

# [***Inside The Courtroom: Donald Trump Lashes Out On Witness Stand***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69K3-W5K1-JBCM-F2F8-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** A play-by-play account of Monday's proceedings in Donald Trump's fraud trial.

**Body**

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Donald Trump is accustomed to speaking with the media. Less familiar: testifying in open court.

(Photo by Pete Marovich/Getty Images)

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Donald Trump testified Monday in a $250 million fraud case that accuses him of lying to financial institutions about his net worth for years. He started out calm, then turned combative, lashing out at the attorney general and even the judge overseeing the case.

**Refresh your browser to follow along with a live account below, which will be updated throughout the day.**

**9:57 a.m.:** Donald Trump is in the courtroom, seated at the defense table, between his lawyers Chris Kise and Alina Habba. Judge Arthur Engoron is here, too, sitting at his perch.

**10:00 a.m.:**  We have a lot of people here and apparently a lot of photographers outside who want to photograph some of you, the judge says.

**10:03 a.m.:**  The people call Donald J. Trump, says an attorney for the State of New York. The former president walks to the stand and puts his right hand in the air. He settles in at his chair on the witness stand. Questioning him: Kevin Wallace of the attorney general s office.

**10:07 a.m.:** They are going over the structure of the Donald J. Trump Revocable Trust, through which the former president owns his assets. Trump says he remains the sole beneficiary of the trust, confirming that the trust is merely a shell entity. Yes, his sons act on his behalf, but there is no question who is the ultimate boss Donald Trump.

**10:08 a.m.:**When asked why he made his very-much-adult son, Don Jr., a trustee of the trust, the former president responds: He s a hardworking boy young man.

**10:13 a.m.:** Trump s voice is muted and measured by his standards. He is still criticizing his legal opponents, but he seems to be intentionally striking a softer tone than he does for the cameras.

**10:17 a.m.:**The former president is offering long-winded answers. The judge seems to be losing patience. I would like to move things along a little faster, he says. Please, just answer the questions no speeches.

**10:22 a.m.:** The attorney general s office pulls up the document below, which is part of the net-worth statement that the Trump Organization helped assemble. It pins the valuations on Trump himself: Donald J. Trump is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. It is this sort of documentation that makes it so difficult for Trump to distance himself from the allegations at the center of this case.

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Screenshot from one of Donald Trump's net-worth statements.

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**10:30 a.m.:**Trump claims that he thought his penthouse was listed with too high of a value on the net-worth statements. I thought the apartment was overvalued when I looked at it, he says. This is not even remotely credible. Let s dig into the numbers a bit.

**10:42 a.m.:**The calculations behind Trump s net-worth statements show a decrease in the penthouse value in 2017. What caused that drop? A change in square footage. The statements had previously listed Donald Trump s penthouse at 30,000 square feet. The Trump Organization then reduced it to 10,996 square feet. Trump has tried to make it seem like he was responsible for that change. Nonsense. The Trump Organization changed the square-footage figure only after**Forbes** published a story titled Donald Trump Has Been Lying About The Size Of His Penthouse.

**10:45 a.m.:** Donald Trump, when trying to pump up his net worth in conversations with**Forbes,** had previously touted the number of square feet at 33,000, an even bigger number than the inflated 30,000 square feet listed on his statements. Make no mistake: The inflated square footage of the penthouse is his lie, not someone else s.

**10:50 a.m.:** Judge Engoron has clearly lost his patience with Trump, as the former president drags out answer after answer. Mr. Kise, the judge says to Trump s lawyer at one point, can you control your client?

**10:55 a.m.:** Trump s lawyers are telling the judge to basically treat Trump like he gets treated in media appearances to sit back and listen to what he has to say, then make of it what he d like. I m not here to hear what he has to say, the judge roars, explaining that he s here to hear his answers to specific questions. Sit down, already, he says to Trump s legal team at one point.

**10:57 a.m.:**That prompts Trump to lash out from the witness stand. He speaks in a neutral tone, but his frustration is unmistakable: This is a very unfair trial very, very, the former president says.

**11:01 a.m.:**Kevin Wallace of the attorney general s office says he would like to take a brief break and asks Trump s lawyer, Chris Kise, to please speak with his client.

**11:09 a.m.:**The sparring that we are seeing between Trump and the judge was entirely predictable. Engoron has been adamant throughout this case that witnesses answer yes-or-no questions with yes-or-no answers. Trump, a master of giving rambling and often interesting responses in media interviews, is not accustomed to answering questions with a simple yes or no.

**11:14 a.m.:** All rise! Court is back in session. Everyone sits down but Trump, who strolls to the witness stand.

**11:17 a.m.:**The state is questioning Trump about Seven Springs, a mansion in New York that was one of the most egregiously inflated assets on his net-worth statements. Even Trump admits it wasn t worth the $291 million listed on the documents. I thought it was high, he concedes.

**11:20 a.m.:** Kevin Wallace of the attorney general s office turns to two office towers, 1290 Avenue of the Americas and 555 California Street, in which Trump owns a 30% interest. Trump continues to give meandering responses when Wallace asks whether he controls the partnership. Well, in many ways it s better, Trump begins, before saying that his minority interest limits his liability exposure. He does not answer the original question until Wallace asks again. This sort of thing is happening over and over.

**11:32 a.m.:**Trump appears to be lying on the witness stand. The attorney general s office is asking once more about his penthouse. The former president is again trying to pin the incorrect square footage figure on others. He says he missed the error because the square-footage figure was not listed on his final net-worth statement, only on the backup documents that show the calculation of those numbers. He fails to mention that he, personally, was pushing an even higher number (33,000 square feet) than what was listed on the backup documents (30,000 square feet).

**11:43 a.m.:**The attorney general s office asks Trump how big his apartment is. The true number is 10,996 square feet, as Trump should know, given that he lived in the place for decades and signed documentation with that number. Even after Trump was caught lying about the size of the penthouse and even though he is under oath on the witness stand he can t stop exaggerating. They say, 11 to 12, 13,000 feet, the former president says.

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Screenshot of a property record, signed by Donald Trump, showing the true size of his penthouse is 10,996 square feet.

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**11:45 a.m.:**The attorney general s office is asking Trump about Mar-a-Lago, his Palm Beach estate. Trump has claimed that the place is worth $1.5 billion, which is nonsense.**Forbes** most recently valued itat $292 million after subtracting liabilities.

**11:53 a.m.:** Trump has go-to lines that he likes to use when referring to certain assets. Wallace has turned his attention to a golf resort in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. When asked about this property, Trump loves to talk about how it s in the oil capital of Europe. But those go-to lines don t necessarily play well in court, especially when they don t have much to do with the questions at hand. Irrelevant, irrelevant, the judge interrupts.

**12:00 p.m.:** When asked specific zoning questions, Trump rambles. It may the greatest golf course ever built, he says. The judge cuts in, making it clear that he has less patience for this sort of response than the attorney general s office seems to have. If you want to let the witness ramble on, be unresponsive, repeat himself, go ahead, the judge says. Trump leans back, crosses his hands and shakes his head.

**12:09 p.m.:** The audience watching the proceedings on screens in the spillover room is actively laughing at Trump as he testifies, especially when he starts railing against the attorney general s office and the presiding judge. In one case, Trump seems to go after the attorney general personally, saying he is under attack because of ***politics***. In her case, definitely for political reasons, Trump says.

**12:13 p.m.:**Trump lashes out. The attorney general s office asks if he agrees that the values in the net-worth statement were overstated. I think she s a political hack, he says, referring to the attorney general. I think she used this case to try to become governor. He sounds like he s tweeting. This is the opposite of fraud, Trump declares. The fraud is her.

**12:15 p.m.:**Trump s measured tone, which he carried onto the witness stand, is now completely gone. You knew nothing about me! he yells at the judge. You believed this political hack back there, he says, referring to the attorney general.

**12:19 p.m.:** Ever the showman, Trump pulls out a prop that he brought with him onto the witness stand. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out the disclaimer clause at the beginning of his net-worth statement.

**12:25 p.m.:** Kevin Wallace turns toward 40 Wall Street, an office tower in Lower Manhattan. Wallace asks if Trump ever inflated the net operating income at the property. Not that I know of, Trump says. But he has. The attorney generalsoffice brings upthis story, which . The article is up on the screen, and the attorney general s office is hammering Trump on lies that the story exposed.

**12:38 p.m.:** This has nothing to do with values, Trump bluffs, responding to questions about the profitability of 40 Wall Street. He previously lied about profits in an attempt to pump up the value of that very property.

**2:13 p.m.:**The court room refills after a lunch recess. Trump walks in with his legal team, striding past the attorney general, who is watching from the first row, where she normally sits. The former president grabs a chair at the defense table, and attorney Chris Kise settles in next to him. Court should be back in session soon.

**2:27 p.m.:** State attorney Kevin Wallace is digging into personal-guarantee documents that Trump signed in connection with a loan he took out against Trump National Doral, a golf resort in Miami. As part of the guarantee, Trump promised to maintain a net worth of $2.5 billion. That s a big number, one that exceeded Trump s net worth during the pandemic. In March 2020,**Forbes**estimated that the former president was worth $2.1 billion. A year later, he was worth an estimated $2.4 billion. Trump refinanced this particular loan the following year, in 2022.

**2:30 p.m.:** Wallace has moved to two other properties, the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C. and the Trump International Hotel & Tower in Chicago. Deutsche Bank loaned Trump money against both of those properties, as well as the golf resort in Miami.

**2:38 p.m.:** The attorney general s office breaks some news in his questioning, suggesting that the loan against Trump s Chicago property was paid off last week. I had heard that it was, yes, Trump confirms. This was the last Deutsche Bank loan left in Trump s portfolio. Trump had previously paid off the loan in D.C. when he sold the hotel, and he refinanced the one in Miami in 2022. The timing of this Chicago payoff is striking, apparently coming in the middle of a massive fraud case involving Deutsche Bank.

**2:41 p.m.:** The lending documents contain similar language. Guarantor, reads one line, for instance, referring to the former president, has furnished to lender his prior financial statements. Such prior financial statements are true and correct in all material respects. This is a problem for Trump, since his net-worth statements were not correct.

**2:49 p.m.:**Trump seems more relaxed this afternoon. He is looking through various lending documents, without lambasting the judge or the attorney general. But that doesn t mean he is being honest on the stand. The numbers of my net worth are substantially more than the numbers reflected on the financial statements, he claims, falsely.

**2:52 p.m.:** Kevin Wallace of the attorney general s office asks Trump who was responsible for making sure the Trump Organization maintained complete and accurate books. Trump says it was former Chief Financial Officer Allen Weisselberg and longtime Controller Jeff McConney. And the accounting firm, Trump adds, who I paid a lot of money to.

**3:06 p.m.:** Wallace shows an email that lists distribution amounts related to the sale of the Washington, D.C. hotel. It appears to show $127 million that went to the former president and $4 million to each of his three eldest children, Don Jr., Ivanka and Eric Trump. The former president says that the actual distribution numbers were something above that but around that.

**3:14 p.m.:** Trump makes it clear that he still holds in high regard Allen Weisselberg, his longtime chief financial officer who was convicted of financial crimes and sent to prison. It was a sad, very sad thing, Trump says. People went after him viciously and violently because he happened to work for me. Then he adds, He did a good job for me.

**3:19 p.m.:**  Nothing further at this time, says Kevin Wallace. Trump steps down from the witness stand. There is no cross-examination of the former president. There will be no more witnesses today. The only additional witness we have, your honor, says Wallace, is Ivanka Trump, who is appearing on Wednesday.

**Load-Date:** November 8, 2023

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