

# American Missionaries Detained in Altai Region

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**The  Moscow Times**

Russian authorities dealt out fines to more than a dozen Americans for doing missionary work while staying in the Altai region on tourist visas.

The 17 Americans organized lessons for local residents in the town of Rubtsovsk, 280 kilometers southwest of Barnaul, in which they spoke about their religious beliefs, the region's migration department said in a statement on its website, Interfax reported Friday.

In order to carry out missionary work legally in Russia it is necessary to obtain a visa that lists the purpose of the visit as "social activity," but the Americans only had tourist visas, the Federal Migration Service's press office said, Itar-Tass reported.

The missionaries were taken to the regional migration department where they received their fines.

Itar-Tass cited the FMS's press service as saying that they were each fined 2,000 rubles (\$56),

after which they left the region.

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