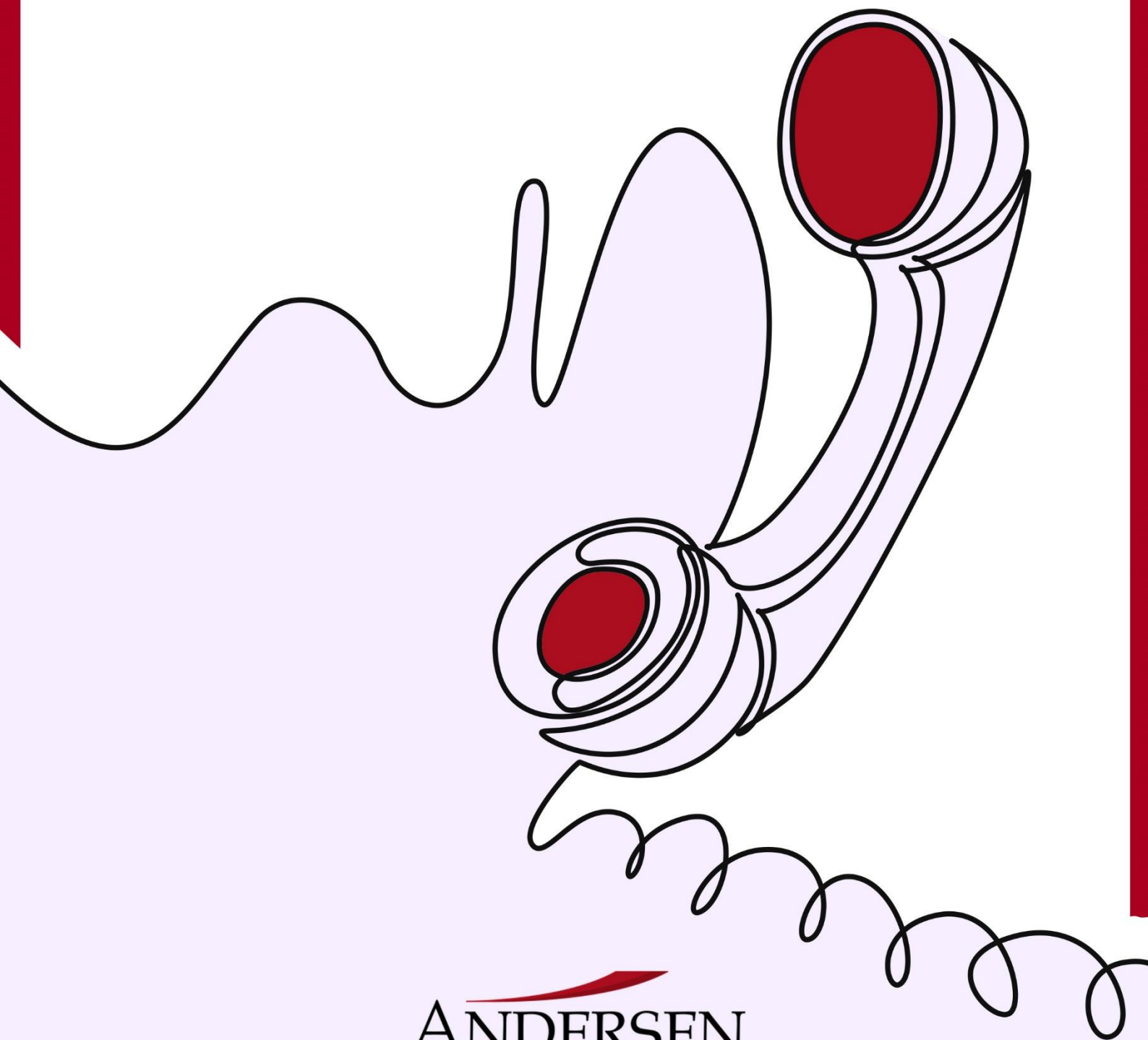


Setting Up a Call Center Guide in Egypt




ANDERSEN

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Setting Up a Call Center Guide in Egypt (Legal, Corporate and VoIP Regulatory Framework)

Introduction

Egypt offers a favorable environment for call center and business process outsourcing (BPO) activities, supported by its strategic geographic location, a large multilingual workforce, competitive operating costs, and continued investment in telecommunications infrastructure. These advantages have made the Republic an attractive jurisdiction for international companies seeking scalable customer support, customer experience management, and outsourced business service operations.

In recent years, the Egyptian government has also placed growing emphasis on the development of the information technology and outsourcing sectors through digital transformation initiatives, infrastructure expansion, and investment support programs. These developments have strengthened Egypt's position as a regional hub for customer experience management, technical support services, and back-office operations serving markets across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Despite these commercial advantages, establishing a call center operation in Egypt requires careful consideration of the applicable legal and regulatory framework. While certain outsourcing activities may be treated as ordinary commercial operations, the use of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) systems and internet-based communication technologies can bring the activity within the scope of Egyptian telecommunications regulation. In such cases, the operation may become subject to the supervision of the [National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority](#) (NTRA) and require prior regulatory approval before commencing operations.

Accordingly, investors entering the Egyptian market must assess not only the commercial structure of the project, but also the technical nature of the communication systems intended to be used. The regulatory classification of the operation will directly impact the required corporate structure, licensing obligations, compliance requirements, and operational timeline.



This guide provides an overview of the principal legal, corporate, and telecommunications considerations associated with establishing a call center operation in Egypt, with particular focus on VoIP-enabled activities and the regulatory framework governing telecommunications services.

Egypt as a Regional Outsourcing Hub

Egypt has become one of the most competitive jurisdictions for call center and outsourcing operations due to the combination of its strategic geographic position, highly scalable workforce, and comparatively efficient operating costs. Over the past decade, multinational corporations and regional service providers have increasingly utilized Egypt as a base for customer support, technical assistance, sales operations, and business process outsourcing activities serving both regional and international markets.

One of Egypt's principal advantages lies in the size and quality of its labor market. The country benefits from a large population of university graduates entering the workforce annually, many of whom possess strong language capabilities in English and Arabic, in addition to European languages such as French, German, Italian, and Spanish. This multilingual capacity allows operators to centralize support services for multiple jurisdictions through a single operational platform.

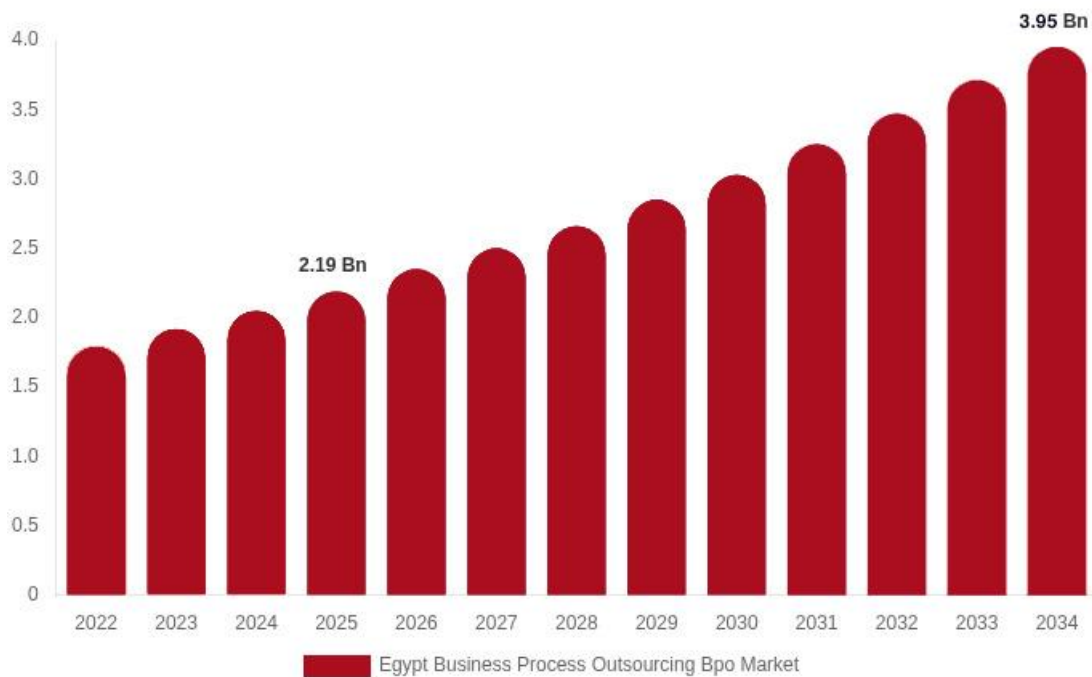
From a commercial perspective, Egypt continues to offer competitive labor and operational costs relative to many traditional outsourcing destinations. This cost efficiency enables companies to scale operations while maintaining commercially sustainable service models, particularly in high-volume customer support environments.

Egypt's geographic location also provides an operational advantage for international service delivery. Its time zone allows efficient overlap with Europe, the Gulf region, and parts of Asia, making the country particularly suitable for businesses requiring extended service coverage and near-continuous operational capacity.



In parallel, the Egyptian government has made substantial investments in digital infrastructure and telecommunications development. Major urban centers, particularly Cairo and Alexandria, have witnessed significant improvements in internet connectivity, data infrastructure, and technology services that support modern outsourcing and cloud-based communication systems.

Egypt Business Process Outsourcing Bpo Market Size (2022-2034):



The chart illustrates Egypt’s growing position as a competitive outsourcing destination, reflecting steady market expansion driven by workforce availability, cost efficiency, and increasing demand for offshore service delivery.

The government has additionally demonstrated increasing support for the ICT and outsourcing sectors through investment incentives, technology parks, training initiatives, and broader digital transformation programs aimed at positioning Egypt as a regional technology and outsourcing hub.



Nevertheless, while the commercial environment presents substantial opportunities for investors, the regulatory framework governing telecommunications and internet-based communication services remains a critical consideration, particularly where call center operations rely on VoIP systems or managed communication infrastructure.

Understanding the Regulatory Landscape

Under Egyptian law, the legal treatment of call center operations depends not on the commercial description of the business, but rather on the technical nature of the services being provided and the communication systems used to deliver them. This distinction is particularly important in the context of modern call center operations, which increasingly rely on internet-based communication technologies and cloud infrastructure.

[Egyptian Telecommunications Regulation Law No. 10 of 2003](#) adopts a broad definition of telecommunications activities, covering the transmission and reception of voice, data, signals, and communications through wired, wireless, and internet-based networks.

Accordingly, as call center operations inherently rely on [Voice over Internet Protocol](#) (“VoIP”) systems, managed voice routing solutions, cloud telephony infrastructure, or similar technologies to facilitate and manage voice communications, such activities fall within the scope of regulated telecommunications services and require the relevant approvals and licensing from the NTRA.

Once an activity falls within this classification, the operation becomes subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of NTRA, which is the governmental body responsible for supervising telecommunications services and infrastructure in Egypt.

Accordingly, one of the most important legal assessments at the outset of any call center project in Egypt is determining whether the proposed operational model constitutes a standard outsourcing activity or a regulated telecommunications operation. This assessment will directly affect the applicable corporate structure, licensing process, operational timeline, and compliance obligations throughout the life of the business.



When Does a Call Center Require an NTRA License or Registration?

The regulatory framework governing call center activities in Egypt was formalized by the NTRA through the issuance of the Regulatory Framework for Establishing and Operating Call Centers within the Arab Republic of Egypt and Providing Call Center Outsourcing Services in April 2023.

Under this framework, the applicable regulatory requirements depend on the nature of the services provided and whether the operator intends to provide call center services to third parties or solely support its own business activities. The framework establishes two distinct regulatory regimes:

- A License to Establish and Operate Call Centers and Provide Call Center Outsourcing Services to Third Parties.
- Registration as a Private Call Center Operator Providing Services Exclusively to Its Own Users.

A. Licensed Call Center Outsourcing Providers

Companies intending to provide outsourced call center services to third-party clients are generally required to obtain an NTRA licence.

The licence is granted for a period of five years and currently involves:

- A one-time licence fee of EGP 100,000 plus applicable VAT.
- Annual fees of EGP 50,000 plus applicable VAT.
- Licence issuance fees of EGP 10,000 plus applicable VAT.
- A financial guarantee of EGP 100,000.

Licensed operators are entitled to establish and operate call centers in Egypt and provide outsourcing services to third parties using dedicated personnel, seats, and communication infrastructure.



Importantly, licensed operators may establish international connectivity arrangements through approved telecommunications providers and may utilize VoIP technology for the transmission of voice and video communications. Licensed operators may also utilize cloud call center solutions, subject to obtaining the NTRA's prior written approval.

B. Registered Private Call Centers

Companies that operate call centers solely for their own business purposes and serve their own customers may be eligible to register as a private call center operator rather than obtain a full outsourcing licence.

Registration is granted for a period of five years and currently requires:

- A one-time registration fee of EGP 10,000 plus applicable VAT.
- A security deposit of EGP 10,000.

The registration process requires submission of company information, commercial registration details, contact information, and details concerning the nature of the activity and communication methods utilized by the operation. Registration is not deemed complete until approval has been obtained from the NTRA.

Unlike licensed outsourcing providers, registered private call centers are generally prohibited from routing or transferring calls using VoIP technology through internet connections. In addition, cloud call center solutions may only be utilized after obtaining the NTRA's prior written approval.

C. Importance of Proper Regulatory Classification

The distinction between a licensed outsourcing provider and a registered private call center is one of the most important regulatory considerations when establishing a call center operation in Egypt. The classification directly affects the permitted communication technologies, operational flexibility, applicable fees, compliance obligations, and overall regulatory burden.



Accordingly, investors should assess their intended operating model at an early stage to determine the appropriate regulatory pathway and ensure compliance with the requirements imposed by the NTRA. Failure to obtain the appropriate license or registration may expose the operator to liability under Telecommunications Regulation Law No. 10 of 2003 and the applicable NTRA regulatory framework.

VoIP Licensing Process Before the NTRA

Where a call center operation in Egypt utilizes VoIP systems or other managed communication technologies, the project may become subject to licensing and regulatory approval by NTRA. In practice, the licensing process represents one of the most technically detailed and regulatorily sensitive stages of establishing the operation.

The NTRA assesses each project based on the specific technical structure of the communication systems proposed, the operational model of the business, the nature of the services provided, and the extent to which the activity interacts with telecommunications infrastructure. Accordingly, there is no single standardized classification applicable to all call center operations, and the regulatory treatment may vary depending on the project's architecture and scope.

Before submitting a licensing application, the company must generally complete a substantial degree of operational and technical preparation. This commonly includes establishing the communication infrastructure, designing the VoIP network architecture, implementing cybersecurity and data protection frameworks, preparing internal operational procedures, and ensuring the availability of qualified technical personnel capable of managing the proposed systems.

The licensing application submitted to the NTRA typically includes extensive corporate, technical, financial, and operational documentation. In practice, the Authority may require constitutional documents of the company, commercial registration records, shareholder information, technical descriptions of the communication systems, network diagrams, cybersecurity policies, business and feasibility studies, operational workflows, and evidence demonstrating the company's financial and technical capability to conduct the proposed activity.



Following submission, the NTRA conducts a detailed regulatory review of the project. This review may involve technical assessments, requests for clarification, meetings with company representatives, and evaluation of the proposed operational structure from both a regulatory and national security perspective.

The Authority retains broad discretion in determining whether the project satisfies the regulatory standards required for approval.

Where the NTRA approves the application, the company is granted authorization subject to specific operational conditions and ongoing compliance obligations. These conditions may relate to technical standards, reporting obligations, cybersecurity requirements, record retention policies, operational limitations, and broader telecommunications compliance measures.

Importantly, companies should not commence VoIP-enabled operations before obtaining the necessary approvals. Under Egyptian telecommunications law, the operation of telecommunications networks or services, including the bypassing of international telephone traffic through unauthorized channels, without the required license from the NTRA may expose the company and responsible individuals to significant regulatory and criminal consequences. These include, under Article 72, imprisonment for a period ranging from six months to five years, fines ranging from EGP 50,000 to EGP 500,000, confiscation of the equipment, devices, and connections used in the violation, and an obligation to compensate for damages resulting from the unauthorized activity, in addition to any administrative enforcement measures imposed by the competent authorities.

For this reason, early coordination between legal, regulatory, and technical advisors is often essential in order to structure the project appropriately, minimize delays during the review process, and ensure alignment between the operational model and the expectations of the telecommunications regulator.



Choosing the Appropriate Corporate Structure

Selecting the appropriate corporate structure is a fundamental step in establishing a call center operation in Egypt, particularly where the business model involves VoIP systems or other regulated telecommunications activities. While Egyptian law recognizes several forms of corporate entities for commercial operations, not all structures are suitable for activities that may fall within the supervision of the NTRA.

In practice, where a call center operation requires telecommunications licensing or regulatory approval, the Egyptian Joint Stock Company (JSC) is generally regarded as the appropriate and expected corporate vehicle. This approach reflects the regulatory preference for entities that demonstrate a higher degree of governance, transparency, operational stability, and financial capacity.

A JSC provides a structured governance framework through a board of directors, regulated shareholding arrangements, formal capital requirements, and enhanced corporate oversight mechanisms. These characteristics align more closely with the expectations typically associated with regulated telecommunications and technology-related activities.

By contrast, although Limited Liability Companies (LLCs) are commonly used for ordinary commercial businesses in Egypt, they are often viewed as less suitable for regulated telecommunications activities involving VoIP infrastructure or managed communication services. In practice, reliance on an LLC structure for such operations may create complications during the licensing and regulatory review process and can ultimately necessitate corporate restructuring.

From an investment perspective, the JSC structure also offers greater flexibility for foreign participation, scalability, future investment rounds, and institutional governance. It is particularly advantageous for projects anticipating operational expansion, external financing, regional service delivery, or strategic partnerships.



The incorporation of a JSC in Egypt requires at least three founders, the appointment of a board of directors, determination of the issued and authorized capital, and registration with the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI). Following incorporation, the company must complete all related corporate registrations, including tax registration, commercial registration, and social insurance compliance procedures.

It is important to emphasize, however, that incorporation alone does not authorize the operation of regulated telecommunications activities. The establishment of the corporate entity represents only the first stage of the process. Where the proposed operation falls within the scope of telecommunications regulation, separate licensing approval from the NTRA must still be obtained prior to commencing VoIP-enabled operations.

Incorporation Process in Egypt

Step 1: Determine the Corporate Structure

The process begins by determining the appropriate legal structure for the proposed operation, including the shareholding arrangement, management structure, and business activities to be reflected in the company's constitutional documents. For regulated or potentially regulated call center operations, investors commonly establish an Egyptian Joint Stock Company (JSC), particularly where future telecommunications licensing may be required.

Step 2: Prepare the Incorporation Documentation

Once the corporate structure has been finalized, the incorporation documentation must be prepared. This typically includes the preparation of powers of attorney (where foreign shareholders are involved), reservation of the company name, drafting of the articles of association, and collection of the supporting corporate and shareholder documentation required by the authorities.



Step 3: Legalize Foreign Documentation

Where foreign investors participate in the company, powers of attorney and other foreign documents generally must be notarized and legalized before the competent Egyptian consulate abroad in order to be accepted by Egyptian authorities.

Step 4: Incorporate the Company Before GAFI

The incorporation application is submitted to the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI). Upon completion of the review process and approval of the application, the company is incorporated and issued its commercial registration, thereby acquiring legal personality as an Egyptian entity.

Step 5: Complete Post-Incorporation Registrations

Following incorporation, several regulatory registrations must be completed before operations commence. These typically include tax registration, VAT registration (where applicable), opening corporate bank accounts, registration with the social insurance authorities, and implementation of employee payroll systems.

Step 6: Establish an Operational Presence in Egypt

The company must secure suitable business premises in Egypt. Depending on the stage of the project, this may involve either a fully operational office or a temporary virtual office arrangement pending completion of the operational setup. Regulatory authorities generally expect the company to maintain a genuine operational presence in Egypt, particularly where telecommunications licensing is contemplated.

Step 7: Build the Operational and Technological Infrastructure

The company should establish the technological and operational framework necessary for the intended business activities. This commonly includes IT systems, communications infrastructure, cybersecurity policies, data management procedures, and internal operational protocols.



Step 8: Prepare and Apply for Telecommunications and VoIP Licensing

The company will proceed with the preparation and submission of the relevant licensing or regulatory approval applications before the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA). The incorporation and operational setup completed during the preceding stages form the basis for such applications.

Step 9: Achieve Operational Readiness

Upon completion of the corporate, regulatory, operational, and infrastructure requirements, the company becomes fully prepared to commence commercial operations in Egypt. Incorporation should therefore be viewed as the first stage of a broader process leading to full regulatory and operational readiness.

Operational Readiness and Ongoing Compliance

Obtaining corporate registration and regulatory approval represents only part of the legal framework governing call center operations in Egypt. Following commencement of operations, companies remain subject to continuing compliance obligations relating to telecommunications regulation, cybersecurity, employment matters, taxation, and operational governance.

From a telecommunications perspective, entities operating under NTRA are generally expected to maintain ongoing compliance with the technical and operational standards applicable to their licensed activities. This may include adherence to approved network structures, maintenance of technical documentation, cooperation with regulatory inspections, and compliance with any reporting obligations imposed by the Authority.

Cybersecurity and data protection considerations have also become increasingly important within the telecommunications and outsourcing sectors. Call center operations routinely process substantial volumes of customer information, communication records, and commercially sensitive data. Accordingly, operators are generally expected to implement appropriate cybersecurity measures, access control systems, internal monitoring procedures, and data management policies designed to protect both operational integrity and customer information.



In practice, regulatory authorities place significant emphasis on operational transparency and internal governance. Companies are therefore encouraged to maintain clear internal compliance frameworks, employee confidentiality obligations, communication monitoring policies, and documented operational procedures governing the use of communication systems and customer data.

Employment compliance also forms a critical aspect of operational readiness. Companies employing local personnel in Egypt must comply with applicable labor and social insurance regulations, including employee registration requirements, payroll administration, workplace policies, and social insurance contributions. For larger operations, internal HR and compliance systems become particularly important in maintaining operational stability and regulatory alignment.

From a practical standpoint, operators should also recognize that telecommunications compliance is not a one-time approval process but rather an ongoing regulatory relationship. Material operational changes, expansion of communication infrastructure, introduction of new technologies, or modifications to the scope of services may require additional regulatory review or notification to the competent authorities.

Accordingly, successful long-term operation in Egypt depends not only on obtaining the necessary approvals at the establishment stage, but also on maintaining continuous compliance, operational discipline, and internal governance mechanisms throughout the life of the business.



Common Structuring and Regulatory Mistakes

In practice, many regulatory complications encountered by foreign investors establishing call center operations in Egypt arise not from the complexity of the legal framework itself, but rather from improper project structuring and misunderstandings regarding the regulatory classification of the activity. Early strategic planning is therefore essential in order to avoid delays, restructuring requirements, and operational disruptions later in the process.

First Mistake: Selecting an Inappropriate Corporate Structure

One of the most common structuring mistakes in the call center sector is incorporating a LLC when the intended business model requires a VoIP licence from the NTRA. In practice, where a call center intends to provide services through VoIP technology and falls within the scope of regulated telecommunications activities, the licensing framework generally requires the company to be established as a JSC.

As a result, investors who initially incorporate an LLC may later discover that their chosen legal form does not satisfy the requirements for obtaining the necessary VoIP licence. This can lead to delays in the licensing process and require the company to convert its legal form to a JSC before the licence application can proceed.

Conversion Mechanism:

This issue can be remedied through a statutory conversion of the company's legal form from an LLC to a JSC in accordance with [Egyptian Companies Law No. 159 of 1981](#) and its Executive Regulations. The law permits the change of legal form upon approval by an extraordinary general assembly resolution adopted by a majority of three-quarters of the capital, subject to compliance with the formation requirements of the JSC structure.

The conversion process generally requires, among other things:

- Full payment of the company's capital prior to conversion
- Compliance with the minimum JSC capital requirements
- A minimum of three shareholders and three board members



- Financial due diligence and valuation of the company's assets and liabilities
- Approval of the Economic Performance Department of GAFI
- Registration with the Misr for Central Clearing, Depository and Registry (MCDR).

Accordingly, while an initial incorporation as an LLC does not preclude later restructuring, such a conversion process may be time-consuming, document-intensive, and dependent on regulatory approvals. As a result, early-stage structuring aligned with the intended licensing and operational model is generally efficient and reduces the risk of delay or re-application during the regulatory phase.

Second Mistake: Lack of Proper Local Authorisation and Delegation

Another frequent issue arises where foreign-owned entities operate in Egypt without appointing a properly authorised local representative with sufficient legal powers. In practice, where the shareholder is not physically present in Egypt, operational and administrative functions may be hindered if no authorised signatory or delegated manager is appointed.

This can create practical difficulties in dealing with authorities such as the social insurance system, tax authorities, and other governmental bodies that require locally valid representation for filings and administrative procedures.

How to Fix It:

A properly structured power of delegation framework should be implemented, and a local authorised representative or manager should be formally delegated with clear signing authority for regulatory, employment, and administrative matters. This ensures continuity of operations and compliance with local procedural requirements.



Third Mistake: Commencing Operations Prior to Regulatory Clearance

A further common compliance risk arises where operators begin VoIP-enabled or regulated communication activities before obtaining the necessary approvals. In some cases, investors incorrectly assume that incorporation alone permits operational launch.

However, where the activity falls within the scope of regulated telecommunications services under Egyptian Telecommunications Law No. 10 of 2003, operations may not lawfully commence prior to obtaining the required approvals from the NTRA.

How to Fix It:

A clear regulatory clearance strategy should be adopted before launch, including confirmation of whether the intended operational model is classified as a standard outsourcing activity or a regulated telecommunications service. Where licensing is required, approval should be secured prior to any commercial deployment of voice-based systems.

Accordingly, investors that conduct early regulatory assessment, adopt the appropriate corporate structure, and align their operational planning with regulatory expectations from the outset are generally better positioned to achieve a smoother and more efficient market entry process in Egypt.



Indicative Timeline and Regulatory Authorities

The establishment of a call center operation in Egypt involves a sequence of corporate, regulatory, and operational procedures carried out before multiple governmental authorities. While the overall timeline varies depending on the complexity of the project, the technical structure of the communication systems, and the completeness of the submitted documentation, the following reflects the typical timeframe associated with the principal stages of the process.

Stage	Competent Authority	Estimated Timeline
Execution and legalization of powers of attorney	Notary Public / Egyptian Consulate Abroad	2–4 weeks abroad / 1 business day in Egypt
Incorporation of the JSC	GAFI	Approximately 2 weeks
Commercial registration and tax registration	Commercial Registry / Egyptian Tax Authority	Approximately 1 week
Opening of corporate bank account	Commercial Bank	1–2 weeks
Social insurance registration	National Organization for Social Insurance	Approximately 1 week
Preparation of technical and operational infrastructure	Internal technical teams / external consultants	Variable depending on project scope
Preparation and submission of VoIP licensing application	NTRA	Approximately 1 week
Regulatory review and licensing process	NTRA	Approximately 3–6 months



The above timelines are indicative only and may vary depending on regulatory workload, public holidays, completeness of documentation, technical complexity of the project, and the responsiveness of the relevant authorities during the review process.

In practice, the telecommunications licensing phase before the NTRA is typically the longest and most technically intensive component of the overall process. Accordingly, investors are generally advised to begin operational planning, technical preparation, and regulatory assessment at an early stage in order to minimize delays and ensure alignment between the proposed operational model and the expectations of the regulator.

Where foreign shareholders are involved, additional time should also be anticipated for the notarization and legalization of foreign documentation, particularly where powers of attorney and corporate documents must be authenticated through Egyptian consular channels abroad.

Conclusion

Egypt continues to position itself as one of the leading regional destinations for call center and outsourcing operations, supported by a competitive labor market, strategic geographic location, multilingual workforce, and steadily expanding telecommunications infrastructure. These factors have created significant opportunities for international investors seeking scalable customer support and business process outsourcing operations serving regional and global markets.

At the same time, the legal and regulatory framework governing telecommunications activities requires careful consideration, particularly where call center operations utilize VoIP systems or other internet-based communication technologies. In such cases, the project may fall within the regulatory jurisdiction of NTRA, resulting in additional licensing, compliance, and operational requirements beyond standard corporate incorporation procedures.

When properly structured and licensed, Egypt offers a commercially attractive and strategically positioned environment for the development of call center and outsourcing businesses capable of serving multiple international markets from a single operational platform.

