

Justice Ministry Warns NGO Over Foreign Funding

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The  **Moscow Times**

The Justice Ministry has sent a warning to the Saratov branch of the No to Alcoholism and Drug Addiction NGO in connection with new legislation forcing all foreign-funded NGOs engaging in "political activity" to register as "foreign agents."

Even though the new law came into force only late last month, authorities demanded that the NGO account in full for any funds it received from abroad last year, Kommersant reported Thursday.

If the NGO does not comply, the Justice Ministry could close it down for up to six months without a court order and impose prison terms of up to two years on noncompliant NGO staff.

Kommersant said the Justice Ministry first warned the group on July 29, almost four months before the new regulations were in place.

No to Alcoholism and Drug Addiction was established in 1987 with the aim of preventing substance abuse, helping children from troubled backgrounds and fostering civil society in Russia.

Currently, the NGO has more than 60 branches across Russia. According to the organization's [website](#), it works actively with the UN, UNESCO and UNICEF.

Prominent NGOs including the Moscow Helsinki Group, Transparency International and Memorial have refused to register as foreign agents in the wake of the controversial Nov. 21 law, seeking domestic sources of funding instead.

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