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Putin Allows Officials in Occupied Ukraine to Hide Their Work

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President Vladimir Putin signed a law on Friday allowing executive and law enforcement authorities in the Russian-occupied regions of Ukraine to withhold information about their work from the public.

Russia's Justice Ministry, which drafted the bill, argued that the new restrictions were needed due to "problems with ensuring the security of the activities of state bodies under martial law." Several Kremlin-installed officials and collaborators have been killed or injured since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, including as recently as this week.

Putin declared martial law in the partially occupied Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions of Ukraine in October 2022, shortly after announcing their annexation. That annexation was condemned by Ukraine and its Western allies.

The latest amendments to Russia's 2002 law on martial law allow local executive agencies and organizations to restrict access to information about their activities under a presidential

decree.

Russia’s Supreme Court is in charge of determining whether judicial bodies in the regions under martial law can restrict information about their activities, according to the amendments.

Likewise, federal prosecutors and investigators will have the authority to restrict information about the activities of their branches in regions under martial law.

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