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À PROPOS DE NOUS

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ABOUT US

The **International Journal of Open Governments / Revue Internationale des Gouvernements ouverts (RIGO)** is an academic journal created and edited by Irène Bouhadana and William Gilles at IMODEV, the Institut du monde et du développement pour la bonne gouvernance publique.

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IMODEV is an international, independent, non-profit scientific organization created in 2009 that promotes good public governance in the context of the information and digital society. This network brings together experts and researchers from around the world who, through their work and actions, contribute to a better knowledge and understanding of the digital society at the local, national or international level by analyzing, on the one hand, the actions of public authorities in the context of the regulation of the data society and the digital economy and, on the other hand, the ways in which digital public policies are implemented within public administrations and open governments.

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ADMINISTRATIVE-LEGAL REGULATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AUTHORITIES

by **Nataliya KOVALEVA**, Professor of the Department of Administrative and Municipal Law Saratov State Law Academy, Russia.

Ensuring the right of citizens to access information about the activities of government bodies and the provision of high-quality state and municipal services to the population is impossible without effective information and communication development, as a result of which high-quality and affordable state and municipal services are provided to everyone. Achieving the information openness of authorities is the imperative of development of the informatization and intercommunication in the Russia.¹

One of the most promising areas for ensuring the information openness of government activities is the development and use of global information networks, primarily the Internet. In terms of Internet accessibility, Russia is inferior today not only to developed, but also to many developing countries. This is explained by the preservation of significant informational disparity between different regions, sectors of the economy, educational institutions and citizens. However, the problem is not only that. The idea that the introduction of information and communication technologies in itself improves the quality of public administration and interaction with the population is not quite right, since the main thing in this process is not a technique to access information, but the availability of publicly available information resources.

For this reason, the achievement of information openness of authorities requires, first of all, the intensification of the processes of formation of information resources necessary for society, as well as changes in the norms of legal regulation of information exchange with a clear definition of what information is publicly available and which has restrictions on access.

The available information on the activities of state and municipal bodies, due to the fact that it ensures the personal interests of citizens, allowing them to exercise other rights and freedoms, as well as public participation in public and state affairs, serves as a guarantor of the democratic foundations of society. In addition, this ensures public control over the activities of state and municipal bodies, the transparency of decisions made in the field of economics, ecology and other socially significant areas.

¹ I.L. Bachilo, T.A. Polyakova, A.A. Antopolsky, M.V. Demyanets, A.K. Zharova, V.N. Monakhov, S.I. Semiletov, E.V. Talapina, "On the main directions of development of information law for 2000-2015", *State and law*, 2017. No. 1. pp. 71-79. (Russian).

The objective need of a person for information determines the origin and existence of his right to information. After all, information is an essential element of people's communication, and its quality ensures the achievement of fair conditions for the development of society.

The right to information is one of the subjective rights enshrined in the Declaration of the Rights and Freedoms of Man and Citizen (of), adopted in the Russia on November 22, 1991 and in the Constitution of the Russian Federation (part 4 of article 29).

Freedom to search for information means the ability to appeal to someone (organization, official, etc.) with a request to provide certain information, with the will of the persons, aimed at obtaining it in a legal way. Freedom to receive information means the likelihood of becoming its owner legally. Freedom to transmit and disseminate information indicates the possibility of bringing information to the attention of an unlimited number of persons.

The free search and dissemination of information on the activities of state and municipal bodies in any legal way is also contained in federal legislation.

For example, the media are obliged to provide citizens with timely, reliable information about the activities of government bodies (Authorities are the totality of state and municipal bodies) and their officials. At the same time, the editors of a properly registered media are guaranteed the opportunity to request such information. The guarantor of this right is the duty of the heads of state and municipal bodies, their deputies, press officers or other authorized persons to provide this information, with the exception of restricted access information.

In addition, since January 1, 2010, the norm referring to special federal legislation regulating the problems of access to information on the activities of state and municipal authorities and courts has entered into force, if the provision of information on its activities by state and municipal authorities is not regulated by requests of editors regulations on the media. Reference systems also play an important role in ensuring access to information on the activities of state and municipal bodies².

The current legislation of the Russian Federation also provides for the possibility of citizens applying personally or collectively to state and municipal bodies with statements, complaints and appeals. However, the Federal Law of July 27, 2006 No. 149-ΦЗ "On information, information technologies and protection of information"³ contains a legal definition of the right of access to information³, and there is a contradiction in the definition of this concept in Art. 8 and in paragraph 6 of Art. 2.

² M.V.Korotkova, "Realization of the right of access to information through reference legal systems", *Information law*, 2017, No. 3, pp. 39-43. (Russian).

³ N.O. Travnikov, "The ratio of the right to information with related constitutional rights", *Information law*, 2014, No. 6, pp. 12-16. (Russian).

At the same time V.N. Lopatin stresses that the right of access to information may be part of the right to information, in particular, he draws attention to the apparent contradictions between art. 2 and 8 of the aforementioned Law. If in art. 2 access to information is determined through the concepts of obtaining and using information, then in Art. 8 - search and receive. At the same time, art. 6 and 7, denoting the concept of using information, include only receipt⁴. According to N.N. Fedoseyeva, at the present stage it is more correct to consider the right of access to information of an independent legal category⁵.

V.N. Monkhov justifies the position according to which information rights can be divided into two types: the right to receive and use information and the right to protect it⁶.

According to the results of the nationwide survey of the population, conducted by the Institute for the Development of Freedom of Information, our citizens evaluate the level of the availability of information about government bodies as extremely low. Thus, only 11.1% of respondents believe that this right is fully provided; 61.7% speak about partial satisfaction of this right; 14% of respondents indicate the absence of its implementation. It should be borne in mind that it is awareness that determines how people are able to assess the degree of realization of their rights. Only 55% of respondents believe that the law enshrines the right to information (1,500 people were interviewed during the survey. Of these, 44.8% are men; 55.2% are women; 17.3% are between the ages of 18 and 24; 29.3% are between the ages of 25 and 39 years old, 21.8% are at the age of 40 to 54 years old, 55 years and older - 31.7%. Such a situation practically excludes the possibility of citizens to fully exercise their rights. Obviously, information about the activities of government bodies is regularly used by citizens in their daily lives. However, there are citizens whose professional activities are in one way or another connected with the use of information about the activities of government bodies. According to a study spented by the Institute for the Development of Information Freedom, they constitute 34% of the total number of respondents⁷.

This means that about a third of the adult population of the Russian Federation, with varying degrees of regularity, specifically refer to information about the activities of government bodies and can be categorized as “professional users of the right of access to

⁴ V.N. Lopatin, “Scope of the Federal Law ‘On Information, Information Technologies and Protection of Information’”, *Information Law*, 2006, No. 4, pp. 44-45 (Russian).

⁵ N.N. Fedoseeva, “The right of citizens to access information in the Russian Federation” *Civil Law*, 2007, N°3, pp. 6–11. (Russian).

⁶ V.N. Monkhov, “Problems of legal regulation of access of citizens to official information”, *State information and the democratization of society: proceedings of the International Conference (May 15–16, 2000)*, comp. A.A. Vikulin; Editorial : V.R. Firsov et al. St. Petersburg, 2001. pp. 225–232. (Russian)

⁷ Report on the results of a representative nationwide survey on the website of the Institute for the Development of Information Freedom. URL: www.svobodainfo.org/appeal July 20, 2017 (Russian).

information”. The higher the level of education, the more likely the individual will be in this group. It should be emphasized that officials of state and municipal bodies are active users of information about the activities of government bodies, that is, they not only produce, store, distribute information about the activities of government bodies, but also consume it.

The results of the conducted studies showed that the implementation and protection of the right access to information about the activities of state and municipal authorities in our country is accompanied by considerable problems. Independent regulations on the right to about one hundred states. Thus, as early as in 1776, a law regulating freedom of publications was adopted in Sweden, later (in 1949) it was transformed into a law on freedom of the press; today, this law is included in the Swedish Constitution and ensures the right of citizens to receive free information about authorities. The United States in 1966 also ensure the ability of citizens to receive free information collected by government agencies in the Law on Freedom of Information, with the exception of classified information. In 2001, Japan adopted the Law on Access to Information, which is under the jurisdiction of administrative structures. Although the law establishes an unlimited number of persons who have access to this information, a number of authorities are also designated thereto, to which it does not apply, including the legislative and judicial authorities and other authorities. The United Kingdom in 2000, by the Law on Freedom of Information, enshrined the rights of citizens to receive documents other than those related to the government’s policy.

In Russia, the already mentioned Federal Law of February 9, 2009 No. 8-ФЗ “On ensuring access to information on the activities of state bodies and local self-government” The activity on the formation and use of an information resource is almost always the result of creating new information or compiling old ones with specific goals and objectives, that is, it is a kind of materialization of information in terms of form and substance: in form, because information is being converted into the most convenient to use. form, in essence, since new solutions are formed on the basis of an information resource, which are executed in the form of documents, or the old ones are transformed (change) into a new quality.

In accordance with Specific rules for the provision of certain categories of information on the activities of state and municipal authorities may be established by legislation.

Thus, resolutions of the Government of the Russian Federation, besides containing information of limited access, are published officially within 15 days from the date of adoption, and if necessary, immediately. published no later than 7 days from the date of their signing by the President of the Russian Federation, documents passed by the chambers of the Federal Assembly – within 10 days after their adoption, and the publication of international treaties is

carried out simultaneously with the publication of federal laws on their ratification.

A separate rule exists regarding the publication of a list of public and other associations subject to liquidation or prohibition court. The above list is posted on the websites of the executive bodies, which are registered by public and religious associations, other organizations, as well as in official publications. In addition, information on the activities of state or municipal bodies can be provided free of charge (as a general rule) and on a paid basis to unlimited circle of persons, upon request, etc.

The list of examples of special rules on the provision of information on the activities of government bodies is diverse and covers various aspects of the activities of state and municipal bodies.

In accordance with Art. 71 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, information and communications are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Russian Federation, that is, rules for the circulation of information in civil society are established at the level of federal legislation. However, the subjects of the Russian Federation are given the opportunity to establish the specifics of providing certain types of information on the subjects of their competence. It should be emphasized that personal data held by state and municipal authorities are not subject to the regulation of legislation on access to information on the activities of government bodies.

A number of restrictions related with the publication of information containing personal data⁸, is contained in the Federal Law of July 27, 2006 No. 152-ФЗ “On Personal Data”

In accordance with art. 23, 24, and others of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, a complex of special federal laws has been formed, although it is incomplete⁹ prohibiting disclosure of information constituting a personal secret. At the same time, prohibiting rules on the collection, storage, use and dissemination of information about private life without consent are not absolute and are limited by part 3 of art. 55 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation¹⁰. Thus, information constituting medical confidentiality may be provided to the investigating authorities, prosecutors and judges when conducting an investigation or a trial upon their request without the consent of a citizen. Other persons cannot receive such information without the consent of the citizen. For example, the current legislation of the Russian Federation advocates and deputies are not named among the entities that can be given information constituting medical confidentiality.

⁸ E.K. Volchinskaya, “Place of personal data in the system of information of limited access”, *Pravo. Journal of Higher School of Economics*, 2014, No. 4, pp. 193-207 (Russian).

⁹ G.G. Kamalova, “Biometric personal data: definition and essence”, *Information law*, 2016, No. 3, pp. 8-12 (Russian).

¹⁰ A.A. Antopolsky, “Legal problems of ensuring a balance of interests in regulating relations about confidential information”, *Proceedings of the Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, 2016, № 3 (55), pp. 89-103 (Russian).

The Federal Law of May 2, 2006 No. 59-ΦЗ “On the Procedure for Considering Appeals of Citizens of the Russian Federation” establishes a procedure for the implementation of citizens’ rights appeals to state and municipal bodies, which, in turn, serve as another guarantee of the realization of the right of access to information about the activities of government bodies. In addition, the provision of state and municipal local authorities in other state and municipal bodies information about their activities is governed by federal laws establishing the competence of these bodies, as well as detailed in agreements on information cooperation.

Hence, relations with access to information about the activities of state and municipal bodies are not regulated one law, and a complex of legal acts. In the subjects of the Russian Federation, these relations have additional regulation, carried out by the relevant regulatory acts of the subjects of the Russian Federation. For example, according to Art. 3 of the Law of the Pskov Region of February 12, 2003 No. 242-OZ “On the Procedure for Publication and Entry into Force of the Charter and Laws of the Region, Other Regulatory Acts of the Region” by official publication of the Charter, amendments to the Charter and laws of the Pskov region, other regulatory acts of the Pskov The oblast is considered to publish their texts in the Pskovskaya Pravda newspaper or in the Collection of Pskov Oblast Law. The date of the official publication of the Charter, amendments to the Charter and laws of the Pskov region, other regulatory legal acts of the Pskov region is the date of the first publication of their texts in one of these publications.

According to Art. 2 of the Law of the Saratov region of June 26, 2006 No. 64-ZSO “On the procedure for promulgation and entry into force of legal acts of the bodies of state power of the Saratov region”, the laws of the region adopted by the regional Duma must be promulgated by the Governor of the region within seven days, its turn is obliged to promulgate the Charter (Basic Law) of the Saratov region, the laws of the region or reject it within fourteen calendar days from the moment of receipt of the said Law. In accordance with Art. 6 of this Law, the official publication of the laws of the region, decrees of the regional Duma, which have a normative character, decrees of the Governor of the region and the Government of the region, other documents of the regulatory nature of the regional executive bodies is considered the first publication of their full text in the newspapers “The Week of the Region” “Saatorvskoy regional newspaper ‘or in the’ collection of legislation of the Saratov region.” The laws of the region, decrees of the Governor of the region and the Government of the region are sent for official publication (promulgation) of the Governor of the region. Resolutions of the regional Duma, having a normative character, are sent for official publication by the Chairman of the regional Duma or his deputy. Regulatory legal acts of the executive authorities of the region are sent for official publication by the

heads of the relevant executive authorities of the region, and according to Art. 7 of this Law, laws of the region, decrees of the regional Duma, having a normative character, decrees of the Governor of the region and the Government of the region, other documents of the regulatory nature of the regional executive bodies may be published in other (besides the above) print publications or communicated to the public through technical means (television, radio, communication channels), distributed in a machine-readable form. The laws of the region, decrees of the regional Duma, which have a normative character, decrees of the Governor of the region and the Government of the region, normative legal acts of other executive bodies of the region can also be published as a separate publication.

Consider the administrative and legal regulation of access to information on the activities of municipal bodies, which includes in itself and municipal legal acts.

For example, in the Shushensky district of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, the Regulation on the provision of information on the activities of municipal bodies and officials of local government: approved by the decision of February 27, 2009 № 550-15 / n Shushenskogo District Council of Deputies of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, which regulates the procedure for interaction between the municipal authorities and natural and legal persons in the provision and receipt of information on the activities of the municipal authorities. Article 2 of the Regulations stipulates that information on the activities of municipal bodies should be open and accessible; timely and reliable; free. Its search, receipt and transfer should be carried out on a legal basis. At the same time, the rights and legitimate interests of third parties must be respected in the process of ensuring access to information about the activities of municipal bodies, as well as state and commercial secrets.

We offer to consider the Provision on the official website of the Sovetskaya Gavan Administration, approved by a resolution of the head, as another positive example. of the urban settlement “City of Sovetskaya Gavan” of the Sovetsko-Gavansky municipal district of June 4, 2009 No. 109. According to this Regulation, the official website Administration of Sovetskaya Gavan created for the development of a common information space, information support of the urban local authorities, as well as the implementation of the principles of openness and transparency of their activities. The site is an information resource located in the municipal property of Sovetskaya Gavan.

The principle enshrining the openness of information about the activities of state and municipal bodies is also implemented in a number of federal laws regulating questions of state and municipal service. In turn, open and free access to information about the activities of the Government of the Russian Federation as the highest executive authority in our state is considered in more detail

in the orders and resolutions of the Government of the Russian Federation.

In addition, the Regulations of the Government of the Russian Federation, approved by the decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of June 1, 2004 No. 260, the Office of the Government of the Russian Federation is entrusted with the implementation of measures to provide information about the activities of not only the Government of the Russian Federation, but also other federal executive bodies; timely and regular posting of information in information networks such as the Internet; systematically informing citizens and organizations in other ways.

So, organizing free access to information about the activities of government bodies is an administrative function of the state, however, the Concept of administrative reform states that the executive power system is very closed to citizens and business.

On transparency of activities of authorities of Russia of the 48 States is a 40-th place. International experts show that the effectiveness of public administration and the quality of state and municipal services (and this includes work with personal data and contacts with citizens) is much lower than in developed countries. Monitoring over the state of corruption is also worthy of low marks, and this indicator is associated with abuses in dealing with citizens and legal entities.

Qualitative information is characterized by timeliness, reliability, completeness and availability. The principle of reliability and timeliness is aimed at providing individuals and organizations with quality information.

So, as a result of the lack of necessary and timely information about the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986, enormous damage was inflicted on millions of people. In this regard, in Art. 42 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation establishes the right to reliable information on the state of the environment.

The right to quality information is one of the most important elements of the system of personal rights and freedoms. Providing the public with high-quality information contributes to the understanding of social, economic, political and other problems, and direct participation in solving them.

The state program of the Russian Federation “Information Society (2011-2020)” to ensure proper openness of information about the activities of state and municipal bodies and the availability of state information resource for society suggests to implement the following activities: to formulate requirements and guidelines in the purpose of organizing the provision of public information on the websites of state and municipal authorities; to bring information resources on the websites of state and municipal authorities in accordance with the requirements of the law; regularly monitor the

named compliance; provide methodological support to federal authorities.

However, one of the most serious shortcomings in the administrative and legal regulation of access to information about the activities of government bodies is a large number of people who do not have access to the Internet or are unable to use it. A.A. Zadkov, for example, believes that the provision of information on the activities of the authorities mainly through Internet sites is not a very democratic way of organizing access¹¹. I.V. Ilgova also points to the particular urgency of the problem of information inequality¹². In this regard, talking about a new form of social inequality, which is generated by the lack of access to information technologies for the population, and this, in turn, implies active actions by the authorities aimed at its elimination.

“Digital inequality” is the result of development information and communication technologies division of regions, organizations and citizens into categories depending on the availability of modern means of processing and transmitting information to them, including provision of telephone communications and up to stupa to the Internet.

Although the manifestation of the “digital” stratification of the Russian population can be attempted to be explained by the poverty of its essential mass, world experience indicates a more complex nature of the problem. Attempts to solve it by intensive computerization are unpromising, since it’s not the wealth or poverty of individuals, regions or entire states, but the lack of the need to use digital technologies resulting from the lifestyle and nature of activities of individual groups and social groups, the technological level of economic development social sphere, etc.

Overcoming digital inequality in the areas of power interaction with the population, education, health and culture requires the build and implementation of public policy. It is necessary to take measures to increase the availability of information and communication technologies for the majority of the population based on regular monitoring of the digital stratification. Moreover, it is important to take a comprehensive approach to solving these problems, for example, to create information and communication education systems in large cities where higher education institutions are located is much easier and cheaper than bringing computerization to rural schools. However, having solved the last problem, we solve the problem as a whole. It must be emphasized that the habit and the need to use information technologies must be developed in order for technical means to be used most efficiently.

¹¹ A.A. Zadkov, *The constitutional right to access information in the Russian Federation: dis. ...* Cand. legal sciences. M., 2006; p. 149 (Russian).

¹² E.V. Ilgova, “Organization of centers for access to information about the activities of executive bodies”, A.V. Malko (ed.), *Administrative reform in Russia: federal and regional levels*, Tambov, 2009, pp. 318–341 (Russian).

In general, much has been done at the federal and regional levels to develop basic technological solutions: the Internet portals of the authorities, on the basis of which the Internet is implemented -the interaction of the state and the population. When carrying out this work, it is important not to force the population to communicate with the authorities only through a computer, but, for example, to equip the existing telephone communication systems and transfer them to a new technological basis that ensures the movement of sound files in networks like e-mail, etc., that is create an electronic communication environment, comfortable for citizens. Moreover, the concern for the development and mastering of technological innovations must be shifted from the bulk of the population to the shoulders of the state and the information technology community. To overcome this drawback, it is necessary to ensure that the Russian population can use the Internet both from a financial point of view and from the point of view of ensuring digital literacy. The federal target program “Information Society (2011-2020)”, for example, is designed to increase the effectiveness of state municipal governance, the quality and efficiency of the provision of state and municipal services, reduce the cost of organizing state and municipal government.

As a result In the past, the use of information technologies has effects that increase the quality of life of the population, labor productivity and competitiveness of goods and services produced. In particular: to receive a state service, you can fill in the relevant request form on the Internet site once, and after a set time, the necessary documents will be drawn up and mailed or amended about the person to the relevant database; management or formation of a group of like-minded people in order to implement their initiative, you can simply go to the corresponding website; textbooks and related training materials Aly for schoolchildren can be copied from the regional educational portal to your e-book; tax reports can be sent via the Internet without visiting the tax inspectorate; certain types of professional activity can be carried out from home, logging into the corporate network, concluding an agreement with partners from other regions it will be possible to carry out without a trip, and to certify the documents - with an electronic signature; the train ticket can be selected and paid through the corresponding Internet site, info The controller will have a seat, the passenger only needs to present a passport proving his identity when boarding.

As for the ability of the municipal authorities to post information about themselves on the Internet, it should be noted that not all municipal authorities have the appropriate technical and financial resources. For example, this applies to small municipalities. However, in this case, municipal authorities have the right to place their information on the official website of the relevant subject of the Russian Federation or municipal area.

There is a whole range of legal, organizational and technical issues that make it difficult for rural citizens to organize the provision of state and municipal services in an interactive way. In order to ensure the interactive participation of the rural population in public administration, telecommunications must be located in every rural locality. At the same time, the spread of telecommunications includes not only the telephones in a countryside in full, but also the Internet based on affordable prices. That is, only if these conditions are realized, it is possible for rural residents, pensioners and other categories of citizens who are particularly unfavorable in the direction of digital inequality, to be provided with high-quality state and municipal services in electronic format. Thus, the legal basis of telephones and ruralization of telephones in rural areas are targeted programs. The federal target program “Social development of a countryside until 2012” envisages the implementation of the following activities that would help eliminate digital inequality: create rural information and consulting centers, provide information that will contribute to the development of new business methods and technologies, organize legal, industrial and technical consulting; hold seminars and courses on improving computer literacy. During the implementation of these activities, according to Appendix No. 6 to bath program rural population gets the opportunity of informing, raising the educational level; there is an expansion of the labor market; employment is provided in rural areas. The development of information and consulting services in rural areas provides for the creation of 5,000 jobs.

In addition, departmental target programs help to overcome the information vacuum in a countryside and ensure that rural residents are widely informed about their rights and the ongoing social and economic reforms in the country and in rural areas, which is supposed to be done through: the development in rural areas of information technologies and networks such as the Internet, as well as information and consulting systems *Itatsionnyh* services; development of affordable and high-quality library services in the context of creating information centers based on them; involving the rural population in the design and implementation of local development programs, in interactive planning, continuous and distance education; improving the performance of rural media.

Each subject of the Russian Federation has its own programs for the development of a countryside. Often, the number of telephone sets per 100 people (level of telephone density) is used as an indicator of the availability of information services to the population. Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, the United States, and Germany provide their residents from 60 to 70. In the CIS, the level of telephone density fluctuates around 21.4. Saratov region looks better against this background - the average telephone density is 37.42; At the same time, in such rural areas as

Marksovsky (27.7), Ozinsky (17.7), telephone density is extremely low. At the same time, one hundred percent installation of telephones in a countryside in the Saratov region was supposed to be achieved in 2007, but this has not yet been implemented.

Hence, it follows that the state and municipal information services are largely unavailable to rural residents. Moreover, on the basis of this indicator, it can be concluded that the Internet in a countryside is also underdeveloped, which, in turn, hampers the implementation of information technologies and limits the availability of the electronic state. Thus, the issue of telephone and wiring in a countryside is very urgent and requires a speedy solution.

As an example of a successful solution of this problem, one can cite the experience of a neighboring state with a similar economic, social and technical situation - Kazakhstan, where funds are allocated to compensate for possible losses to telecom operators that provide telephones and Internet services in a countryside.

Telecommunications in a countryside is aimed of improved the quality of life of the rural population, developing new intellectual needs among rural residents on the basis of the emergence of new information services, which, in turn, ensures the adaptation of a villagers to modern living opportunities.

Chuvashia resolves this issue on the basis of providing rural libraries with computers and connecting to the Internet. The result of this process was the emergence of so-called model libraries. These technologies allow, based on automated information processing, to provide any legal information, including documents of municipal bodies. In the cultural institutions of the new generation, people are taught to work on the Internet, look up information in electronic encyclopedias and reference books, use an electronic mailbox, scan the necessary documents¹³.

Another option to speed up the informatization processes in rural areas can be the creation of information and consultation centers on the basis of educational institutions, since As a result of the implementation of the priority national project “Education”, now all schools in the country are connected to Internet.

However, existing rural development programs approach these issues one-sidedly, do not take into account various aspects. For example, the creation of information counseling centers on the basis of rural libraries and schools involves not only providing training in courses for the advanced training of librarians and school teachers, but also financial support for additional work. Only in this case such centers will be able to improve computer literacy in the countryside.

A full-fledged provision of villagers’ participation in public administration is possible on the basis of a special federal targeted program, relevant programs of the subjects of the Federation,

¹³ O.G. Denisova, *New features of libraries*, Library, 2004, No. 2, pp. .34-36. (Russian)

which will be aimed at introducing information technologies into the lives of rural residents. At the same time, these programs will not only provide technical opportunities for the provision of state and municipal electronic services, but also implement organizational measures, educational activities and provide solutions to other related problems. The technologies of public-private partnership will allow more efficiently organizing the financing of these programs¹⁴.

Hence it follows that the state must ensure that individuals and legal entities have free access to information about the activities of government bodies. It is necessary to take into account the constitutional principle of free receipt, distribution and use of information and to ensure the legal equality of all subjects of information interaction.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation and other laws guarantee freedom of access to information for citizens. Unfortunately, the underdevelopment of the information infrastructure and often the high cost of using information networks in remote rural areas, insufficient computer literacy of the population create serious limitations to the realization of this right. Thus, the administrative and legal regulation of access to information about the activities of government bodies includes legal, technological basis of public awareness. First of all, it is necessary to ensure quality standards for providing information by state and municipal bodies, as well as to develop administrative and legal measures to eliminate digital inequality.

¹⁴ N.N. Kovaleva, "Legal regulation of state information services for rural citizens", *Information society and the social state: a collection of scientific works*. M.: IHP RAS, IPO "At the Nikitsky Gate", 2011, pp. 104–112. (Russian).

