

# [***U.S. Soldier Gordon Black Detained In Russia Here s What To Know***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C04-C6S1-JBCM-F01J-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 573 words

**Byline:** Ty Roush, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Russian officials said the soldier s detention allegedly involving a Russian girlfriend has nothing to do with ***politics*** or espionage.

**Body**

**Topline**

A U.S. soldier arrested in Russia on theft charges will be detained for at least two months and could face a five-year sentence if he s found guilty, a Russian district court said Tuesday, amid allegations he stole from a girlfriend after following her from South Korea, where they were involved in a domestic disturbance.

<figure>

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Russian officials said the soldier s detention allegedly involving a Russian girlfriend has nothing to do with ***politics*** or espionage.

NurPhoto via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

The Pervomaisky District Court in Vladivostok said the American soldier Staff Sgt. Gordon Black was arrested last week on criminal misconduct charges and will be held in pre-trial detention until July 2, a court spokespersontoldthe state-run news agency RIA Novosti.

The 34-year-old Black, who is married, is charged with secretly stealing property, which caused the alleged victim significant damage, the court said.

Black whoreportedlyfaces up to five years in prison traveled to Russia to visit a longtime Russian girlfriend who had moved from South Korea after the two were involved in an alleged domestic dispute or altercation, U.S. officialstoldthe Associated Press.

Black did not notify his unit in South Korea he was traveling to Russia and did not receive authorization to go there, and was instead on leave to redeploy back home to Fort Cavazos, Texas, according to the officials.

The alleged victim filed a police report accusing Black of stealing money following an argument, and Black was later arrested at a local hotel after having purchased a plane ticket to return home, Reutersreported.

The Russian Foreign Ministry s office in Vladivostok said Black s arrest has no relation to ***politics*** or espionage, adding a household crime [is suspected] in this case, accordingto the Russian state-run news agency Tass.

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**What To Watch For**

A State Department official toldABC Newsthe U.S. Embassy in Moscow was trying to get in touch with Black, though they have not been allowed to meet with him. The official said it s likely Black s detention will be extended.

**Tangent**

Another U.S. citizen was arrested and detained in Russia earlier on Tuesday, RIA Novostireported. Russell William Nycum was sentenced to 10 days in jail for petty hooliganism, after he allegedly climbed through the windows of a children s library after getting drunk.

**Key Background**

Black is the latest American to be detained in Russia in recent years. Last year, Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich wasdetainedon espionage charges and faces up to 20 years in prison. Former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan wassentencedto 16 years in prison on spying charges by a Moscow court in 2020. Whelan said his trial was a sham and has maintained his innocence, suggesting he was set up after he was given a flash drive containing sensitive information he was unaware of. The U.S. government has defended Whelan and Gershkovich and said both have been wrongfully detained. Brittney Griner spent 10 months in a Russian prison on drug possession and smuggling charges, though the WNBA star wasreturnedto the U.S. in a prisoner swap involving a Russian arms dealer.

**Further Reading**

American Soldier Detained In Russia On Theft Charges(**Forbes**)

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