Like most major brands and labels, the French luxury house was one of the first to suspend trade relations with Russia. However, Chanel seems to be taking a step even further by refusing to sell its products to Russian buyers outside the country’s borders either, strictly complying with the sanctions imposed by the European Union and other countries.
Some Russian influencers, who were denied purchases from Chanel in several boutiques, particularly in Dubai, protested and publicly displayed their dissatisfaction on social media platforms. When contacted by FashionNetwork.com, Chanel confirmed its stance, explaining that "as an international company, we comply with all laws applicable to our operations and employees worldwide, including laws imposing economic and financial sanctions."

"Chanel is prohibited from doing business with certain individuals and entities designated or listed by these sanctions regimes under the various EU, UK, U.S. and Swiss sanctions against Russia and Belarus," the statement added.

Recent sanctions imposed by the European Union and Switzerland prohibit the "sale, supply, transfer or export, directly or indirectly, of luxury goods to any natural or legal person, entity or body in Russia or for use in Russia," stated the French company, noting that the ban applies to luxury goods "worth more than €300 euros per item."

"For this reason, we have asked customers whose primary residence is unknown to us to confirm that the items they purchase will not be worn in Russia," the company added.

This was met with astonishment among Russian customers. As reported on social media, several Russian influencers, some of whom are loyal customers of the fashion house and regularly attend the fashion shows, were unable to complete their purchases since the salespeople explained how they could not sell them products because they had failed to make a written commitment promising to not wear or endorse Chanel items in Russia.

These incidents, relayed on the internet, caused an outcry among some of the brand's most loyal customers, compelling Chanel to perform a difficult balancing act.

"We are aware that this approach to the law has been misunderstood by some of our customers. We are currently working to improve this approach and we apologize for the misunderstanding this has caused, as respect for all our customers, wherever they come from, is a priority for Chanel," said the group. Will Chanel's firm stance be adopted by other luxury houses? Economically and reputationally speaking, the stakes are certainly high.

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