

Michael Cohen Sues Trump and U.S. Government For Damages Following Return to Prison



Michael Cohen, a former lawyer and fixer for Donald Trump, has filed an appeal with the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan to revive his lawsuit against Trump and other government officials. Cohen is seeking damages for being sent back to prison in retaliation for publishing a tell-all memoir criticizing Trump. Lawyers for Cohen argue that the judiciary has a responsibility to remediate the harm done by Trump and his subordinates.

In a filing with the court, Cohen's lawyers stated that Trump "wielded his power to have one of his critics silenced, thrown back into prison, and kept in conditions dangerous to his health." They argue that when such a "grievous injury is done to a citizen's rights and the nation's rule of law, there must be a remedy." Cohen is appealing U.S. District Judge Lewis Liman's dismissal of his lawsuit in November.

Liman had dismissed the lawsuit, stating that while his decision did "violence" to Cohen's constitutional rights, Cohen was not entitled to damages under U.S. Supreme Court precedent. Alina Habba, a lawyer for Trump, has called Cohen's case "meritless."

Cohen was sentenced to three years in prison in 2018 after pleading guilty to campaign finance violations and other crimes. He was released in May 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, he was thrown back in prison two months after questioning an agreement that barred the book's publication, communicating with the media and social media. Another judge ordered Cohen's release 16 days later, finding he had been targeted with retaliation.

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Cohen's memoir, "Disloyal: A Memoir," topped the New York Times hardcover nonfiction best-seller list in September 2020. Former U.S. Attorney General William Barr and various prison officials are also defendants in Cohen's lawsuit. A spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan, which represented the other defendants, declined to comment.

Cohen is a central witness in Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's criminal case against Trump over a \$130,000 hush money payment to silence porn star Stormy Daniels before the 2016 election about her alleged sexual encounter with Trump. Trump has pleaded not guilty to 34 felony counts and has denied the encounter with Daniels ever happened.

In addition to the lawsuit against Cohen, Trump is also suing Cohen for \$500 million in damages in federal court in Miami. Trump accuses Cohen of "spreading falsehoods" and failing to keep attorney-client communications confidential.

The outcome of Cohen's appeal remains to be seen, but it is clear that his lawsuit is part of a larger legal battle between him and Trump. As the former president faces a criminal case in Manhattan, his former lawyer and fixer is seeking damages for being sent back to prison in retaliation for publishing a tell-all memoir. The case raises important questions about the extent to which a president can use their power to silence their critics and retaliate against those who speak out against them.