



Establishment of the Maldives Intellectual Property Office and Publication of the Maldives Trademark Act

In a significant overhaul of its intellectual property (IP) landscape, the Government of Maldives has introduced the Maldives Intellectual Property Office (MIPO) in a bid to consolidate the administration, registration, and enforcement of intellectual property rights in the region, with its governing act, the Maldives Intellectual Property Office Act (Act No. 13/2025) effective from January 01, 2026.

The Government of Maldives is also set to formalize its trademark system, through the enactment of the Maldives Trademark Act (Law No. 19/2025) (hereinafter 'Act'), the bill for which was ratified on November 11, 2025.



IMPORTANT DATES

- The Act will come into force twelve (12) months after the date of ratification i.e., on November 11, 2026.
- All subordinate regulations required under the Act will be issued within six (6) months of the Act coming into force, i.e., May 11, 2027
- Existing proprietors who currently rely on cautionary notices must submit formal registration applications within twelve (12) months of the Act's effective date, i.e., November 11, 2027, to maintain protection.



KEY INFORMATION

- In order to be compatible with internationally followed practices, the Act intends to mirror basic processes and procedures, such as substantive examination on absolute and relative grounds, oppositions, 10-year validity period for registered trademarks and non-use cancellation.
- The Act permits trademark filing by non-resident users as well.
- The framework postulates a 'first to file' approach i.e., affording superior rights to trademark owners with a prior filing date, with extended protection being given to well-known trademarks.

- The definition of what constitutes a trademark under the Act is broad and encompasses elements such as names, words, letters, numerals, figurative elements, combinations of colours, any combinations thereof as well as certification and collective marks.
- In addition, the Act also provides for a robust enforcement mechanism, inclusive of civil remedies, criminal penalties for counterfeiting as well as border protection by the Maldives Customs Services.

Note: As the Act has not yet come into force and the requisite subordinate legislation is still pending, formal procedures, prescribed forms, or official fee schedules have not yet been made available. Accordingly, the publication of **Cautionary Notices** remains the only available mechanism for asserting and the protection of trademark rights in the Maldives.

Disclaimer: This update is for information purposes only. It is not and should not be construed as legal advice.



G&W LEGAL | Advocates and Legal Advisors

Delhi (Regd.): C-9 / 9624, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi - 110 070, India

Gurugram: Incuspaze #2, G.F., Plot No.13, Phase 4, Udyog Vihar,
Sector 18, Gurugram -122015

Ph.: +91 (124) 4402666 E. info@gnwlegal.com

www.gnwlegal.com