

Prigozhin-Linked Companies Win Government Contracts After Failed Mutiny

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Wagner founder Yevgeny Prigozhin. Marina Moldavskaya / Kommersant

Companies with known links to Wagner Group founder Yevgeny Prigozhin have been awarded over 1 billion rubles in government contracts since his attempted overthrow of Russia's military leadership last month, the RTVI television network reported Thursday, citing public data.

The nine contracts, which are all for the provision of food services to various state-run institutions and were signed after the June 24 mutiny, are worth a total of 1.06 billion rubles (\$11.7 million), according to publicly available data published by the Russian government.

Prodfutservis LLC was awarded the largest contract among the companies, receiving 705 million rubles (\$7.8 million) for providing meals to public schools in the town of Mytishchi just north of Moscow. The contract's duration is 2023–2025.

Prigozhin-linked companies also secured contracts to provide meals to hospitals, clinics and a children's summer camp.

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Journalists had previously <u>discovered</u> matching phone numbers and registration addresses between the companies and Prigozhin's subsidiaries, along with key personnel who have held positions in multiple Prigozhin-owned companies.

While Prigozhin has gained international notoriety as the leader of the Wagner mercenary group following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine last year, he initially amassed his wealth through his catering business that secured lucrative government contracts thanks to his close ties with President Vladimir Putin.

In comments made just days after Wagner's botched mutiny, Putin said that Prigozhin's main company Concord had earned 80 billion rubles (\$888.1 million) from catering contracts with the Defense Ministry over the past year.

"I hope that no one stole anything or stole very little, either way, we'll deal with that," Putin said at the time, hinting at possible law enforcement inspections into the company's finances.

When contacted by RTVI, a representative from a medical and health center associated with Russia's Foreign Ministry and Moscow's health department stated that they had no plans to terminate existing contracts with Prigozhin-linked companies.

Earlier this month, the investigative outlet Vyorstka <u>reported</u> that companies associated with Prigozhin had failed to secure a number of state contracts despite submitting bids.

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