

# [***Donald Trump Might Need to Sell Assets to Cover Legal Costs***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BBN-0HW1-DY68-10KW-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Kate Plummer

**Highlight:** The damages that the former president might face in his civil fraud trial could lead him to sell assets.

**Body**

To cover the damages that could be awarded in his civil fraud trial, former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) may be forced to sell his assets, according to experts.

Judge [*Arthur Engoron*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/arthur-engoron?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is expected to issue a final ruling in the Republican's civil fraud case this week. In September, he issued a partial summary judgment in the case, [*brought by New York Attorney General Letitia James,*](https://www.newsweek.com/trump-storms-out-civil-fraud-trial-courtroom-1837983?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and ruled that Trump and top executives at The Trump Organization committed fraud. He held that the Republican grossly inflated the value of his assets to obtain more favorable terms from lenders and insurers. *Newsweek* contacted a Trump representative by email to comment on this story.

Engoron will decide how much the frontrunner for the GOP presidential nomination will pay in damages, as well as [*rule on six other accusations*](https://www.newsweek.com/judge-engoron-explains-dollar-amount-behind-trumps-gag-order-fine-1836651?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), including falsifying business records, insurance fraud and conspiracy claims. Trump has denied any wrongdoing and has said the cases are part of a political witch hunt to derail his bid for another term in the White House.

The lawsuit initially sought $250 million in damages, but James increased it to $370 million, plus interest. New York State mandates a 9 percent interest rate on the sum of damages, meaning the potential $370 million payment could be substantially higher, depending on whether the payment is backdated to when James started her investigation in 2018.

If these damages are awarded, Trump could be forced to sell assets. While his [*net worth*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-net-worth-civil-fraud-ruling-1870218?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is not publicly known, in a deposition last year, he described his stockpile of cash as being substantially in excess of $400 million. Meanwhile, the [*Bloomberg*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/bloomberg?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Billionaires Index placed his liquid assets at about $600 million and said he has a net worth of $3.1 billion. *Forbes* reported that Trump's net worth stood at about $2.6 billion as of September and said it was mostly tied up in real estate.

Speaking to the [*BBC*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-68175846), William Thomas, a professor at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business, said: "Something is going to have to be sold or realized in order to get the money to pay for that kind of cost."

Meanwhile, in October, speaking to [*Jen Psaki*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/jen-psaki?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) on [*MSNBC*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/msnbc?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s *Inside With Jen Psaki,* George Conway, a prominent critic of the former president, said Trump will have to [*"liquidate everything,"*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-civil-fraud-trial-assets-george-conway-msnbc-1839383?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) including his prized Florida resort Mar-a-Lago, if he were found to have committed fraud. Conway said the damage payments would be a death blow to Trump's businesses.

Richard Bensel, a professor of American ***politics*** at Cornell University in New York, previously told *Newsweek* that, if Trump has to sell his New York holdings, it will be a significant loss but won't seriously impair his financial situation.

However, Dr. Alex Connock, senior fellow at the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School in the U.K., said Trump has a resilient brand.

"The brand he values so highly has survived a tsunami of legal action in a way that almost no other brand could," Connock told *Newsweek*. "Right now, for instance, with legal cases that represent a theoretically possible jeopardy of 717.5 years in jail, Trump appears also to be polling as the most popular politician in America."

Connock added: "Operationally, the court actions may constrain his budget. Legally, the cases may or may not be strong. But whether we like it or not, it's hard to see any current evidence that, for his core constituency, any of this is damaging the Trump brand. That brand, not money in the bank, is his real electoral asset."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2349999/donald-trump.jpg)

**Graphic**

Donald Trump

Photo by Steven Hirsch-Pool/Getty Images

Former U.S. President Donald Trump attends a pre-trial hearing at Manhattan Criminal Court on February 15, 2024 in New York City. The damages the former president might face in his civil fraud trial could lead him to sell assets.

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