

# Jailed Anti-War Journalist Ponomarenko Threatens Self-Harm Over Prison Abuse

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Siberian journalist and activist Maria Ponomarenko, imprisoned under Russia's wartime censorship laws, [threatened](#) to cut her wrists in protest against the abuse she says she has endured while incarcerated.

Ponomarenko was [sentenced](#) to six years in prison in February 2023 for spreading "fake news" about Russia's 2022 bombing of a theater in Mariupol, Ukraine — an attack for which Moscow denies responsibility. She is currently serving her sentence at a penal colony in Russia's Altai region.

Last fall, Ponomarenko faced [new charges](#) for allegedly assaulting prison guards, accusations which she denies. During hearings this summer, the journalist [accused](#) prison staff of suffocating her and abusing other inmates.

At a court hearing on Tuesday, Ponomarenko claimed that regional prison authorities were ignoring her complaints and warned she would cut her wrists once she was transferred back

to the penal colony, her employer, the RusNews outlet, reported.

In an audio recording shared by RusNews, Ponomarenko was heard breaking down in tears as she described her treatment. Her next court hearing is scheduled for Tuesday.

Ponomarenko, who was diagnosed with histrionic personality disorder, previously [self-harmed](#) in September 2022 while in pre-trial detention, citing abusive conditions.

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