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Moscow Domestic Violence Appeals Skyrocket After Decriminalization Law

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Sergei Bobylev / TASS

Domestic violence complaints have shot up in Moscow since Russia adopted a law decriminalizing abuse in the family last year, said the city's human rights ombudswoman.

The 2017 law scraps prison sentences for "first-time" abusers whose beatings result in "minor harm" such as small abrasions, bruises, superficial wounds, and soft-tissue damage. Supporters say the law is needed for parents to discipline children.

"Looking at statistics of appeals, we saw that after the law decriminalizing beatings was passed, the number of complaints on this issue increased significantly," Moscow ombudswoman Tatyana Potyayeva was quoted as saying by state-run RIA Novosti news agency Monday.

Women, children, and the elderly are most likely to file complaints of familial abuse, Potyayeva said.

Familial abuse appeals have grown by 27 percent since 2016 and make up over half of all physical abuse complaints, state-run TASS news agency reported, citing the ombudswoman's office.

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