

Russia's Labor Ministry Wants to Save on Wheelchairs for the Disabled

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's Ministry of Labor and Social Protection has suggested that recipients of state medical aid should get a longer use out of their wheelchairs and diapers in a bid to optimize government expenditure amid the country's economic downturn.

According to the ministry's proposal, published on the government's legal information website, the designated life of a hand-operated wheelchair should be extended to at least six years, instead of the current four.

It added that a pair of "complex" orthopedic shoes should be worn for a year, instead of the current six months, and adult diapers and underpads should be changed once every 12 hours, instead of the current eight.

The proposal, which seeks to amend previous rules established in mid-2013, argues that extending the life of medical devices has been made possible by "modern technological means" that rely on "high-quality, long-lasting materials."

But the goal of the proposal is to "raise the effectiveness of state budget expenditures on programs for supplying disabled people with technical means of rehabilitation," according to the document.

Other cost-saving measures suggested by the ministry include extending the use of hearing aids to six years, instead of the current four. The public will have until Feb. 25 to comment on the proposal.

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