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Transgender Ex-FSB Officer Fined for Trying to Flee Russia – Mediazona

August 21, 2023



Katerina Mayers. **Katerina Mayers / instagram**

A transgender former Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) agent has been fined for attempting to flee the country, the independent news website Mediazona reported Monday, citing her lawyer.

Katerina Meyers was pressured to leave a 12-year career as an FSB counterintelligence officer after she started her gender transition in 2020. Authorities launched a criminal case against Meyers in December after she attempted to leave Russia under her new identity.

The Moscow District Court found Meyers guilty of violating Russia's Criminal Code on the protection of state secrets and fined her 300,000 rubles ($3,100), according to Mediazona.

Prosecutors had requested a fine of 400,000 rubles.

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“It’s known there [was] an attempt to illegally cross the state border by someone who once had access to state secrets,” the former FSB officer's lawyer, Konstantin Yerokhin, told Mediazona.

“We don’t dispute [Meyers’] attempt to travel abroad itself,” he said, noting that his client had received threats before trying to flee Russia.

Under Russian law, current and former FSB employees, public officials with access to state secrets and members of the military are prohibited from foreign travel. The travel ban has expanded significantly following Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

The maximum punishment for leaving Russia as a current or former holder of state secrets is imprisonment for up to three years.

Meyers pleaded guilty and will not appeal the fine, Yerokhin told Mediazona.

The trial was held behind closed doors as it dealt with classified information.

No other details surrounding the case were revealed, with Meyers and Yerokhin both under a binding non-disclosure agreement.

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