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Persons with HIV/AIDS were prohibited from working in some areas of medical research and medicine. For example, the Ministry of Transport prohibited HIV-positive persons from working as aviation dispatchers until the Supreme Court lifted the ban on September 10.

In September 2018 as part of broader pension reform, amendments to criminal law were adopted to establish criminal liability for employers who dismiss workers due to approaching pension age.

#### **e. Acceptable Conditions of Work**

The monthly minimum wage increased to the official “subsistence” level on January 1. Some local governments enacted minimum wage rates higher than the national rate.

Nonpayment of wages is a criminal offense and is punishable by fines, compulsory labor, or imprisonment. Federal law provides for administrative fines of employers who fail to pay salaries and sets progressive compensation scales for workers affected by wage arrears. The government did not effectively enforce the law, and nonpayment or late payment of wages remained widespread. According to Rosstat, as of September 1, wage arrears amounted to approximately 2.6 billion rubles (\$40.8 million). As of September 17, the State Unitary Enterprise Chuvashavtotrans had a debt of 39.8 million rubles (\$625,000) for 707 employees, one of the largest wage arrears for a single organization.

The law provides for standard workhours, overtime, and annual leave. The standard workweek may not exceed 40 hours. Employers may not request overtime work from pregnant women, workers younger than age 18, and other categories of employees specified by federal law. Standard annual paid leave is 28 calendar days. Employees who perform work involving harmful or dangerous labor conditions and employees in the Far North regions receive additional annual paid leave. Organizations have discretion to grant additional leave to employees.

The law stipulates that payment for overtime must be at least 150 percent for the first two hours and not less than 200 percent after that. At an employee's request, overtime may be compensated by additional holiday leave. Overtime work may not exceed four hours in a two-day period or 120 hours in a year for each employee.

The law establishes minimum conditions for workplace safety and worker health, but it does not explicitly allow workers to remove themselves from hazardous workplaces without threat to their employment. The law entitles foreigners working to the same rights and protections as citizens.

Occupational safety and health standards were appropriate within the main industries. Government inspectors are responsible for enforcement and generally applied the law in the formal sector. Serious breaches of occupational safety and health provisions are criminal offenses. Experts generally pointed to prevention of these offenses, rather than adequacy of available punishment, as the main challenge to protection of worker rights. The number of labor inspectors was insufficient to enforce the law in all sectors. RosTrud, the agency that enforces the provisions, noted that state labor inspectors needed additional professional training and additional inspectors to enforce consistent compliance.

At the end of 2018, an estimated 14 million persons were informally employed. Employment in the informal sector was concentrated in the southern regions. The largest share of laborers in the informal economy was concentrated in the trade, construction, and agricultural sectors, where workers were more vulnerable to exploitative working conditions. Labor migrants worked in low-quality jobs in construction but also in housing, utilities, agriculture, and retail trade sectors, often informally. Labor law and protections apply to workers in the informal sector.

No national-level information was available on the number of workplace accidents or fatalities during the year. According to Rosstat, in 2018 approximately 25,400 workers were injured in industrial accidents, including 1,140 deaths.