

Court Ruling Could Boost Navalny's Political Ambitions

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Constitutional Court on Thursday ruled that a 2012 law barring convicted felons from running for political office for indefinite periods is unconstitutional and ordered lawmakers to amend the legislation immediately.

The court took issue with the fact that the seriousness of a crime is not taken into account when bans are being allocated. It also said that felons should be given a set time frame telling them exactly how long they are to be sidelined for, instead of just banning them indefinitely, the legal body said in a [statement](#) on its website.

The ruling could provide a timely boost for opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who finished second in the Moscow mayoral elections on Sept. 8 and announced his presidential ambitions earlier this year.

In July Navalny was sentenced to five years in prison, after a Kirov region court found him

guilty of embezzling about \$500,000-worth of timber from a state-owned company in 2009. His defense team appealed the decision, which allowed him to take part in the elections.

The court in Kirov last week postponed his appeal hearing until Oct. 16, but even if his appeal is unsuccessful, the Constitution Court's ruling would allow him to get back into politics eventually.

The next presidential election is set to be held in March 2018 and President Vladimir Putin said in late September that he could run for a fourth term.

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