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Russian Health Worker Detained for Selling Fake Covid Vaccine Certificates – Police

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Demand for fake vaccine certificates has grown in Russia as several regions have announced compulsory vaccination. **Moskva News Agency**

A senior administrator at a western Russian clinic has been detained on suspicion of selling fake coronavirus vaccine certificates, police said Wednesday.

The unnamed Kaliningrad region medical worker is the latest and most high-profile suspect in the authorities' attempt to crack down on the black market sale of falsified Covid-19 jab certificates.

Related article: Russian Vaccine Skeptics Rush to Buy Fake Covid Jab Certificates

Demand for fake vaccine certificates has grown after Moscow and several Russian regions last month mandated vaccinations for service-sector workers and banned entry to unvaccinated

restaurant-goers in hopes of kickstarting the country's flagging vaccination drive.

The detained suspect, an elderly woman, said in a video interrogation that she had poured out Sputnik V vaccines and falsified medical records for around 15 customers.

The clinic administrator said she charged customers 1,500-3,500 rubles ($20-$46) for her services.

“Police officers will also give a legal assessment to the actions of citizens who used the illegal services,” Interior Ministry spokeswoman Irina Volk said in a statement.

“If the use of forged documents is established, they will also be brought to justice.”

Russian authorities said they have opened 55 criminal cases into "the manufacture and sale of fictitious certificates."

The offense is punishable by prison sentences of 1-3 years.

Meanwhile, Moscow police announced Thursday the city’s first criminal case against a person who had allegedly purchased a fake QR code for dining indoors at the city's restaurants. The unnamed suspect faces up to 2 years in prison on charges of fraud.

Polls have shown Russia as one of the world's most vaccine-skeptical countries amid the coronavirus pandemic, with an independent poll this week saying that 54% of Russians are still not ready to get vaccinated against Covid-19.

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