

Russian Ambulance Workers Stage Mass Walkout Against Mandatory Vaccination – Reports

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Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency

Update: An “overwhelming majority” of the two dozen ambulance workers opposing vaccine mandates in Far East Russia’s Jewish autonomous region have rescinded their resignation letters, a regional government spokesperson [told](#) Interfax.

Dozens of ambulance workers in Russia’s Far East have staged a mass walkout in opposition to coronavirus vaccine mandates, media [reported](#) this week.

Residents of the town of Obluchye 6,000 kilometers east of Moscow risk being left without emergency care after all 15 ambulance workers submitted resignations in protest of the vaccine requirements.

Related article: [Russian Employees Rejecting Vaccines Risk Unpaid Leave](#)

“They say they don’t want to” get the Covid-19 shot, chief doctor at Obluchye’s ambulance service [told](#) the Jewish autonomous republic’s EAOMedia news website Wednesday.

The ambulance workers were later joined by 12 colleagues from the neighboring village of Pashkovo, the region’s Nabat news outlet [reported](#) Thursday.

“We’re ready to work [but] leave us alone with these vaccines!” said ambulance worker and local Communist Party deputy Ivan Krasnoslobodtsev.

“The vaccine, as far as I know, has not yet been tested and no one knows how it will manifest itself in the future,” he was quoted as saying.

Research published in medical journal The Lancet in February showed Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine to be 91.6% effective against the original Covid-19 strain. In August, Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said Sputnik V is 83% effective against the Delta variant behind Russia’s fourth wave of the pandemic that has infected and killed record numbers of patients in recent weeks.

Authorities in all 85 Russian regions, including the Jewish autonomous republic where the ambulance workers quit, have in recent months ordered state and service sector workers to get the vaccine as voluntary vaccination fell short of reaching herd immunity.

According to Nabat, the 27 anti-vaccine ambulance workers were questioned by prosecutors who asked them to fill out a questionnaire about the vaccine requirements.

Russian medical outlets [reported](#) Wednesday that federal health watchdog Roszdravnadzor plans to pursue anti-vaccine medical professionals for criminal prosecution under 2020 [laws](#) that punish spreading false information about Covid with up to 5 years in prison.

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