

New Rules Guard Inmate Health

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Cell doors stand open in the Butyrka detention center where lawyer Sergei Magnitsky died in 2009 after being refused medical treatment. **Andrei Makhonin**

New rules coming into force will require police to insure that people who are detained are in good health before they are transferred to prison cells, by instituting new requirements to record detainees' health status in an official document.

The decree bringing the new rules into effect was published Monday in Rossiskaya Gazeta.

"Before being placed in the cell, a police officer shall ask the detainee if he has a chronic illness or health complaints," the document says. "Everything should be written down in a protocol."

Police are also forbidden from placing people in temporary holding cells if they are sick or have serious injuries. Rules also restrict detainment for diabetics and pregnant women, but the document does not specify the actions to be taken in these cases.

The new rules come after public outrage in the wake of highly visible cases of police abuse, such as the incident last month in which a man died after being sodomized by police officers

in Kazan and the 2009 death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who succumbed to an untreated medical condition in pretrial detention in 2009.

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