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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

FEDERAL LAW

**ON ASSEMBLIES, MEETINGS, DEMONSTRATIONS,
MARCHES AND PICKETING**

NO. 54-FZ OF JUNE 19, 2004

OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION*

* Unofficial translation.

FEDERAL LAW**NO. 54-FZ OF JUNE 19, 2004****ON RALLIES, MEETINGS, DEMONSTRATIONS, MARCHES AND PICKETING**

Passed by the State Duma in June 4, 2004

Endorsed by the Federation Council in June 9, 2004

Amended by Federal Law no. 344-FZ of 8 December 2010 "Amending Federal Law no. 54-FZ of 19 June 2004 "On assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and pickets", Adopted by the State Duma on 26 November 2010, Ratified by the Federation Council on 1 December 2010

This federal law is aimed at ensuring realization of the constitutionally mandated right of citizens of the Russian Federation to peaceful assembly without weapons, to hold rallies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing.

Chapter 1. General provisions**Article 1. Legislation of the Russian Federation on assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing**

1. The legislation of the Russian Federation on assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing is based on the provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the commonly recognized principles and norms of international law, international agreements of the Russian Federation and comprises this federal law and other legislative acts of the Russian Federation related to ensuring the right to hold rallies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing. In cases envisaged under this federal law, the regulatory legal acts concerning the provision of conditions for holding rallies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing shall be such as issued by the President of the Russian Federation, the Government of the Russian Federation or such as may be passed and issued by the state power bodies of the Subjects of the Russian Federation.

2. The holding of assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing with a view to election campaigning, agitation related to the issues of a referendum shall be regulated under this federal law and the legislation of the Russian Federation on elections and referenda. The holding of religious rites and ceremonies shall be regulated under Federal law No. 125-FZ of September 26, 1997 On the Freedom of Conscience and On Religious Associations.

Article 2. Basic notions

For purposes of this Federal law the use shall be made of the following basic notions:

1) public event implies an open, peaceful action accessible to everyone that is implemented as an assembly, meeting, demonstration, march or picketing or by using various combinations of those forms that is undertaken at the initiative of citizens of the Russian Federation, political parties, other public or religious associations, including with the use of means of transport. The objective of the public event is to exercise the free expression and shaping of opinions and to put forward demands concerning various issues of political, economic, social and cultural life of the country and also issues of foreign policy;

- 2) assembly implies the coming together of citizens at a place specially allocated or adjusted for the purpose to collectively discuss some socially important issues;
- 3) meeting implies mass gathering of citizens at a certain place to publicly express the public opinion regarding currently important problems mostly of a social and political character;
- 4) demonstration implies an organized public manifestation of public sentiments by a group of citizens carrying, as they go, placards, streamers and other aids of visual campaigning;
- 5) march implies mass passage of citizens along a route specified beforehand with the aim of attracting attention to certain problems;
- 6) picketing implies a form of public expression of opinions carried out without marching and using sound-amplifying technical devices by stationing one or several citizens carrying placards, streamers and other aids of visual campaigning outside an object being picketed;
- 7) notice of holding the public event implies a document by which the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or local self-government body is given information, following the procedure prescribed under this federal law, of the holding of the public event in order to enable them to ensure security and law and order throughout of such public event;
- 8) rules of procedure for holding the public event implies a document containing a timetable (hour-by-hour schedule) of the basic stages of holding the public event specifying persons responsible for implementing each such stage, and, in the event of a public event to be held with the use of means of transport, information on the use of means of transport.
- 9) territories directly adjoining buildings and other objects implies land plots whose boundaries are fixed by decisions of the executive power bodies of the subject of the Russian Federation or local self-government bodies in accordance with statutory legal acts regulating relations in the sphere of land management, land use and urban development.

Article 3. Principles of holding the public event

The public event shall be held proceeding from the following principles:

- 1) legality which implies the observance of the provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, this Federal law, other legislative acts of the Russian Federation;
- 2) voluntary participation in the public event.

Chapter 2. Procedure for organization and holding of a public event

Article 4. Organization of the public event

The organization of the public event shall imply:

- 1) notification of prospective participants in the public event and submission of the notice of holding the public event to a respective executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or local self-government body;
- 2) conducting prior campaigning;
- 3) making and distribution of visual campaigning aids;

4) other actions that do not conflict with the legislation of the Russian Federation that are carried out for the purposes of preparation and holding of the public event.

Article 5. Organization of the public event

1. The organiser of the public event may include one or several citizens of the Russian Federation (organiser of demonstrations, marches and picketing - a citizen of the Russian Federation who is no less than 18 years old, of meetings and rallies - 16 years old), political parties, other public and religious associations, regional affiliations and other structural branches of same that have undertaken an obligation associated with the organization and holding the public event.

2. The following persons may not act as organisers of a public event, viz.:

1) person declared by court to be legally incapable or with limited incapacity and also person kept at places of detention under a court verdict;

2) a political party, other public and religious association, their regional branches and other structural subdivisions whose activity has been either suspended or banned or that have been liquidated according to the procedure established under the law.

3. The organiser of the public event shall have the right:

1) to hold meetings, demonstrations, marches and picketing at places and at hours duly specified in the notice on holding the public event or that have been altered by agreement with the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or body of local self-government, to hold rallies - at a place that has been specially allocated or adjusted for the purpose making it possible to ensure the security of citizens in the process of holding such an assembly;

2) to conduct prior campaigning in support of the goals of the public event through the mass information media by distributing leaflets, making placards, streamers, slogans and in any other forms not conflicting with the legislation of the Russian Federation;

3) to authorize individual participants of the public event to perform managerial functions associated with the organization and holding of the public event;

4) to organize the raising of voluntary donations, signatures under resolutions, demands and other petitions of citizens;

5) to use in holding rallies, meetings, demonstrations and marches sound-amplifying technical devices (audio, video and other equipment) with a level of sound corresponding to the standards and norms established in the Russian Federation.

4. The organiser of the public event shall be obligated:

1) to submit to the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or local self-government body a notice on holding the public event in accordance with the procedure prescribed under Article 7 of this federal law;

2) not later than three days prior to the holding of the public event (except for an assembly and picketing held by a single participant) to notify the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body in writing of accepting (not accepting) its proposal to alter the place and/or time of holding the public event specified in the notice on holding the public event;

- 3) to ensure compliance with the conditions for holding the public event specified in the notice of holding the public event or with those that have been altered as a result of agreement reached with the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body;
- 4) to require that the participants in the public event comply with the public law and order and also with the rules of procedure for holding the public event. Persons who fail to comply with the lawful requirements of the organiser of the public event may be sent away from the place of holding the public event;
- 5) to ensure, within their respective competence, public order and security of citizens when holding the public event and in instances specified under this federal law to perform that obligation jointly with the authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or body of local self-government and the authorized representative of the internal security body, complying in so doing with all their lawful requirements;
- 6) to suspend or terminate the public event in case of perpetration by its participants of any illegal actions;
- 7) to ensure compliance with the norm of the maximum holding capacity of the territory (premises) at the place of holding the public event;
- 8) to provide for the safety of plantations, premises, buildings, structures, installations, equipment, furniture, implements and of other property at the place of holding the public event;
- 9) to bring to the notice of participants in public event the requirements of the authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body regarding suspension or termination of the public event;
- 10) to bear a distinctive sign of the organiser of the public event. An authorized representative shall also carry a distinctive sign.

5. The organiser of the public event shall have no right to hold it when the notice on holding the public event was not filed in due time or no agreement was reached with the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or local self-government body as to the alteration at their motivated proposal of the place and/or time of holding the public event.

Article 6. Participants in public event

1. Citizens, members of political parties, members and participants in other public and religious associations, voluntarily participating therein shall be recognized as participants in a public event.
2. Participants in public event shall have the right:
 - 1) to take part in the discussion and taking decisions, other collective actions in keeping with the goals of the public event;
 - 2) to make use, while holding the public event, of various symbols and other means of public expression of collective or individual opinion and also of the means of campaigning not forbidden under the legislation of the Russian Federation;
 - 3) to pass and forward resolutions, demands and other applications of citizens to the state power bodies and local self-government bodies, public and religious associations, international and other bodies and organizations.

3. When holding the public event its participants shall be obligated:

1) to comply with all legal requirements of the organiser of the public event, persons authorized by him, authorized representative of the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body and officials of the Ministry of the Interior;

2) to observe public order and rules of procedure for holding the public event.

3) to observe requirements for ensuring the safety of transport and the safety of passers-by provided for in federal laws and other legal and regulatory acts if the public event is being held with the use of means of transport.

Article 7. Notice of holding the public event

1. A notice of holding the public event (except for an assembly and picketing held by a single participant) shall be sent by its organiser in writing to the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the body of local self-government within the period not earlier than fifteen and not later than ten days prior to holding of the public event. In the event of a picket by a group of persons, notice of a public event may be submitted no later than three days prior to the holding of that event or, where those days fall on a Sunday and/or a non-working public holiday, no later than four days prior to the holding of that event.

2. The procedure for submitting a notice of holding the public event to the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body shall be subject to a relevant law of the Subject of the Russian Federation.

3. The notice of holding the public event shall indicate:

1) the purpose of the public event;

2) the form of the public event;

3) the place (places) of holding the public event, routes of passage of participants, and, in the event of a public event to be held with the use of means of transport, information on the use of means of transport;

4) date, time of commencement and termination of the public event;

5) expected number of participants in the public event;

6) forms and methods to be used by the organiser of the public event to ensure public order, the organization of medical aid, intention to use sound-amplifying technical devices when holding the public event;

7) family name, first name, patronymic or denomination of the organiser of the public event, data on his residential address or location and telephone number;

8) family name, first name and patronymic of persons authorized by the organiser of the public event to perform managerial functions associated with the organization and holding of the public event;

9) data of submission of the notice on holding the public event.

4. The notice on holding the public event shall, in accordance with the principles set forth under Article 3 of this federal law, be signed by the organiser of the public event and persons duly

authorized by the organiser of the public event to perform managerial functions associated with its organization and holding.

Article 8. Places of holding a public event

1. A public event may be held at any venue suitable for holding the event if its conduct does not create a threat of the collapse of buildings or structures or other threats to the safety of the participants in the public event. Conditions governing bans or restrictions on holding a public event at particular venues may be specified by federal laws.

2. Places where it is prohibited to hold public events shall include:

1) territories directly adjacent to hazardous production facilities and to other projects the operation of which requires compliance with special labour safety rules;

2) viaducts, main railways and railway shelter belts, oil-, gas- and products pipe lines, high voltage transmission lines;

3) territories directly adjacent to residences of the President of the Russian Federation, to buildings accommodating courts, to the territories and buildings of agencies executing penalties in the form of imprisonment;

3.1) The procedure for holding a public event at transport infrastructure sites used for public transport and not included in the places where the holding of a public event is prohibited in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present Article shall be determined by the law of the Russian Federation constituent entity concerned, taking account of the requirements of the present Federal Law and also requirements for ensuring the safety of transport and the safety of passers-by provided for in federal laws and other legal and regulatory acts;

4) the border zone in the absence of a special permission of the border guard bodies duly authorized thereto.

3. The procedure for holding a public event in the territories of objects that are monuments of history and culture shall be such as prescribed by the executive power bodies of a respective subject of the Russian Federation with due regard for the specific features of such objects and the requirements of this federal law.

4. The procedure for holding a public event in the territory of "the Moscow Kremlin" state museum-preserve of history and culture, including Red Square and the Alexander Garden, shall be such as determined by the President of the Russian Federation.

Article 9. Time for holding the public event

The Public event may not commence earlier than 7 a.m. and end later than 11 p.m. of the current day, local time.

Article 10. Prior campaigning

1. The organiser of the public event and other citizens shall, as from the submission of a notice on holding the public event, have the right to freely conduct prior campaigning among citizens, giving them information on the place (places), time, goals of holding the public event and other information connected with the preparation and holding of the public event and also call upon citizens and their associations to take part in the forthcoming public event.

2. The conduct of prior campaigning may include the use of mass information media, oral calls, distribution of leaflets, placards and making announcements, the use of other forms of campaigning not forbidden under the legislation of the Russian Federation.

3. It is impermissible to conduct prior campaigning in forms that may derogate from or abuse human and civil dignity.

4. The prior campaigning may not be conducted in the form of a public event when the procedure for its organization and holding is at variance with the provisions of this federal law.

5. If the organiser of the public event decides not to hold the public event, he shall be obligated to take measures to terminate prior campaigning and advise citizens and the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body to whom the notice on holding the public event was submitted, of the decision that has been taken.

Article 11. Material-technical and organizational support of a public event

1. The material and technical support for holding a public event shall be the responsibility of the organiser of such public event and participants therein which support shall be effected by using their own funds and also funds and assets that may be raised and/or provided to them for holding the public event unless otherwise is established under the acts of the Government of the Russian Federation, the laws of the Subject of the Russian Federation.

2. The powers of participants in the public event carrying out the material and technical support for holding the public event shall be duly certified in writing by the organiser of such event.

Article 12. Obligations of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation and the local self-government body

1. The executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the municipal body, upon receiving notice of the public event, must:

1) acknowledge with documents receipt of the notice on holding the public event by indicating in so doing the date and time of its receipt;

2) inform the organiser of the public event, within three days of receipt of the notice on holding the event (or, if a notice on holding a picket by a group of individuals is submitted within less than five days before its intended date, on the day of its receipt), of a reasoned proposal to alter the venue and/or time of the public event, as well as of any proposal for the organiser of the event to bring the aims, form or other conditions for holding the event as indicated in the notice into line with the requirements of this Federal Law;

3) designate, depending on the form of the public event and the number of participants, an authorised representative to assist the event organisers in conducting the event in accordance with this Federal Law. The authorised representative shall be formally appointed by a written order which must be forwarded to the organiser of the public event in advance [of the event];

4) bring to the notice of the organiser of the public event information on the fixed norm of the maximum holding capacity of the territory (premises) at the place of holding the public event;

5) ensure, within its competence and jointly with the organiser of the public event and the authorised representative of the Ministry of the Interior, public order and safety of citizens while holding the event and, if necessary, provide them with urgent medical aid;

6) provide the state authorities and local self-government bodies concerned with information regarding issues that provoked the holding of the public event;

7) upon receipt of information that the public event is planned to be held at traffic routes and places of permanent or temporary location of facilities under state protection specified under Federal law No. 57-FZ of May 27, 1996 On State Protection, advise respective federal state protection bodies thereabout in a timely fashion.

2. In the event that the information contained in the text of a notice on holding the public event and also other data make it possible to suggest that the goals of the planned public event and the forms of its holding are at variance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and/or defy bans envisaged under the legislation of the Russian Federation on administrative offences or the criminal legislation of the Russian Federation, the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body shall immediately give to the organiser of the public event a motivated caution in writing to the effect that the organiser and also other participants in the public event, given such discordances and/or defiance in holding the public event may be held responsible as appropriate.

Article 13. Rights and obligations of the authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body

1. The authorized representative of the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the body of local self-government shall have the right:

1) to demand that the organiser of the public event observe the procedure for its organization and holding;

2) to take a decision to suspend or terminate public events by a manner and on the grounds envisaged under this Federal Law.

2. The authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body shall be obligated:

1) to attend the public event;

2) to give to the organiser of the public event assistance in its holding;

3) to ensure, jointly with the organiser of the public event and the authorized representative of the internal security body public order and security of citizens and also observance of legality in the process of its holding.

Article 14. Rights and obligations of the authorised representative of the Ministry of the Interior

1. At the suggestion of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body, the chief of the body of the Ministry of the Interior that is servicing the territory (premises) in which it is planned to hold the public event, shall be obligated to appoint an authorized representative of the Ministry of the Interior for purposes of rendering assistance to the organiser of the public event in maintaining public order and security of citizens. The appointment of the representative shall be formalized with an order of the chief of the body of the Ministry of the Interior.

2. The authorized representative of the Ministry of the Interior shall have the right:

1) to demand that the organiser of the public event discontinue the admittance of citizens to the public event and to stop on his own the admittance of citizens thereto in the case of exceeding the norm of the holding capacity of territory (premises);

2) to demand that the organiser of the public event and participants in the public event comply with the procedure for its organization and holding;

3) to send away, at the request of the organiser of the public event, from the place of its holding citizens who fail to obey lawful requirements of the organiser of the public event.

3. The authorised representative of the Ministry of the Interior must:

1) facilitate the conduct of the public event;

2) ensure, jointly with the organiser of the public event and the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the municipal body, public order and safety of citizens and compliance with the law while holding the public event.”

Article 15. Grounds and Procedure For Suspension of a public event

1. When and if, there occurs, during the holding of a public event, through the fault of its participants violation of law and order not entailing a threat to the life and health of its participants, the authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body shall have the right to demand that the organiser of the public event either on his own or jointly with the authorized representative of the internal affairs body make good such violation.

2. In the case of failure to obey the demand to make good a violation mentioned under Part 1 of this Article, the authorized representative of the executive authority of the Subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body shall have the right to suspend the public event for the period fixed by him to make good the detected violation. Upon remedying the violation, the public event may, by agreement between the organiser of the public event and respective authorized representative, be continued.

3. When the violation was not made good upon the expiration of the period fixed by the authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body, the public event shall be terminated according to the procedure envisaged under Article 17 of this federal law.

Article 16. Grounds for termination of a public event

The grounds to terminate the public event shall be as follows:

1) creation of a real threat to the life and health of citizens and also to the property of individuals and legal persons;

2) perpetration by participants in the public event of illegal actions and deliberate violation by the organiser of the public event of the provisions of this federal law concerning the procedure for holding the public event.

Article 17. Procedure for termination of a public event

1. If a decision is taken to terminate the public event, the authorized representative of the executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation or the local self-government body shall:

1) give instructions to the organiser of the public event to terminate the public event, giving him reasons for such termination and formalize within 24 hours the said instructions in writing to deliver them to the organiser of the public event;

2) fix the time limits for compliance with the instructions to terminate the public event;

3) in the case of failure by the organiser of the public event to comply with the instructions to terminate it, he shall address directly the participants of the public event and fix extra time limits for compliance with the instructions to terminate the public event.

2. In the case of non-compliance with the instructions to terminate the public event, officers of the police shall take appropriate measures to terminate the public event, acting, in so doing, in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation.

3. The procedure for termination of the public event provided under Part 1 of this Article shall not be applied in the case of an outbreak of mass disturbances; pogroms, arsons and in other cases calling for emergency action. In those instances the termination of the public event shall be carried out in line with the legislation of the Russian Federation.

4. Failure to obey the lawful requirements of officers of the police or disobedience (resistance) to them by individual participants of the public event shall entail responsibility of those participants as is envisaged under the legislation of the Russian Federation.

Chapter 3. Guarantees of realization by citizens of the right to hold a public event

Article 18. Provision of conditions for holding a public event

1. The organiser of the public event, officials or other individuals may not prevent the participants in the event from expressing their opinion in a manner that does not breach public order or the conditions for holding the public event.

2. The state power bodies or local self-government bodies concerned with the issues that provoked the holding of the public event shall be obligated to consider the said issues on their merits, take relevant decisions regarding those issues according to the procedure established under the legislation of the Russian Federation and notify the organiser of the public event of decisions so taken.

3. The maintenance of public order, regulation of road traffic, sanitary and medical service with the objective of ensuring the holding of the public event shall be carried out on a free basis.

Article 19. Appealing decisions and actions (inaction) infringing upon the right of citizens to hold public event

Decisions and actions (inaction) of the state authorities, local self-government bodies, public associations, officials that infringe upon the right of citizens to hold the public event may be appealed against in court by a procedure prescribed under the legislation of the Russian Federation.

President of the Russian Federation
V. Putin
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