

# [***Could Trump Be Pardoned? Some 2024 Rivals Open To It But Still Unclear If He Can Pardon Himself***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68G5-XVD1-DXVP-51Y8-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 1160 words

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**Highlight:** Trump claimed as president he had the absolute right to pardon myself, and some of his rivals say they re inclined to help him if they win.

**Body**

**Topline**

Former President Donald Trump has been indicted on 37 federal charges, which could result in prison time if he s convicted and his rivals in the 2024 Republican primary are already starting to speculate on whether they could grant him a pardon if he s convicted, though Trump could face legal issues if he ends up back in the White House and tries to pardon himself.

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Former President Donald Trump speaks at the Trump National Golf Club on June 13 in Bedminster, New Jersey.

Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

**Ron DeSantis:**The Florida governor hasn t said specifically whether he would pardon Trump based on the charges he faces, but DeSantis said after joining the 2024 race before Trump s indictment that he would be aggressive in issuing pardons, and, when asked if pardons could include Trump,saidanyone who s the victim of disfavored treatment based on ***politics*** or weaponization from the Justice Department would be considered for a pardon, no matter how small or how big.

**Mike Pence:** Trump s former vice president has said he s not going to speak to hypotheticals about pardoning Trump, and told thethat while the allegations against Trump are serious and he can t defend them, it s hard for me to believe that ***politics*** didn t play some role in this decision.

**Nikki Haley:**Trump s former United Nations ambassadorsaidTuesday that Trump s alleged actions were reckless and put all of our military men and women in danger, but told conservative radio hosts that she would be inclined in favor of a pardon, arguing that with a pardon, the issue is less about guilt and more about what s good for the country.

**Chris Christie:**The former New Jersey governorsaidprior to Trump s indictment that he can t completely answer whether he would pardon Trump, but he can t imagine pardoning anyone who had a full and fair trial, especially someone in public life, and Christie has more recentlycalledthe indictment against Trump devastating and damning.

**Tim Scott:**The South Carolina senator hasrefusedto speculate on whether he would pardon Trump, but called Trump s indictment a serious case with serious allegations in a campaign appearance Monday, though he also criticized the DOJ for purportedly targeting and hunting Republicans.

**Vivek Ramaswamy:**Entrepreneur Ramaswamy has led the charge among 2024 candidates for Trump to be pardoned,sayinghe would pardon Trump if elected and calling on every other candidate to commit to pardoning Trump, or explain why they wouldn t.

**Asa Hutchinson:**The Arkansas governor hascriticizedRamaswamy s calls for Trump to be pardoned, saying it would be offensive for candidates to use the pardon power in order to curry votes, and has condemned Trump over the allegations against him, calling for him to drop out of the race for the good of the country.

**Larry Elder:**Conservative talk show host Elder hassaidhe would be very likely to pardon Trump if his long-shot candidacy succeeds.

**What We Don t Know**

Being indicted or even convicted of a crimewouldn t stopTrump from being elected in 2024, and it remains to be seen if Trump would get away with pardoning himself if he wins. The DOJ issued alegal opinionduring the Nixon Administration that said presidents can t pardon themselves, after President Richard Nixon considered doing so, and legal expertssaidduring Trump s first term it s unlikely he d be able to pardon himself, as he reportedly considered doing. That doesn t mean Trump wouldn t try to challenge that precedent, given that heinsistedin 2018 he had the absolute right to pardon myself. If Trump does try to pardon himself, the issue is likely to play out in court and go to the Supreme Court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority including three Trump appointees. The court that we have right now is one that I think is very receptive to the prospect of broad presidential power, New York University law professor Melissa Murray toldMSNBC.

**Tangent**

Another route that Trump and his legal team could take in the case is to try and draw out the case as long as possible, so that a trial would be after the 2024 election. If Trump were to win, that would mean the DOJ he controls could then simply drop the charges against him without the need for a pardon. While prosecutors have noted the Southern District of Florida, where Trump was charged, is known for bringing speedy trials, Trump could behelpedby U.S. District JudgeAileen Cannon, the Trump appointee overseeing the case who will determine the timeline for it to move forward.

**What To Watch For**

How the indictment will affect Trump in the election. Early polling suggests the charges haven t hurt Trump with his GOP base: Morning Consult s polling showed aslight bumpin his support among Republican voters, going up from 55% to 59%, and a Reuters/Ipsospollfound 81% of Republicans believe the charges against him are politically motivated. Polling hassuggestedIndependents and Americans overall are less inclined to support Trump if he s convicted, however only 23% of Yahoo/YouGov respondents said in a May poll he should be allowed to serve as president if he s convicted of a serious crime suggesting the ex-president could face issues in a general election. Republican operatives cited byNBC NewsWednesday have also expressed concern about the charges against Trump and the impact they could have on the GOP s 2024 chances. At this point, where we are is Who s going to be the nominee? a GOP operative linked to DeSantis told NBC. Donald Trump broke the law, and frankly, I m not a never-Trumper. But this is too much.

**Key Background**

Trump was indicted last week andpleaded not guiltyTuesday to 37federal chargesstemming from him keeping White House documents at Mar-A-Lago after leaving office, including 31 counts alleging violations of the Espionage Act along with obstruction and making false statements. Trump allegedly kept classified documents related to national security at Mar-A-Lago even storing them in his bathroom the indictment alleges, and when federal agents issued a subpoena for all remaining classified documents, Trump allegedly intentionally concealed them and did not turn them over. Trump faces potentially decades in prison if found guilty, based on the statutes he s been charged under. The ex-president has repeatedly denied the charges against him,sayingTuesday after being arraigned that the indictment was the most evil and heinous abuse of power in the history of our country. He hasinsistedthe charges will not have an impact on his 2024 campaign and that he will never yield and never be deterred.

**Further Reading**

Trump Arrest: Trump Departs Courthouse After Pleading Not Guilty To 37 Federal Charges In Classified Docs Case(Forbes)

What Crimes Was Trump Charged With In Federal Documents Case? Here s What To Know As He Pleads Not Guilty(Forbes)

Trump Indictment: Why A Conviction Or Imprisonment Wouldn t Prevent Him From Being President(Forbes)

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