**From the history of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation**

The Ministry of Justice of the Russian Empire was founded on 8 September 1802 by the Manifesto of [Alexander I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_I_of_Russia) "On the establishment of ministries." The same document provided for the post of the Minister of Justice, who also served as Attorney General of the Russian Empire.

The Ministry of Justice was to prepare legislative acts, establish and abolish courts, appoint and dismiss judicial officials as well as supervise the work of courts and prosecutors.

The first Minister of Justice (1[802](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/1802)—[1803)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/1803_%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4) was the General Prosecutor of the Russian Empire [Gavriil Romanovich Derzhavin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gavriil_Derzhavin).

The Ministry of Justice took an active part in preparing the Judicial Reform 1864, which expanded the powers of the Ministry significantly. The Ministry of Justice managed both prisons and notary offices. It was in charge of the personnel of courts and prosecutors and could appoint and dismiss any investigators or judges of both district and county courts. The Ministry established the institution of Justices of the Peace and that of jurors. It had the power to influence the legal policy of the state.

In 1881, at the request of the Ministry of Justice, public executions were canceled.

In the 19th century, the Ministers of Justice of the Russian Empire were actively engaged in international activities by chairing the International Tribunal. They were also members of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague.

After the [October Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/October_Revolution) of 1917, the Ministry of Justice was transformed into the People's Commissariat of Justice.

According to Decree № 1 "On Court" (1917), the People's Commissariat of Justice was in charge of establishing courts and selecting personnel for them. It also took part in the creation of new legislation. Subsequently, the powers of the People's Commissariat of Justice were radically changed.

In March 1946, the Ministry of Justice of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed. It became one of the most important government offices in the Soviet Union. In 1991, it was dissolved and the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation was founded.

Now the Ministry of Justice of Russia is one of the central government bodies charged with coordinating the activities of the legal and penal system of Russia.

According to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 13 October 2004 (as amended on 23 October 2008), the Ministry of Justice performs law enforcement duties and functions of control and supervision in the areas of executing criminal penalties (by the Federal Penitentiary Service), advocacy, notarial activity, the State registration of civil status, combating corruption (together with the Prosecutor General of Russia), and some others.

The Ministry is headed by the Minister of Justice.