

# [***US soldier arrested in Russia to be detained for 2 months***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BYX-FCY1-DY7V-G00S-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; An American soldier arrested in Russia [*on suspicion of theft*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/05/06/politics/us-soldier-arrested-russia/index.html) will be detained for two months, a Russian district court said Tuesday.

Staff Sgt. Gordon Black will be in detention until July 2, the Pervomaisky District Court of Vladivostok ruled.

Black is accused of "committing secret theft of the property of a citizen T., causing significant damage to the latter," the court statement said, referring to psychological damages.

He was not authorized by the Defense Department to travel to [*Russia*](https://www.cnn.com/world/europe/russia) and did not request official clearance to do so when he left his unit in South Korea nearly a month ago, according to Army spokesperson Cynthia Smith.

Black out-processed from his station at Eighth Army, US Forces Korea on April 10, Smith said, and took leave before he was supposed to move back to the US and be stationed at Fort Cavazos, Texas. Instead, he flew from South Korea through China to Vladivostok, Russia, "for personal reasons," according to Smith.

A Russian Foreign Ministry representative told Russian state media TASS on Tuesday that the case is "not related to ***politics*** or espionage."

"As far as we understand, this is a purely domestic crime. Therefore, the representative office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vladivostok does not closely monitor the fate of an American citizen," the representative office said, according to TASS.

The arrest comes at a time of huge tension between the US and Russia as the [*war with Ukraine*](https://www.cnn.com/world/europe/ukraine) continues. There are a number of Americans being held in Russia, including two who have been declared as wrongfully detained by the US State Department - Wall Street Journal reporter [*Evan Gershkovich*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/29/politics/evan-gershkovich-one-year-russian-detention/index.html) and former Marine [*Paul Whelan*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/21/politics/paul-whelan-russia-prison-camp/index.html).

Black was seen in a previous video saying that he "understand Russia's position," in a question about US-Russian relations. "I think that NATO is pretty aggressive honestly," Black said in the video obtained by Radio Free Europe.

"I understand Russia's position obviously, they want to defend their country," Black added before being interrupted. The video was taken before Black was detained, but it is unclear exactly when.

"I am deeply concerned by reports that a US Army officer has been detained in Russia," House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul said Monday.

Black enlisted in the Army as an infantryman in 2008 and deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan in 2009 and 2013, according to Smith.

"(Russian President Vladimir) Putin has a long history of holding American citizens hostage. A warning to all Americans - as the State Department has said, it is not safe to travel to Russia."

CNN's Oren Liebermann and Kylie Atwood contributed to this report.

By Natasha Bertrand and Caitlin Danaher, CNN

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