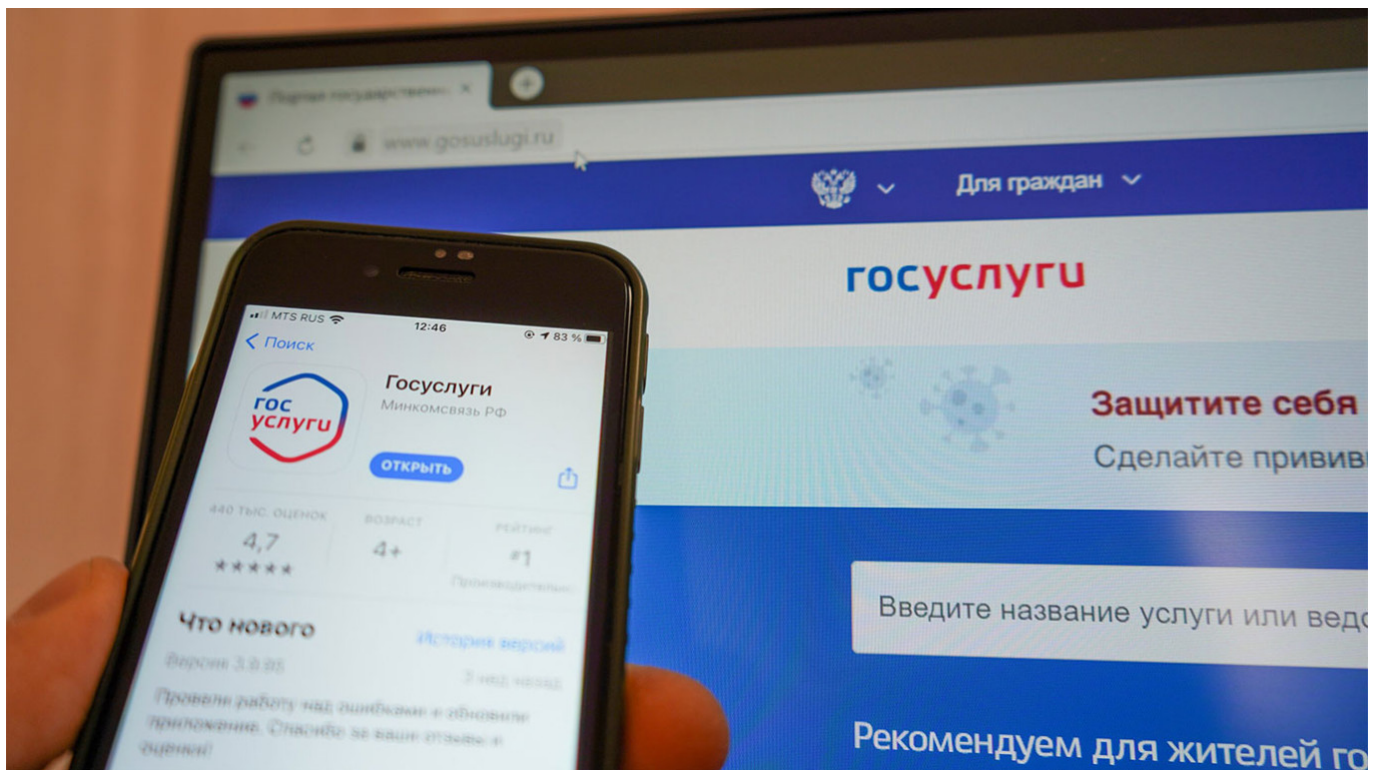


Russia Begins Issuing Digital Military Summons – Reports

By [Leyla Latypova](#)

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Gosuslugi, the online state portal through which call-up notices have been issued. **Moskva News Agency**

The authorities in several Russian regions are distributing digital summons to men of call-up age, according to media reports, less than a week after a radical overhaul of the country's military draft system was signed into law by President Vladimir Putin.

Previously summons had to be issued in person — making them relatively easy to evade.

“All the norms allowing for such [digital] summons to be distributed are in force,” Yevgeny Smirnov, a lawyer with human rights project Perviy Otdel, told The Moscow Times.

“The law is working.”

In addition to media reports of Moscow students targeted by military enlistment officers, the use of the digital summons have helped fuel fears that the Kremlin might be preparing to mobilize more men to aid its military efforts in Ukraine.

A bloody spring offensive launched by Russia has yielded few territorial gains in Ukraine and Russian forces are currently bracing for Kyiv's counter-offensive.

Military officials in Moscow and St. Petersburg admitted earlier this week that local residents eligible to be conscripted in Russia's annual spring draft could expect to be summoned to recruitment offices via messages on online state portal Gosuslugi.

While Moscow military commissioner Maxim Loktev later [backtracked](#), his St. Petersburg counterpart Sergei Kachkovsky [said](#) such summons were just tests.

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"During this military call up digital summons will be sent only as a test...They won't have any legal force," the head of State Duma's Defense Committee Andrey Kartapolov [said](#) Wednesday in what appeared to be an attempt to allay public fears.

But independent news outlet 7x7 [reported](#) Thursday a case of a digital summons being received by a 38-year-old man who had already completed his military service.

The resident of the southern city of Volgograd received a summons notice via his Gosuslugi account, according to 7x7. When he showed up at his local enlistment office, officials reportedly did nothing beyond checking his papers.

Under the law that was [rammed](#) through parliament and signed by Putin last week, Russians eligible for military service will be required to show up to recruitment offices after receiving an online summons — issued via either a new digital database, the postal service or Gosuslugi.

In addition, the law also blocks anyone eligible for military service who has received a summons from leaving the country.

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Those who ignore their call-up papers will face legal restrictions including a driving ban, and being disqualified from taking out loans and selling or buying real estate.

Despite the authorities' repeated [reassurances](#) that digital draft notices are not yet legally binding, lawyer Smirnov said that this was not the case.

"The bill was passed and it includes the possibility of distributing digital draft summons... the obligation to show up [at the draft office] based on them is already in place," he said.

Separately, several instances of men of conscription age being forcefully [taken](#) to draft offices in the capital Moscow were reported this week by independent media outlets.

Some students from Russia's prestigious Moscow State University were allegedly [handed](#)

summons by the officials running their student accommodation.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov claimed Friday that he had no knowledge about students being served draft notices in this fashion.

"To be honest, this is the first time I hear about this. What notices? Honestly, I don't even know," Peskov told journalists.

"There is no talk in the Kremlin about some sort of mobilization wave," he added.

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