

Yabloko Candidates Disqualified in St. Petersburg Elections Over Missing Paperwork

By [Mack Tubridy](#)

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yabloko.ru

Nearly half of the candidates nominated by the liberal Yabloko party for St. Petersburg's regional parliamentary elections in September face disqualification after election authorities claimed they failed to submit required paperwork, Russian media reported Tuesday.

The disqualifications are connected to elections for St. Petersburg's 50-seat legislative assembly, which will take place alongside federal parliamentary, regional and municipal votes later this year. The ruling United Russia party currently holds the majority of seats in the assembly.

Members of Yabloko told local media that 11 of their 25 nominees received formal notices claiming their submissions were incomplete.

“The documents are submitted, officially logged and then suddenly disappear,” lawyers representing Yabloko [told](#) the news outlet Fontanka.

Under Russian law, candidates are barred from submitting missing paperwork after the official filing deadline, which Fontanka said expired last week. Earlier, the outlet [reported](#) that election officials have used technicalities to reject “several dozen” prospective candidates from Yabloko and other opposition parties in separate municipal races due to be held in St. Petersburg in September.

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Evidence challenging the official claims has surfaced online. The Telegram news channel Rotonda [shared](#) video of Yabloko candidate Dmitry Khorzov filming himself turning in the exact documents officials later claimed were missing.

The left-leaning A Just Russia party reported similar issues after one of its legislative candidates, Manefa Korolyova, recorded herself submitting her application before being told her file was incomplete.

Representatives for A Just Russia told Fontanka that election officials were performing a “magic act of forgetfulness.”

Korolyova filed a formal complaint with the city election commission, which Rotonda reported denied violating her electoral rights and instead accused her of failing to follow proper submission procedures.

A former Yabloko candidate who ran in St. Petersburg’s 2019 local elections told The Moscow Times that the tactic is a familiar one.

“They told me I submitted someone else’s papers, like, the application packet had a different person’s name on it,” the former candidate, who asked to remain anonymous, said of his own experience with being barred from running on technical grounds.

“I actually had a signed document from the election commission chairman confirming my submission. But no one gave a damn,” he added.

The wave of ballot rejections in St. Petersburg follows the recent convictions of several prospective candidates, including anti-war politician Boris Nadezhdin, for displaying “extremist” symbols. The administrative offense, which carries a maximum punishment of 15 days in jail, appears designed to keep unwanted challengers off the ballots for the September elections.

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