

Russia Orders New Trial in Activist's 'Repeat Protest' Conviction

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Konstantin Kotov became the second person ever to be found guilty of taking part in multiple unsanctioned protests following last summer's opposition protests in Moscow. **Maksim Stulov / Vedomosti / TASS**

A Moscow court has ordered a lower court to review the four-year prison sentence of activist Konstantin Kotov, who was convicted of "multiple breaches" of Russia's protest law, Interfax [reported](#) Monday.

Kotov, 34, in September became the second person ever to be [found guilty](#) of taking part in multiple unsanctioned protests. The Moscow City Court [upheld](#) the sentence for the computer programmer, whom rights groups called a prisoner of conscience, the following month.

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A Moscow appellate court struck down October's ruling and sent Kotov's case back to the Moscow City Court for review, Interfax reported. No date has been set for the new trial.

The judge ordered Kotov to remain in custody until May 2.

Kotov's lawyers had asked the appellate judge to overturn the case. State prosecutors had requested to reduce Kotov's sentence from four years to one year, according to Interfax.

Kotov was arrested and charged amid a wave of criminal prosecutions that were opened over last summer's Moscow election protests. The rallies, which began after opposition candidates were barred from the ballot in the Sept. 8 Moscow City Duma election, became the largest wave of protests seen in Russia since 2011–2013.

President Vladimir Putin, who promised in December to look into his case, ordered federal prosecutors in January to determine whether Kotov's sentence was lawful.

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