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## **Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Protection of Zabaykalsky Krai found guilty of exceeding official authority**

The evidence collected by the Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee for the Zabaykalsky Krai has been recognized as sufficient by the court to convict Elena Nizhegorodtseva, the Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Protection of Zabaykalsky Krai. She has been found guilty of committing a crime under Part 1 of Article 286 of the Criminal Code of the RF.

The investigation and the court have established that Nizhegorodtseva, acting as Deputy Minister of the regional Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, exceeded her authority in disbursing budget funds intended for the acquisition of residential premises for orphaned children.

In 2021, the Zabaykalsky Krai received a subsidy of over 680 million rubles from the federal budget for purchasing housing for orphaned children, and concluded a number of government contracts for the construction and purchase of housing. By December 2021, more than 500 million rubles had been disbursed.

In December 2021, Nizhegorodtseva, without the authority to conclude agreements on behalf of the government of the Zabaykalsky Krai, illegally instructed her subordinates to prepare a letter to the federal ministries with a request to reduce the amount of funds allocated for these purposes by an amount of 177 million rubles and subsequently sign a corresponding agreement. As a result of her actions, the amount of budget subsidies for purchasing housing for orphaned children in the Zabaykalsky Krai was reduced by the specified amount, which made it impossible to pay for the executed government contracts. With this amount, in 2021, at least 24 residential premises could have been purchased for the needs of orphaned children.

The court sentenced Nizhegorodtseva to 2 years of suspended imprisonment, with a 2-year ban on holding positions in public service related to organizational and administrative powers.

06 June 2024

Page address: <https://en.sledcom.ru/news/item/1890182>

