

Russian Jail on Coronavirus Lockdown After Inspector's Death – Reports

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More than half a million people are held in Russia's notoriously crowded prisons in what is the European continent's largest prison population. **Federal Penitentiary Service / TASS**

A detention center east of Moscow has been placed under lockdown after the alleged death of one of its inspectors, the Mash Telegram channel [reported](#) Friday.

The republic of Marii-El, some 700 kilometers east of Moscow, is Russia's 12th most-affected region with 63 confirmed coronavirus cases. Authorities reported Marii-El's first death Thursday, identifying the patient as a 37-year-old woman.

Related article: [Campaigners Urge Russia to Release Prisoners as Coronavirus Spreads](#)

Marii-El's first coronavirus victim was an employee at a detention center, the Lenta.ru news portal [cited](#) an unnamed law enforcement source as saying.

Mash reported that the woman, who it identified as Natalya Gayduk, had contracted the virus

from colleagues in Moscow. The outlet said that Gayduk had had contact with 27 people before succumbing to the disease.

Around 127 out of more than 1,600 employees have now been quarantined inside the detention center, Mash said without citing sources.

"They can't go home and are spending the nights at work," the outlet said.

Regional officials have not yet confirmed or denied the report.

The Federal Prison Service's republic of Marii-El branch [confirmed](#) that its detention center employees in the city of Ioshkar-Ola will remain on duty for 14 days starting this week, according to TASS.

Russia's Federal Prison Service has [confirmed](#) at least one coronavirus case in a Ryazan region jail south of Moscow this week.

The service [said](#) its 49 labs had carried out more than 1,400 coronavirus tests as of Thursday.

Rights campaigners have called on the government to consider releasing some pre-trial detainees and prisoners held in the country's packed jails, warning of the "devastating consequences" of the coronavirus.

Russia has reported 11,917 coronavirus cases so far after seeing its largest one-day surge in infections Friday.

Marii-El, like many Russian regions, is under strict lockdown measures until the end of April to prevent the spread of coronavirus. On Friday, regional authorities [limited](#) alcohol sales to four hours a day.

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