

# [***Former Trump adviser Peter Navarro sentenced to 4 months in jail for defying congressional subpoena***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B5Y-FH31-DY7V-G001-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Washington (CNN) &#8212; Peter Navarro was sentenced Thursday to four months in jail for contempt of Congress after defying a subpoena related to the congressional investigation into the January 6, 2021, US Capitol attack.

Navarro was [*convicted on two counts of contempt of Congress in September*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/07/politics/peter-navarro-contempt-of-congress-january-6-committee-subpoena/index.html) for not complying with a subpoena from the House select committee that investigated the attack.

The judge overseeing Navarro's case said Thursday that the former Trump adviser's sentence is of his "own making" as he tore into Navarro for claiming that his prosecution was politically motivated.

"I guess what bothers me ultimately is that here we are after a year and a half plus and you still want to suggest to me that this is a political prosecution. You want me to believe this is a political prosecution," US District Judge Amit Mehta said during the sentencing hearing, raising his voice. "When the evidence is completely to the contrary."

"You are not a victim. You are not the object of a political prosecution," the judge said. "These are the circumstances of your own making."

Mehta also fined Navarro $9,500.

Navarro quickly appealed the case on Thursday to the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. His attorneys have long said they plan to file an appeal to raise issues related to his claim that he didn't comply with the subpoena because Trump had invoked executive privilege.

Each count carries a mandatory minimum sentence of one month in prison, but [*prosecutors had asked*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/18/politics/prosecutors-ask-six-months-navarro-defying-congress/index.html) Mehta to sentence Navarro to six months for each count - running concurrently - and fine him $200,000.

They told the judge last week that a sentence of one month apiece for the two counts "is insufficient to account for, punish, and deter the Defendant's criminal offenses," arguing that Navarro's decision to not comply with the subpoenas was akin to the conduct of some of the people who participated in the riot.

"The Defendant, like the rioters at the Capitol, put ***politics***, not country, first, and stonewalled Congress's investigation," prosecutors wrote. "The Defendant chose allegiance to former President Donald Trump over the rule of law."

Navarro's conviction and sentence represents another key victory for the now-disbanded House January 6 committee in its efforts to have the Justice Department criminally pursue individuals who refused to cooperate with its probe.

Former Trump adviser Steve Bannon was convicted in 2022 on two contempt counts and later sentenced to four months in prison. Bannon's case is currently on appeal.

Navarro's attorneys are seeking a sentence of no more than six months of probation for each count, and they asked Mehta last week to pause the sentence he imposes as they appeal the conviction.

A speedy trial

Navarro's trial last September moved quickly, with it taking less than a day for the jury to hear all the evidence in the case.

Prosecutors put just three witnesses on the stand, all former staff members of the House January 6 committee. The Justice Department used its testimony to make the case that the committee had good reason to subpoena Navarro and that he was informed repeatedly of its demands.

Prosecutor Elizabeth Aloi told the jury in closing arguments that Navarro "had knowledge about a plan to delay the activities of Congress on January 6," and that he was "more than happy" to air that knowledge in public remarks, but not to the House committee.

Navarro's attorneys did not put on any witnesses of their own, instead focusing on part of the contempt charge that required a showing that Navarro was willful and deliberate in his decision not to comply with the subpoena - meaning that his lack of compliance was not the result of an inadvertent mistake or accident.

Navarro has insisted that he didn't comply with the subpoena at the direction of Trump, who he claimed invoked executive privilege in the matter. But ahead of trial, Mehta concluded that Navarro had not carried his burden in proving that Trump had formally asserted a privilege or a testimonial immunity that would have allowed his former aide to not even appear to answer the committee's questions.

The former aide has said he plans to raise that issue and others on appeal.

"The appeal of this case will definitely answer what is required of a former President to invoke executive privilege as to their senior advisors and no future advisor will be in the same position of not knowing that the President they served had not properly invoked the privilege," his attorneys wrote in court papers.

The federal appeals court in DC is currently considering Bannon's bid to overturn his own contempt of Congress conviction.

During oral arguments last year, some members of a three-judge panel handling the appeal appeared skeptical of arguments advanced by Bannon's attorney that the trial court judge who oversaw Bannon's criminal case erred when they declined to let him assert executive privilege as part of his defense, and that the ex-adviser was simply acting on the advice of his then-attorney when he didn't comply with the subpoena.

This story and headline have been updated to reflect additional developments.

CNN's Tierney Sneed and Hannah Rabinowitz contributed to this report.

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