

Driver's Jailing Postponed Until 2024 — Again

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An Irkutsk district court de-facto ignored a higher court's recommendation when on Friday it postponed for 14 years a prison sentence for a driver who killed a pedestrian and crippled another.

Anna Shavenkova was handed a 2 1/2-year sentence, but will not begin serving it until 2024, which will allow her to raise her infant son, Interfax said.

The court also cited her new pregnancy, lack of criminal record and the fact that she has paid 300,000 rubles (\$10,000) to the family of the victims as reasons to postpone the jailing, RIA-Novosti said.

Shavenkova pleaded guilty and apologized to the victims, but their lawyer nevertheless promised to appeal.

Shavenkova, daughter of then-head of the Irkutsk region elections committee, rammed into two female pedestrians on an Irkutsk sidewalk in 2009 after losing control of her car.

Surveillance video leaked online showed Shavenkova ignoring the victims and examining the damage to the car while talking on her cell phone after the crash.

An Irkutsk court sentenced Shavenkova to three years in prison in August — but postponed the sentence until her newborn son reaches 14.

The ruling sparked outrage amid bloggers, many of whom said the non-obligatory leniency rule was only applied because Shavenkova was an official's daughter. They cited another high-profile case that saw Svetlana Bakhmina, ex-lawyer for Yukos — on which the authorities cracked down hard — kept in prison for four years despite a pregnancy and two underage children.

A higher court ordered a retrial in October, and Shavenkova's mother Lyudmila resigned the next month.

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