

Russia's Top Islamic Authority Permits Men to Marry Multiple Women

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Women walking along a street in Grozny, Chechnya. **Yelena Afonina / TASS**

Russia's top Islamic authority issued a ruling that allows men to have multiple wives, the state-run news agency RIA Novosti [reported](#) Thursday, citing Moscow's head Mufti.

Mufti Ildar Alyautdinov, who serves as deputy chairman of the Ulama Council of Russia's Spiritual Administration of Muslims, said religious polygyny would be allowed in cases when the "wife is unable to bear children due to her health, due to the end of her reproductive age or other objective reasons, such as the sexual incompatibility of the wife," but also if she "does not want to have children."

Alyautdinov said a husband would need to "provide equal material support to all wives, provide each of them with separate housing" and "spend equal time with all of his spouses."

"If these conditions are not met, then a man is not allowed to enter into a polygamous marriage," the mufti said.

At the same time, Alyautdinov said it would be “unacceptable” for a husband to not inform his wife about other women he has married. “If [the second wife] was not informed [of a prior marriage] and is not ready to put up with it, then she has the right to end the marriage.”

Russian law [prohibits](#) marriage between more than two people.

“The rights of a woman who is only in a religious marriage are not legally secured,” Alyautdinov said. “Our theological ruling will help her take the necessary steps to preserve her rights.”

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