

Putin OKs Stiffer Fines for Smoking in Public

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin signed off Monday on the introduction of stiffer penalties for smoking in public, as the government continues in its battle to improve health standards.

The law sets fines of up to 3,000 rubles (\$94) for smoking in public places designated as no smoking areas. The steepest fines are reserved for offenders smoking around playgrounds.

Under the new rules, which are set to come into force Nov. 15, fines for vendors selling goods containing tobacco to minors have also been increased.

Public places affected by the change to the law include government buildings, healthcare and educational facilities, cultural sites and sports stadiums.

A total ban on smoking in restaurants, trains and hotels is set to come into effect next year.

The new law limits how stores can display products that contain tobacco. Sales from retail

kiosks are to be banned from June 2014. Minimum prices will be set for cigarettes, some of which currently sell for as little as 40 rubles per pack.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said in April that the crackdown on smoking in public places could save up to 200,000 lives annually in Russia, which has some of the highest rates of smoking in the world.

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