

Specialised courts - Cyprus

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The following specialised courts operate in the Republic of Cyprus (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία):

- Family Court (Οικογενειακά Δικαστήρια)
- Industrial Disputes Tribunal (Δικαστήριο Εργατικών Διαφορών)
- Rent Control Tribunal (Δικαστήριο Ελέγχου Ενοικιάσεων) and Military Court (Στρατιωτικό Δικαστήριο).

Specialised courts

Family Court

The Family Court has exclusive jurisdiction to hear petitions for divorce, custody of children, maintenance and property disputes between spouses who are members of the Greek Orthodox Church.

If the parties belong to one of the other religious groups in Cyprus, i.e. Armenians, Maronites or Roman Catholics, jurisdiction for the above matters is vested in the Family Court for Religious Groups.

There are 3 Family Courts, one for Nicosia and Kyrenia, one for Limassol and Paphos and one for Larnaca and Famagusta. There is also 1 Family Court for Religious Groups for the whole of Cyprus, based in Nicosia.

Cases before the Family Court are heard by a single judge, except divorce petitions, which are heard by a panel of three judges.

Industrial Disputes Tribunal

The Industrial Disputes Tribunal has exclusive jurisdiction to hear all industrial disputes arising from the termination of employment, such as payment of compensation for unfair dismissal (except where the amount claimed exceeds the equivalent of two years' salary, in which case jurisdiction is vested in the District Court), payment in lieu of notice, redundancy payments and claims arising out of the contract of employment, such as accrued wages, annual holiday, 13th month's salary or bonuses. It also has jurisdiction to hear any civil claim based on the Protection of Motherhood Law (Ο περί Προστασίας της Μητρότητας Νόμος), cases of unequal treatment and sexual harassment in the workplace and disputes between Provident Funds (Ταμεία Πρόνοιας) and their members.

The Industrial Disputes Tribunal is composed of a President or a Judge, who is a member of the Judicial Service of the Republic (Δικαστική Υπηρεσία της Δημοκρατίας), and two lay members appointed on the recommendation of the employers' and employees' unions. The lay members have a purely consultative role.

There are currently 3 Industrial Disputes Tribunals in the Republic, based in Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca.

Rent Control Tribunal

The Rent Control Tribunal has jurisdiction to hear matters regarding recovery of possession of rented property, the determination of fair rents and any other incidental or additional matters.

Each Rent Control Tribunal (of which there are currently three) is composed of a President, who is a member of the judiciary, and two lay members nominated by the tenants' and landlords' associations. The lay members have a purely consultative role.

Military Court

The Military Court has jurisdiction to try offences committed by military personnel in contravention of the Military Criminal Code (Στρατιωτικός Ποινικός Κώδικας), the National Guard Law (Ο περί Εθνικής Φρουράς Νόμος), the Criminal Code (Ποινικός Κώδικας) or any other law, irrespective of the sentence provided. Private individuals are also brought before the Military Court where provided for under the Military Criminal Code or any other law.

If the accused has the rank of colonel or above, the Military Court is constituted in the same way as the Assize Court.

The President of the Court is a judge belonging to the Judicial Service of the Republic. Two army officers appointed by the Supreme Council of Judicature (Ανώτατο Δικαστικό Συμβούλιο) are also members of the Court, but they have a purely consultative role.

Administrative courts

Petitions for annulment of administrative acts are heard at first instance by one judge of the Supreme Court and at appeal by a panel of 5 judges.

Legal databases

There is still no official legal database. There are a number of private legal databases, some of which provide subscriber services and some of which provide free access.

They contain information on court judgments and primary legislation.

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