

# Officials Claim Stable Health Situation in Irkutsk After Anti-Plague Institute Worker's Death

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The hospital in Shelekhovo, Irkutsk Region. [yandex.ru/maps](https://yandex.ru/maps)

Russian health authorities insist that the health situation in Siberia's Irkutsk region remains stable amid concerns surrounding the death of a lab worker at a local anti-plague facility, state media [reported](#) Sunday.

The female employee of the Irkutsk Anti-Plague Research Institute of Siberia and the Far East was hospitalized last Tuesday with symptoms of severe pneumonia and died on Thursday. On Sunday, a Trump administration official [told](#) Axios that the White House was monitoring reports of a suspected plague case in Russia.

The lab worker was diagnosed with "pneumonia of unknown etiology," according to a Russian consumer safety watchdog Rospotrebnadzor statement cited by the Interfax news agency.

Media reports have described the suspected infection as pneumonic plague, which affects the lungs and can spread between humans through respiratory droplets.

Alexei Tsydenov, head of the neighboring republic of Buryatia, initially claimed the employee had died of the plague, before modifying his statement with the word “maybe.”

Rospotrebnadzor said that laboratory analysis of material from the patient did not reveal any microorganisms associated with her work handling dangerous pathogens.

Earlier reports claimed the lab worker may have broken a test tube containing live bacteria.

According to Interfax, the institute’s special commission and Rospotrebnadzor concluded that no emergency or security breach had occurred. The watchdog noted that no other infectious disease complaints had been registered among institute employees over the preceding 10 days.

**Related article:** [Nearly 200 People Under Observation After Irkutsk Lab Worker Dies From Plague](#)

Rospotrebnadzor said all close contacts were placed under medical observation with daily laboratory testing, which detected two cases of Covid-19 and two cases of rhinovirus, but no other infections.

Irkutsk region Governor Igor Kobzev [said](#) in a video published Monday that family members and close relatives under quarantine could be discharged next week.

Local media [reported](#) that, contrary to earlier reports, area hospitals continued to operate on standard schedules aside from localized precautions.

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