

Golikova Odds-on to Head Audit Chamber

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Former Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova could be appointed head of the Audit Chamber as early as Friday by President Vladimir Putin, several government sources said, Vedomosti reported Thursday.

Golikova, currently a presidential aide, was tipped to replace Sergei Stepashin as soon as a new law prescribing the re-election of all members of the Audit Chamber went into effect in April 2013.

The new head will be selected for a shortlist of three candidates that also includes Stepashin and Andrei Makarov, head of the State Duma committee on budgets and taxes, who also hosts a television show on legal issues.

The president will nominate the new head of the chamber either on Friday, during the last Duma session before the summer recess, or in autumn, presidential spokesman Dmitry

Peskov said.

He declined to comment on Golikova's possible selection by Putin.

Stepashin held the roles of Interior Minister, head of the Federal Security Agency and Prime Minister during the tenure of late President Boris Yeltsin. He has headed the chamber since 1999.

But support for Stepashin in some circles has dwindled since the parliament chose not to reappoint a number of his allies as auditors, including Alexander Piskunov. Those close to Stepashin said he was ready to replace the current chief of staff, Sergei Shakhrai, with Piskunov.

Golikova's cause is also strengthened by the fact that she received a nomination from the Liberal Democratic Party as well as United Russia.

She worked as deputy finance minister between 2002–2007 and was often referred to as "queen of the budget," because of her understanding of state finances, Lenta.ru reported.

The role of the Audit Chamber is to evaluate and report on the effectiveness of budget spending, state-funded infrastructure development programs, and fight corruption.

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