

Former Popcorn Books Publisher Receives Suspended Sentence in LGBTQ+ ‘Extremism’ Trial

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Dmitry Protopopov. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

A Moscow judge [handed down](#) a four-year suspended sentence on Friday to the former head of the independent publishing houses Popcorn Books and Individuum after finding him guilty of LGBTQ+ “extremism.”

Dmitry Protopopov was among three senior managers arrested in May 2025 and charged with “extremism” following a 2023 ruling by Russia’s Supreme Court to outlaw the so-called “international LGBT movement,” thereby making it a criminal offense to publish, sell or distribute literature with LGBTQ+ themes.

Prosecutors [accused](#) Protopopov and his colleagues of devising a scheme that would allow them to sell books with LGBTQ+ themes to “loyal customers” in an effort to avoid writing off 10 million rubles (\$121,700) in losses.

In addition to the suspended sentence, a judge from the Zamoskvoretsky District Court placed Protopopov on probation for five years and banned him from working in publishing or managing websites for four years, granting the prosecution's request in full.

Related article: [CEO of Russia's Largest Book Publisher Detained in LGBTQ+ 'Extremism' Probe](#)

The court also seized 8.7 million rubles (\$106,000) representing Protopopov's total earnings while employed by Eksmo, Russia's largest publishing group. Eksmo acquired majority stakes in Indivuum and its imprint Popcorn Books in 2023.

Protopopov entered into a plea deal and testified against senior executives at Eksmo.

"I want to apologize to anyone who suffered pain as a result of my actions," Protopopov said during his final statement in court.

Former Popcorn Books sales director Pavel Ivanov and warehouse manager Artyom Vakhlyayev both [received](#) four-year suspended sentences in separate trials earlier this summer.

The human rights organization Memorial has [designated](#) Ivanov, Vakhlyayev and Protopopov as political prisoners.

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