

# [***How Donald Trump's Court Confinement Is Hurting His Campaign***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BWK-S7N1-JBR6-9536-00000-00&context=1516831)

Newsweek.com

April 26, 2024 Friday 11:25 AM EST

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**Length:** 784 words

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**Highlight:** Experts told Newsweek that having to attend court will hamper the Republican's ability to hit the campaign trail.

**Body**

Donald Trump's ability to campaign ahead of the presidential election is being stalled by one key issue: his court appearances.

The presumptive [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) nominee for the 2024 election's legal requirement as a criminal defendant to attend his New York hush money case for four days a week is affecting his ability to tour the country and make a case for a second term, experts told *Newsweek*.

The former president's high-profile criminal trial entered its second week on Monday. Trump is accused by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg of falsifying business documents to allegedly make hush money payments to adult film actor [*Stormy Daniels*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/stormy-daniels?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) ahead of the 2016 presidential election. Daniels has alleged that she and Trump had an affair.

Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee for the 2024 election, has denied the affair with Daniels and pleaded not guilty to all 34 charges against him in the case.

Speaking to *Newsweek*, experts outlined how weeks in court will affect the presumptive Republican nominee in the elections.

Thomas Whalen, an associate professor who teaches U.S. ***politics*** at Boston University, called the court appearances "a major disaster" for Trump's campaign.

"A general can't lead from the rear-and neither can presidential candidates," he told *Newsweek*. "By spending the bulk of his time in a courtroom, Trump is neglecting his political garden. This is a major disaster for the Trump campaign, plain and simple."

This month, Democratic presidential candidate [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s campaign told [*NBC*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/nbc?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) News it hired 300 staffers across nine states and 100 offices in parts of the country that will influence the election. Trump, on the other hand, did not disclose [*campaign staffing levels*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-campaign-spam-emails-presidential-election-1893591?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

Biden has also fundraised more than double the amount of Trump, who has amassed substantial legal bills from his numerous cases.

Trump canceled a rally planned for last Saturday in Wilmington, North Carolina, due to a rainstorm.

However, as well as through rallies, presidential candidates can also campaign in other ways, including via marketing and social media. Given his trials have garnered a lot of press coverage, Trump's profile is also being raised by the media.

"This is truly unchartered territory for any candidate for the presidency," Heath Brown, an associate professor of public policy at City University of New York, said.

"However, while some may make the case that any attention is good attention for a candidate, I can't imagine a campaign aide believing former President Trump's ongoing legal troubles are a good thing for his chances. Anything that takes a candidate's focus and resources away from campaigning is a bad thing for their campaign."

A spokesperson for Trump told *Newsweek*: "President Trump just did a campaign event this morning [Thursday]. Yesterday we announced two rallies for next week. And there will be a rally the week after. Biden's actual campaign schedule can't match up with that."

Trump's hush money case is not his only legal obligation. The former president is [*facing three other criminal indictments*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-indictment-georgia-election-fani-willis-1819577?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)—two concerning his alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election, and one concerning the manner in which he retained classified documents after leaving the White House.

On Thursday, the [*Supreme Court*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/supreme-court?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) heard arguments for and against Trump's motion that he [*has absolute immunity from prosecution*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-rages-presidential-immunity-supreme-court-hearing-1892526?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) in the Washington, D.C., election interference indictment brought by Special Counsel [*Jack Smith*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/jack-smith?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

Meanwhile, Merchan imposed a gag order on Trump in March, which prohibits the Republican from making public comments about prosecutors, witnesses, or jurors in the case or their families in the high-profile case. It was expanded in April to include prohibitions on Trump making statements about Merchan's family and Bragg.

Merchan has scheduled a hearing over claims that [*Trump's social media posts*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-social-media-stormy-daniels-trial-hush-money-case-juan-merchan-1892132?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) linking to articles that attacked his former lawyer, [*Michael Cohen*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/michael-cohen?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), or claimed that "undercover liberal activists" are lying to the judge to get on the jury were a violation of the gag order.

The hearing, scheduled for May 1, is on the same day that Trump had arranged rallies in Wisconsin and Michigan.

"These legal obligations disrupt his ability to campaign, as he has said numerous times publicly, draw on his energy and distract his attention and require large sums of money in legal fees that could otherwise be used for campaign activities," Todd Landman, a professor of political science at the School of ***Politics*** and International Relations at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom, told *Newsweek*.

Trump's hush money trial is expected to last for around six weeks. Until then, Trump's in-person campaigning will remain challenging.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2384186/donald-trump.jpg)

**Graphic**

Donald Trump

Photo by Jefferson Siegel-Pool/Getty Images

Former U.S. President Donald Trump appears in court during his trial for allegedly covering up hush money payments at Manhattan Criminal Court on April 25, 2024 in New York City. Experts told Newsweek that having to attend court will hamper the Republican's ability to hit the campaign trail.

**Load-Date:** April 26, 2024

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