

Duma Passes Law Barring Ex-Prisoners From Elections for Governor, President

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The State Duma has passed a law disqualifying those convicted of serious crimes from running for governorships or the Russian presidency.

The measure, passed Friday, restricts the electoral eligibility of those who commit serious and very serious crimes for periods of 10 and 15 years, respectively.

Candidates must also disclose their criminal records, including convictions that have been expunged, and the information is expected to be published on ballots, Interfax reported.

Ex-prisoners had previously been completely banned from running for office, though the Constitutional Court ruled that a lifetime ban was unconstitutional last year.

Critics have said that the eligibility restrictions allow the Kremlin to sideline potential challengers like anti-corruption blogger and opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who last year

was given a suspended five–sentence for embezzlement during which he is prohibited from running for public office.

Navalny received 27 percent of the vote and lost to Mayor Sergei Sobyenin in last year's Moscow mayoral election, held after his original sentence and before his appeal in what many observers called a politically-motivated case.

The law passed Friday will prevent Navalny, the opposition's most prominent figure, from running for the presidency in 2018.

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