

## CHAPTER 208

# THE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES REGISTRATION ACT

[PRINCIPAL LEGISLATION]

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

*Section Title*

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## CHAPTER 208

### THE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES REGISTRATION ACT

An Act to provide for the establishment of a business activities registration system, Business Registration Centres and to provide for matters related thereto.

[1<sup>st</sup> January, 2012]<sup>1</sup>

Acts Nos.  
1 of 2007  
5 of 2011

#### PART I PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

Short title  
Act No.  
1 of 2007

1. This Act may be cited as the Business Activities Registration Act, and shall come into operation on such a date as the Minister may, by notice published in the *Gazette*, appoint.

Application

2. This Act shall apply in Tanzania Mainland.

Interpretation

3. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires-  
“Act” means the Business Activities Registration Act;  
“auxiliary business” means any business not specified in a business registration which may be lawfully carried on under such registration;  
“BRELA” means a Business Registrations and Licensing Agency;  
“business” means any form of trade, commerce, craftsmanship or specified profession carried on for profit, gain and to which the provisions of this Act apply;  
“Business Registration Centre” means a centre established in local authority for the purpose of business activities registration;

<sup>1</sup> A commencement date for s. 15 of this Act by Act No. 5 of 2011 s. 4

“business registration” means the process of registering business undertaking, business entity, enterprise, with a Registrar in a designated Local Authority in accordance with the provisions of this Act;

“business registration system” means the business registration system established under section 8 of this Act;

“certificate of compliance” means a certificate issued by a relevant licensing authority body to a business owner proving that the business complies with the relevant law governing that business;

“certificate of registration” means a certificate issued under section 14 of this Act;

“Chief Registrar” means the officer designated to be Chief Registrar under section 5 of this Act;

“core activity” means the main activity of that business;

Cap. 212 “company” means a company incorporated under the Companies Act, or incorporated outside Mainland Tanzania and authorised by that Act to carry on business or to have a registered office in Mainland Tanzania;

“inspector” means an officer appointed by the Minister under section 26 of this Act;

Cap. 287 and Cap. 288 “local authority” means local government authority established under the Local Government (District Authorities) Act, or the Local Government (Urban Authorities) Act;

“main registry” means the registry established under section 6;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for trade;

Cap. 298 “public servant” has the meaning ascribed to it under the Public Service Act;

“publish” means the publication of information relating to the Business Register in either electronic form or through printed material to all ministries and to the general public;

“registrar” means a public officer appointed under section 9 of the Act in each local authority jurisdiction;

“registry” means the registry established under section 10 of this Act;

“regulated business” means a business regulated under any written law.

## PART II INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

- Role of Minister
- 4.** The Minister shall, in relation to the powers and functions of local authorities conferred under this Act-
- (a) formulate a national policy and regulatory framework for local authorities in relation to business registration system;
  - (b) coordinate and monitor the performance of local authorities for compliance with national policies, guidelines and standards;
  - (c) provide the necessary technical support or assistance to local authorities for the implementation of the respective functions;
  - (d) facilitate the exercise of powers and the discharge of functions in a manner that gives due recognition to the autonomy of local authorities.
- Designation and functions of Chief Registrar
- 5.**-(1) The Chief Executive Officer of BRELA is hereby designated to be the Chief Registrar of business.
- (2) The functions of the Chief Registrar shall be-
- (a) to receive quarterly updated registers of businesses from the registrars of each local authority;
  - (b) to establish and maintain one composite register of all businesses registered under this Act;
  - (c) to publish quarterly the composite registers of all Business Registration Centers within three months after the end of the quarter; and
  - (d) to ensure that, each registrar maintains minimum acceptable standards of the registry in his jurisdiction.

Main registry  
Caps. 212 and 213

**6.**—(1) There is hereby established a main registry which shall link with the registries under the Companies Act, the Business Names (Registration) Act and any other registry or data base which may be integrated under this Act.

(2) The Minister shall ensure that the main registry is kept and maintained in accordance with prevailing international best practices with the use of modern technology and skills.

### PART III BUSINESS REGISTRATION CENTRES

Establishment  
of Business  
Registration  
Centre

**7.**—(1) There shall be established in each local authority a Business Registration Centre.

(2) Each Business Registration Centre shall be a section of the local authority.

Functions  
of Business  
Registration  
Centres

**8.** The functions of the Business Registration Centre shall be to—

- (a) register all businesses undertakings, business entities and enterprises in the area of its jurisdiction;
- (b) collect business information in the area of its jurisdiction for the purpose of public consumption;
- (c) ensure all business information collected is available for the purpose of public record;
- (d) provide information and guidance to the public on the manner in, and extent to which businesses are to comply with legislation and regulations applicable to them;
- (e) provide information regarding services provided by the Government and other agencies to businesses including but not limited to training programmes, skills access in the form of technical advice and business development services, and the provisions of trading and operational facilities such as hawker stalls and industrial parks;
- (f) provide a facility which may, as far as possible, be in a form similar to a website where any registered business may be entitled to place advertisements at a fee determined by the local authority with the approval of the Minister;

- (g) provide a registry of information on all businesses operating within the area of its jurisdiction and ensure accessibility of such information to all branches and agencies of the Government and to all businesses;
- (h) submit quarterly reports within three months after the end of the quarter to the Chief Registrar;
- (i) de-register businesses as and when necessary as provided for in this Act;
- (j) publish the current register of all businesses registered in the area of his jurisdiction.

Appointment  
and functions of  
registrar

**9.**—(1) There shall be in each Business Registration Centre a registrar who shall be appointed by the Minister responsible for local government.

(2) The registrar shall be the head of the Business Registration Centre.

(3) The registrar shall be answerable to the Chief Registrar on all matters concerning administration of this Act.

Registry

**10.** The Minister in collaboration with the Minister responsible for local government shall ensure that each registry is maintained in accordance with prevailing international best practices with the use of modern technology and skills.

## PART IV REGISTRATION OF BUSINESS

Compliance by  
regulated and  
unregulated  
business

**11.**—(1) It shall be necessary to obtain a certificate of registration from the Business Registration Centre in respect of every business.

(2) Any business which is not regulated under any written law shall upon application be issued with certificate of registration.

(3) Each registrar shall notify the Chief Registrar on each regulated business that has been licensed to undertake any specified business by the respective regulatory body.

(4) The owner, manager or person in-charge holding a valid certificate of compliance with the regulated business has no obligation to obtain a certificate of registration.

(5) A person shall not carry on business at two or more premises unless particulars of both premises are registered.

Application for registration

**12.**-(1) A person who wishes to register a business of any local authority within the area of jurisdiction shall make an application for registration to the Business Registration Centre in such form as may be prescribed.

(2) Every application under this section shall be signed in the manner and by such person or persons as required under this Act.

Particulars of application

**13.** Every application for business registration under this Act shall contain the following information-

- (a) the name of the business;
- (b) the date of commencement of the business;
- (c) the name of the owner or owners of the business;
- (d) where the owner is a firm, a corporate entity or a natural person;
- (e) where the owner is a firm, the partners, thereof;
- (f) nationality of the owner;
- (g) where the owner is a corporate entity, the registration number and date of registration of the company;
- (h) whether the owner of the business has been registered in terms of section 4 of the Business Names (Registration) Act the name under which it was registered;
- (i) in the case of a subsidiary business, the name and location of the head office;
- (j) the nature of the core activity of the business;
- (k) the nature of any auxiliary activity;
- (l) the number of employees in the business and where the business has more than one branch, in each such branch;
- (m) the physical and postal address of the business;

Cap. 213

- (n) the telephone and telefax number or e-mail and website addresses of the business, if any;
- (o) the chief executive officer or other person in charge of the management of the business;
- (p) the extent to which, if any, that business has been granted an applicable certificate of compliance or authorisation to trade or operate; and
- (q) the Tax Identification Number (TIN) of business.

Registration

**14.**–(1) Upon receipt of the application, the registrar shall cause the business activity to be registered in the prescribed form and shall issue to the applicant a certificate of registration in the form set out in the Schedule to this Act.

(2) Where the Chief Registrar or registrar is not satisfied with compliance of the requirements set out under section 13, he may refuse to grant application for registration business and give reasons for such refusal.

Validity of  
registration  
Act No.  
5 of 2011 s. 4

**15.**–(1) Subject to subsection (2), every business registration shall be valid for the entire life of the business.

(2) There shall be required for every business registered under this Act, a licence.

(3) The licence shall be valid for a renewable period of twelve months.

(4) A local government authority may, upon consultation with the Minister responsible for trade and with the approval of the Minister responsible for finance, make by-laws for imposition of charges or fees for various types or categories of licences issued in respect of businesses registered under this Act; provided that, village council may, with the approval of the District Council within whose jurisdiction the village council is situate, make by-laws for imposition of charges or fees for various types of business licences in respect of businesses operating within the area of jurisdiction of the village council.

(5) It shall be a duty of a local government authority, wherever required, to furnish the Minister with information relating to licences issued within its area of jurisdiction; provided that village council shall, wherever required, furnish the District Council within whose jurisdiction the village council is situate, with information relating to licences issued within its area of jurisdiction.

(6) The licensing measures stipulated under this section shall commence on the 1st day of January, 2012.

Prohibition to carry business

**16.** This Act shall not entitle any person to carry on business or business to be conducted in contravention of any law or regulation governing activities of that business, including but not limited to-

- (a) town planning regulations;
- (b) health regulations;
- (c) safety regulations;
- (d) environmental regulations;
- (e) in relation to foreigners, the immigration requirements;
- or
- (f) any regulation governing the conduct of any specific type of business or profession.

Exhibition of certificate of registration

**17.** A person who is issued with a certificate of registration shall exhibit the same in a conspicuous place in the premises where the business is carried on.

Local Authority not to issue licences

**18.** A local authority, its agent, or any other person shall not save as provided for under any written law, have the power to issue a licence, permit or authorisation required as a precondition for the right to conduct a business.

## PART V

### SUSPENSION, REVOCATION, DE-REGISTRATION AND CANCELLATION

Suspension,  
revocation, or  
cancellation of  
certificate of  
registration

- 19.**—(1) The registrar may suspend, revoke or cancel a certificate of registration issued under this Act where he is satisfied that—
- (a) the premises has ceased to be used for the purpose for which the certificate of registration was issued;
  - (b) the business owner, manager or person in-charge has, since the certificate of registration was issued, been convicted of any offence against the provisions of this Act or any regulations made thereunder;
  - (c) the business owner has become bankrupt or where a company, has gone into liquidation; or
  - (d) the business has failed to comply with any condition of the certificate of registration.
- (2) A person whose certificate of registration has been suspended, revoked or cancelled under this Act shall be required to surrender that certificate to the registrar.

Notification of  
intention to de-  
register

- 20.** The registrar shall, where he is satisfied that the business owner, manager or a person in-charge of business—
- (a) does not comply with any law specifically governing activities of that type of business or the business has been liquidated or is no longer trading; or
  - (b) furnished false information in the application for registration,
- serve a notice of the intention to de-register to such owner, manager or as the case may be, the person in-charge of the business.

Right to be heard

- 21.**—(1) A person who is served with a notification under section 20 shall be given an opportunity of appearing and making representation relevant to the proposed de-registration to the registrar, and the registrar shall consider such representations and decide accordingly.

(2) Where the registrar deregisters any business he shall, within thirty days from the date of de-registration notify in writing the owner, manager or any other person in-charge of the business.

Appeals

**22.**-(1) A person who is aggrieved by-

- (a) suspension, revocation or cancellation of a registration certificate;
- (b) refusal of the registrar to issue certificate of registration;
- or
- (c) de-registration,

may, within sixty days from the date of the decision, appeal to the District Commissioner.

(2) Where the registrar suspends, revokes or cancels the registration certificate that suspension, revocation or cancellation shall not take effect until the period within which an appeal against suspension, revocation or cancellation may be made to the District Commissioner has elapsed or, where the appeal has been made, until that appeal has been heard and determined.

(3) A person who is aggrieved by the decision of the District Commissioner may, within thirty days from the date of the decision, appeal to the Minister.

(4) Every appeal made under this section shall be in writing.

Appeals  
Committee

**23.**-(1) The Minister shall, by Order published in *Gazette*, appoint such number of public officers to be members of the Appeals Committee.

(2) The Appeals Committee shall advise the Minister on any complaint made by any person in relation to decision made by the Chief Registrar or registrar pursuant to the provisions of this Act.

(3) A person aggrieved by the decision of the Minister may, within thirty days from the date of the decision, appeal to the High Court.

## PART VI

### OBLIGATIONS OF OWNERS OF BUSINESS

- Notification to registrar
- 24.** The owner, manager or any other person who is in-charge of a business shall be required to notify the registrar of a local authority in which his business is registered if-
- (a) he ceases to operate business;
  - (b) his business is placed in liquidation;
  - (c) business premises are changed;
  - (d) his line of core activities has changed; or
  - (e) his business activities registration certificate is misplaced, destroyed or lost.
- Replacement of lost or destroyed certificate
- 25.** A person whose certificate of registration has been defaced, lost or destroyed may, upon application to the registrar, be issued with a duplicate certificate.

## PART VII

### APPOINTMENT AND POWERS OF INSPECTORS

- Appointment and functions of inspectors
- 26.**-(1) The Minister responsible for local government shall, appoint such number of officers of the local authority to be inspectors for the purposes of this Act.
- (2) Notice of appointment of every inspector shall be published in the *Gazette*.
- (3) The officer appointed pursuant to subsection (1) shall be a person who is a holder of a degree, diploma or certificate from a recognised institution.
- (4) The inspectors appointed under this section shall, for purposes of implementation of this Act, be answerable to the registrar and in that respect perform the following functions-
- (a) inspect and examine premises or place where business is carried on, and
  - (b) any other functions as may be directed by the Registrar.

Powers of  
inspectors

27. An inspector shall, for the purpose of the execution of this Act, have powers to-

- (a) require the production of the certificate of registration or any document kept in pursuance of this Act and to inspect, examine and make copy of any of them;
- (b) to demand the owner, occupier or other person having control of premises to give any information that is in that person's powers;
- (c) to exercise any powers which may be necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

## PART VIII OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Offences and  
penalties

28. A person who-

- (a) carries on business without being registered under this Act;
- (b) provides false information at the time of registration;
- (c) conducts business without observing other legislation or regulations governing such activity;
- (d) carries on business at any place not specified in the certificate of registration;
- (e) fails to surrender to the registrar a certificate of registration which has been suspended, revoked or cancelled to registrar,

commits an offence and on conviction shall be liable-

- (i) in case of a business with a turnover of not exceeding twenty million shillings *per annum*, to a fine of not less than fifty thousand shillings but not exceeding one hundred thousand shillings; and
- (ii) in case of a business with a turnover exceeding twenty million shillings *per annum*, to a fine of not less than two hundred thousand shillings but not exceeding five hundred thousand shillings.

Suspension,  
revocation or  
cancellation to be  
published

**29.** Where the registrar suspends, revokes or cancels a certificate of registration, the Chief Registrar shall publish in the *Gazette* such suspension, revocation or cancellation and shall inform the owner accordingly.

## PART IX MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Regulations

**30.**—(1) The Minister may make regulations for the better carrying out the provisions and purposes of this Act.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), the Minister may make regulations:

- (a) prescribing forms to be used for purposes of this Act;
- (b) prescribing for the classification of businesses;
- (c) requiring the registrar to submit returns to the Chief Registrar;
- (d) providing for the issuance of a duplicate certificate of registration where the original is defaced, destroyed or lost;
- (e) providing for the timeframe within which specific obligations shall be carried out;
- (f) prescribing the fine to be imposed on any person or business found to be carrying on a business without a valid certificate of registration; or
- (g) prescribing anything which, under the provisions of this Act, may be prescribed.

Repeal  
Act No.  
25 of 1972

**31.** [Repeals the Business Licensing Act]

Transitional  
provisions  
Act No.  
25 of 1972

**32.** Notwithstanding the repeal of the Business Licensing Act, licences issued and all exemptions granted thereunder, shall remain in force and effective until a date to be determined by the Minister whereupon such licences shall lapse and owners of businesses shall be required to register such business in accordance with this Act.

**SCHEDULE**

*(Made under section 14)*

**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
BUSINESS ACTIVITIES REGISTRATION ACT  
(CAP. 208)  
CERTIFICATE OF BUSINESS REGISTRATION**

This is to certify that

.....  
is the holder of a Certificate of Business Registration issued under the  
Business Registration Act, 2007  
For and on behalf of Chief Registrar  
.....

Registrar.  
..... Business Registration Centre  
Dated this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

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