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Murmansk Governor Steps Down

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Murmansk Governor Dmitry Dmitriyenko resigned Wednesday **Sergei Nikolayev**

President Dmitry Medvedev has signed an order relieving Murmansk Governor Dmitry Dmitriyenko of his duties, the Kremlin said in a statement Wednesday.

The order showed that Dmitriyenko himself submitted a resignation request to the president.

Marina Kovtun, first deputy speaker of the Murmansk regional legislature, will act as interim governor until another leader is appointed for the region.

Dmitriyenko's exit from office has been expected since the beginning of the year. Sources close to the Murmansk administration told Vedomosti in January that the governor had written a resignation letter and an order from Medvedev had been drafted. A Dmitriyenko spokesman denied the report at the time.

Analysts have rated Dmitriyenko's survivability as governor as low, noting that his random shake-ups in local leadership, conflicts with large financial and industrial groups as well as with local elites made his position untenable. At a January meeting on the effectiveness of public authorities, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin criticized Dmitriyenko's performance

was "very, very low."

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