

Doctors Request Prosecution for Hunger-Striking Volgograd Parents

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Prosecutors in Volgograd are considering bringing charges against a group of local parents who have gone on hunger strike over unpaid subsidies for families with many children, a news report said.

The 29 parents went on hunger strike in the southern Russian city about two weeks ago and have since refused medical treatment, prompting doctors to demand that prosecutors charge the organizers of the protest with "incitement to suicide," the governor's spokeswoman Yekaterina Golod said, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported Sunday.

The charge carries a maximum sentence of five years in jail.

One of the hunger-strikers, father of three Valery Kvitkin, was hospitalized last week with acute liver and kidney problems and has agreed to end his hunger strike. Others have signed statements saying that no legal complaints will be brought in the event of their death,

the report said.

"We have refused medical help because they wanted to hospitalize us forcefully," said protester Yelena Samoshina. "We don't need medical help, we need social help. Officials come to visit us all the time, but their visits are of no use."

The protesters are demanding that the government deliver on its legislation that envisages the allocation of subsidies for large families, including free bus passes for children and increased child-support allowances, Dozhd reported.

"Instead of making transportation free for school children, they have increased the prices of bus passes for World War II veterans, people with disabilities, war veterans and other vulnerable groups, and the price hikes were" by 200 to 400 percent, protester Nikolai Shamayev said.

Golod said that the regional administration has fulfilled "80 percent" of the protesters' demands, and that the remaining demands fall within the jurisdictions of either federal or municipal authorities.

"Still, the government is ready to discuss even those demands," she said. "To do that, officials of all levels visit the hunger-strikers every day. Activists have been refusing to communicate with them so far."

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