The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Orenburg Becomes Fifth Russian Region to Cut Military Sign-Up Bonus in October

October 28, 2025



Ivan Vysochinsky / TASS

Russia's Orenburg region has slashed one-time enlistment bonuses for men signing military contracts to the minimum legal threshold, becoming the fifth region this month to scale back financial incentives for volunteer soldiers fighting in Ukraine.

The Orenburg region's administration reduced the payout from 2 million rubles ($25,000) to 400,000 rubles ($5,000) effective Tuesday, according to a decree published a day earlier.

The decision reverses a January 2025 increase that had doubled the bonus from 1 million rubles to 2 million rubles, which local officials previously said would remain in place through the end of the year.

The new figure matches the minimum level that President Vladimir Putin recommended that regional governments pay new recruits last year. The federal government typically provides a matching payment.

Orenburg joins the Samara region and the republics of Tatarstan, Chuvashia and Mari El in quietly cutting enlistment bonuses to the 400,000-ruble minimum so far in October.

Related article: Regions Calling: Governments Cut Back on Once-Lucrative Military Enlistment Payments

Other regions like Belgorod, Samara, the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district and the republic of Bashkortostan lowered army contract payments earlier in the year.

While authorities had widely promoted the payment hikes through regional media campaigns, the latest reductions have gone largely unannounced, surfacing only after the decrees were published on official government websites.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, regional governments have offered large enlistment bonuses to attract volunteers amid growing battlefield losses. Several regions have rolled back these benefits as regional budgets came under strain.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/10/28/orenburg-becomes-fifth-russian-region-to-cut-military-sign-up-bonus-in-october-a90967