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Russian Colonel Placed Under House Arrest for Washing Machine Bribe

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Military registration and enlistment office in Moscow. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

A Colonel in the Russian General Staff responsible for overseeing mobilization has been placed under a two-month house arrest for allegedly demanding a washing machine as a bribe from a fellow officer, the Kommersant business daily reported on Tuesday.

Colonel Ivan Mertvishchev pleaded guilty to demanding the unusual bribe from a Moscow military commissar whose conscription office he was due to inspect.

Mertvishchev apparently made it clear to the commissar that he knew mobilization was going very poorly and that the commissar should give him a washing machine worth 70,000 rubles ($1,153) if he wanted to pass inspection.

However, rather than doing as Mertishchev demanded, the commissar decided to file an official complaint to the FSB's department of military counterintelligence instead.

The colonel, who Kommersant said has admitted his guilt, now faces a prison sentence of up

to 12 years.

The FSB and the Investigative Committee will also determine whether Mertvishchev has committed similar crimes in the past.

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