

# [***Gag order hearing in Trump's hush money case: What to know***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BXW-PDF1-DY7V-G129-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; [*Judge Juan*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/04/15/politics/juan-merchan-judge-nyc/index.html) held another gag order hearing Thursday morning to consider the prosecution's [*four additional allegations*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/04/30/politics/donald-trump-fined-usd9-000-for-violating-gag-order-in-hush-money-case/index.html) against former President Donald Trump in [*the hush money trial*](https://www.cnn.com/politics/live-news/trump-hush-money-trial-05-02-24/index.html).

Prosecutors are asking for a $1,000 maximum fine for each alleged violation, but they told Merchan they are not seeking to put Trump in jail.

Trump earlier this week was fined $9,000 for nine violations of the gag order.

The judge did not immediately issue a ruling Thursday.

Here's what to know:

Prosecutors allege several gag order violations

· **Trump is impacting the fairness of the trial:** "His statements are corrosive to this proceeding and the fair administration of justice," prosecutor Chris Conroy said. "The defendant is doing everything he can to make this case" about ***politics***.

· **Trump is aware of gag order parameters:** Conroy reminded the court that Trump attorney Todd Blanche assured the judge last week that the former president "does, in fact, know what the gag order allows him to do and not allow him to do."

· **No jail request**: Prosecutors told the judge they were not seeking that Trump be incarcerated for the violations.

Trump's defense argues he did not violate gag order

· **Trump needs to defend himself against attacks:** Blanche argued that upcoming witnesses Michael Cohen and Stormy Daniels are "not people who need to be protected."

· **"Daring" Trump to reply:** "Cohen has been inviting and almost daring President Trump to respond to almost everything he's saying," Blanche said. He added that Daniels shouldn't be covered by the gag order either, though he acknowledged that her comments about Trump are not so "voluminous." Merchan reiterated that the order means Trump is "not allowed to refer" to foreseeable witnesses.

· **On comments about David Pecker:** Blanche argued that Trump calling former National Enquirer publisher David Pecker "nice" didn't violate the gag order. "There's no animosity between the two of them. There's no threatening, menacing statements," Blanche said. "It's not about just Mr. Pecker," the judge responded. "It's about what the other witnesses see." He added, "It affects those witnesses as well."

· **Trump speaking to press:** Blanche again argued that Trump can't respond to 24/7 social media posts of everything that's taking place in the courtroom, including their whispered conversations.

Merchan said: "They're not defendants in this case. They're not subject to the gag order. I don't have authority over the press, I don't have authority over most of the people who are saying things." Merchan also said there are no surprises when it comes to the media coverage of this trial, as Trump is a leading presidential candidate.

Judge: 'When in doubt, steer clear'

After a court broke for lunch, Trump's attorney, Susan Necheles, asked Merchan for permission for Trump to post to his Truth Social account. The stack of articles presented referred to the trial and he was concerned because they mention some witnesses and prosecutors.

When Necheles argued there was ambiguity in the gag order, Merchan said he found "nothing wrong" with the order.

"I'm not going to be in the position of looking at posts in advance and determining whether you should or should not post them on Truth Social or your campaign website," Merchan said.

"When in doubt, steer clear," he said.

This story has been updated with additional developments.

By Maureen Chowdhury, Jeremy Herb, Lauren del Valle and Kara Scannell, CNN

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