

# Russia Prosecuted 5.5K Cases of Military Desertion in 2023 – Mediazona

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## Russian Defense Ministry

A record-setting 5,593 Russian soldiers faced trials in 2023 for desertions and other offenses related to refusal to serve, the independent news website Mediazona [reported](#) Friday.

Russia [passed laws](#) in the fall of 2022 tightening punishments for acts committed during mobilization, including voluntary surrender, conscientious objection and desertion.

Mediazona said Russian courts received 5,024 cases relating to soldiers abandoning their units between the start of 2023 and Friday, Dec. 29. That compares with 1,001 cases received by the courts in 2022 and 615 in 2021, the news site said.

Another 148 cases were lodged for the more serious crime of desertion, six times higher than in 2022.

Authorities registered 421 cases under the more lenient criminal offense of disobeying orders.

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By late 2023, the courts were issuing 500 convictions a month, or more than 100 a week, Mediazona said.

According to Mediazona, 5,006 cases registered after Russia's September 2022 "partial" mobilization concerned the evasion of services.

Mediazona said its analysis of the court verdicts showed the "vast majority" of the soldiers received suspended sentences so they could be sent back to the battlefield.

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