during this period, his service shall be terminated by royal order.

A person appointed for the first time in the judiciary shall be given an allowance equivalent to a three-month salary.

Article 45

Without prejudice to the provisions of this Law, members of the judiciary shall enjoy the rights and guarantees provided for in the Civil Service Law and Retirement Law and shall observe the duties provided for in the Civil Service Law which do not conflict with the nature of judicial positions.

Article 46

With the exception of trainee judges and persons appointed under probation, a member of the judiciary

may not be dismissed except for reasons provided for in Article 69 (f, g, and h) of this Law and in accordance with procedures provided for therein.

Article 47

Appointment and promotion in the judiciary shall be by royal order pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council stating that the legal requirements are satisfied on a case by case basis. In promotion, the Council shall take into consideration the order of absolute seniority. If candidates are equal in seniority, priority shall be given to the most competent, based on performance review . In case of equal proficiency or in the absence of such performance reviews, priority shall be given on the basis of age seniority. A member of the judiciary under evaluation may not be promoted unless he has been evaluated at his current rank at least twice and received a proficiency rating not lower than average in the last two reviews prior to promotion.

Article 48

Salaries of members of the judiciary of all ranks shall be in accordance with the salary scale of the judiciary.

Section Two: Transfer, Assignment, and Leaves of Judges

Article 49

Members of the judiciary may not be transferred or assigned within the judiciary except pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council. Nor may they be transferred, assigned, or seconded outside the judiciary except by royal order pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council specifying the remuneration due to the assigned or seconded judge. The period of assignment or secondment shall be one year renewable for another year, provided that the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council may, in exceptional cases, assign a member of the judiciary to another position within or outside the judiciary for a period not exceeding three months per year.

Article 50

Pursuant to his decision, the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council shall permit judges to take their leaves in accordance with relevant provisions.

Section Three: Duties of Judges

Article 51

A judge may not engage in commerce or work or hold a position inconsistent with the independence and dignity of the judiciary. The Supreme Judicial Council may decide to prevent a judge from engaging in any work the performance of which, in its opinion, conflicts with the duties of the position and the proper performance thereof.

Article 52

Judges may not disclose deliberations.

Article 53

A judge must reside in the locality of his place of work. The Supreme Judicial Council may, in view of exceptional circumstances, grant a judge permission to reside temporarily in a different locality near his place of work.

Article 54

A judge may not absent himself from work, nor may he discontinue working for non-emergency reasons before obtaining written permission to do so.

Section Four: Inspection of Judges' Work

Article 55

1. A department for judicial inspection shall be formed at the Supreme Judicial Council, consisting of a head, an assistant, and a sufficient number of full-time judges to be selected by the Council from among judges of courts of appeals and first instance courts.
2. The Judicial Inspection Department shall undertake the following:
 - a) Inspect the work of judges of courts of appeals and first instance courts in order to gather information which would lead to determining their competence level and the extent to which they are keen on performing their duties.
 - b) Investigate complaints submitted by judges or against them in matters relating to their jobs after they are referred to the Department by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Inspection and investigation referred to in (a) and (b) of this paragraph shall be carried out by a member of the judiciary of a rank higher than that of the judge under investigation or inspection, or by a member senior to him, if both are of the same rank. Investigation and inspection shall be carried out at the Judicial Inspection Department or at the court as may be determined by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

3. Inspection of members of the judiciary shall be carried out at least once and not more than twice a year.

Article 56

The following ratings shall be used in evaluating the proficiency of a judge:

Distinguished, Above Average, Average, Below Average

Article 57

1. The Judicial Inspection Department shall notify the concerned judge of the report and his proficiency rating as well as everything that is kept in his file, and he may file an objection to the same with the

Inspection Department within 30 days from the notification date, unless there is an acceptable excuse.

2. The Judicial Inspection Department shall refer the objection along with a memorandum stating its views thereof to the Supreme Judicial Council within 15 days from its filing date.

The Council shall decide on the objection after perusal of the documents, and the objecting petitioner shall be notified, in writing, of the Council's decision. Said decision shall be deemed final.

Section Five: Disciplining of Judges

Article 58

Without prejudice to the impartiality and independence of the judiciary and the right of the Supreme Judicial Council to supervise courts, judges, and their work, the president of each court shall have the right to supervise the judges of his court and notify them of all acts that are in violation of their duties or the requirements of their positions after hearing their statements. The notification may be verbal or written, and in the latter case, a copy of said notification shall be sent to the Supreme Judicial Council. The judge may object to the notification- in

writing- before the Council within 15 days from the notification date. If the violation is repeated or continues, he shall be subjected to a disciplinary trial.

Article 59

Disciplining judges shall be the responsibility of a circuit to be formed at the Supreme Judicial Council of three judges from among full-time Council members. The decisions of said circuit shall be taken by majority vote but shall not be final except with the approval of the Council.

Article 60

The head of the Judicial Inspection Department or his designee shall file the disciplinary action before the Disciplinary Panel upon a request by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council either upon his discretion or based on a suggestion from the president of the court to which the judge belongs.

Such request shall not be filed except in accordance with a criminal or administrative investigation carried out by a judge whose rank shall not be lower than an Appeals

Judge, to be assigned by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

The initial pleading of the case shall include the violation and its supporting evidence. The Panel shall issue its decision to summon the judge to appear before it. The Disciplinary Panel may- with the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council- carry out the investigations it deems necessary and it may assign any of its members to carry out such investigations.

Article 61

If the Disciplinary Panel finds grounds to initiate trial proceedings for all or some of the violations, it shall summon the judge to appear at a suitable time. The writ of summons must include a sufficient statement of the subject matter of the case and the evidence of the violation.

Article 62

When the Disciplinary Panel decides on the initiation of trial proceedings, it may, upon the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council, order the suspension of the judge from performing his duties until the end of the

trial. The Disciplinary Panel may at any time reconsider the suspension order.

Article 63

The disciplinary action shall end upon the resignation of the judge. The disciplinary action shall have no effect on the criminal or civil suit arising from the same incident.

Article 64

The hearings of the Disciplinary Panel shall be confidential. The Disciplinary Panel shall render its judgment after it has heard the defense of the defendant judge, who may submit his defense in writing or empower a member of the judiciary to defend him. The Disciplinary Panel shall always have the right to summon him to appear in person. If he does not appear in person or empower somebody on his behalf, a judgment by default may be rendered after ascertaining that he was properly notified.

Article 65

Judgment rendered in the disciplinary action shall include the grounds upon which it is based, and such grounds shall be stated upon pronouncing the judgment

in a confidential session. The judgment shall not be subject to appeal.

Article 66

The disciplinary penalties which may be imposed on judges shall be reprimand and termination of service.

Article 67

Execution of the penalty of termination of service shall be pursuant to a royal order and the penalty of reprimand shall be in accordance with a decision by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 68

In cases where a judge is caught in a criminal act, the matter shall, upon arrest and detention of the judge, be reported to the Supreme Judicial Council within the following 24 hours. The Council may decide whether said judge shall continue to be detained or whether he shall be released with or without bail. The judge may request that his statements be heard before the Council, upon bringing the case before it. The Council shall specify the term of detention in the decision ordering either detention or the continuation thereof. The

aforementioned procedures shall be observed whenever the continuation of detention is deemed necessary after the expiration of the term fixed by the Council. Except in the foregoing cases, a judge may not be arrested nor may investigation proceedings be instituted against him or criminal charges brought against him except with the permission of the Council. Detention of judges and execution of punishments restraining their freedom shall be implemented in independent places.

Section Six: Termination of Service of Judges

Article 69

The service of a judge shall terminate for one of the following reasons:

- a) Reaching 70 years of age.
- b) Death.
- c) Acceptance of his resignation.
- d) Acceptance of his request for retirement in accordance with the Civil Retirement Law.
- e) Being unfit for the judiciary in accordance with Article 44 of this Law.

- f) Inability to perform his duty after the end of his sick leave or if it appears at any time that he is incapable of performing his duty properly due to his sickness.
- g) Obtaining a below average grade in his performance review for three consecutive times.
- h) Termination of his service for disciplinary reasons.

Article 70

In cases other than death and retirement for having reached the statutory age, or for being proven unfit during the probation period with respect to a Trainee Judge, the service of a judge shall be terminated by royal order pursuant to a recommendation by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Chapter Five: Ministry of Justice

Article 71

1. Without prejudice to the provisions of this Law, the Ministry of Justice shall be entrusted with the administrative and financial supervision of courts and notaries public.
2. The Ministry of Justice shall submit proposals or projects to promote the administration of justice.

3. There shall be established at the Ministry of Justice a research center consisting of a sufficient number of specialized members, the qualifications of each shall not be less than a university degree and it shall undertake to publish select judgments with the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 72

The Vice-Minister of Justice shall be appointed pursuant to a royal order upon a recommendation by the Minister of Justice from among current judges, provided that his rank is not lower than President of Court (B) and that he remains in the judiciary during his term in office.

Chapter Six: Notaries Public

Section One: Notaries Public and their Jurisdiction

Article 73

Establishment of notaries public and determining their jurisdiction and formation shall be pursuant to a decision by the Minister of Justice. The head of each notary public shall supervise the notaries public under his authority.

Article 74

Notaries public shall have jurisdiction to authenticate contracts and record declarations other than endowments and wills. Some of such jurisdictions may be entrusted to others in accordance with regulations to be issued by the Minister of Justice upon the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 75

In localities with no notaries public, the function of the notary public shall be entrusted to the court of that locality. Said court shall have the jurisdictions and powers of notary public within the court's venue jurisdiction.

Section Two: Appointment and Inspection of Notaries Public

Article 76

To be appointed as a notary public, a candidate shall satisfy the requirements provided for in Article 31 (a, b, c, d, and f) of this Law.

Article 77

Regulations issued by agreement between the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Civil Service with regard to determining the qualifications required for various ranks of notaries public shall remain in effect. Said Ministers may amend such Regulations in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Article 78

Without prejudice to the provisions of this Law, notaries public shall be subject to all the provisions applicable to civil service employees.

Article 79

Notaries public shall be subject to judicial inspection in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Section Three: Power of Documents Issued by Notaries Public

Article 80

Documents issued by notaries public under the powers provided for in Article 74 of this Law shall have dispositive power and shall be admitted as evidence in

courts without additional proof. Such documents may not be contested except on grounds of being in violation of requirements of Sharia or law, or being forged.

Chapter Seven: Employees of Courts and Notaries Public

Article 81

Registerers, recorders, researchers, process servers, interpreters, experts, secretaries, and the like shall be deemed assistants to the judiciary. The Minister of Justice, after agreement with the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council, shall issue the regulations stating the rules and procedures regulating their work.

Article 82

Without prejudice to the provisions of the Civil Service Law relating to appointment requirements, persons to be appointed as assistants to the judiciary and employees of courts shall pass an examination, the procedures and conditions of which shall be determined pursuant to a decision by the Minister of Justice after agreement with the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 83

Provision of the Civil Service Law shall apply - when not inconsistent with the provisions of this Law - to court employees and notaries public. Employees of each court and notary public shall be under the supervision of their administrative head, and all shall be subject to the supervision of the president of the court or the head of the notary public as the case may be.

Chapter Eight: General and Transitional Provisions

Article 84

All appointments and promotions in the judiciary shall be effected within the appropriations made in the budget and the provisions thereof.

Article 85

This Law shall supersede the Law of the Judiciary issued by Royal Decree No. (M/64) dated 14/7/1395H.