

Georgia court sets bond and restrictive release terms for Trump

Patrick Martin
21 August 2023

Ex-president Donald Trump agreed Monday to post a \$200,000 bond and observe restrictive conditions on his public statements and communications about the criminal case stemming from his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in the state of Georgia.

Trump faces 13 felony counts, including racketeering, criminal conspiracy, criminal solicitation, filing false documents and making false statements.

Three Trump lawyers met with officials of the Fulton County district attorney's office later Monday, to discuss the circumstances of his booking on the charges, which is now expected to take place on Thursday. District Attorney Fani Willis has set a Friday noon deadline for each of the 19 people indicted in the case to post bond and turn themselves in.

Trump himself announced the Thursday booking, in a posting Monday night on his social media platform, Truth Social. "Can you believe it? I'll be going to Atlanta, Georgia, on Thursday to be ARRESTED by a Radical Left District Attorney, Fani Willis," he wrote.

The booking will take place at the county jail. The Fulton County sheriff's office issued a news release saying that when Trump turns himself in, "there will be a hard lockdown of the area surrounding the Rice Street Jail."

So far, in addition to Trump, four other co-defendants have reached bond agreements. Two lawyers for the Trump 2020 campaign, John Eastman and Kenneth Chesebro, must post a \$100,000 bond, a third lawyer, Ray Smith, faces a bond of \$50,000 and Scott Hall, himself a bail bondsman, must post \$10,000.

The "consent bond order" for Trump was signed off on by Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee and co-signed by Willis and Trump's attorneys. It declares, "The Defendant shall perform no act to intimidate any

person known to him or her to be a codefendant or witness in this case or to otherwise obstruct the administration of justice."

The order goes on to say: "Defendant shall make no direct or indirect threat of any nature against the community or to any property in the community; The above shall include, but are not limited to, posts on social media or reposts of posts made by another individual on social media."

Trump is explicitly forbidden to use social media to target any of his 18 co-defendants, the 30 unindicted co-conspirators, or any witnesses in the upcoming trial. None of the other four with bond orders issued Monday is barred from statements on social media.

This order is far more restrictive than that sought by Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith in the federal case against Trump on charges related to illegal efforts to overturn the election. Trump has made repeated posts on social media vilifying Smith and Judge Tanya Chutkan, the judge who will hear the case, and threatening those involved in the case against him.

His most notorious post included the threat, in all caps, "IF YOU GO AFTER ME, I'M COMING AFTER YOU!"

The order for attorney John Eastman, author of the bogus legal opinion that Vice President Mike Pence had the right to block certification of Democrat Joe Biden, the winner of the 2020 election, requires him to "report to pre-trial supervision every 30 days." It says that Eastman "shall perform no act to intimidate any person known to him or her to be a codefendant or witness in this case or to otherwise obstruct the administration of justice" and "shall not communicate in any way, directly or indirectly, about the facts of this case with any person known to him to be a codefendant" or a witness in the case "except through

his or her counsel.”

It is not clear what the consequences for Trump would be if the court finds that he has violated the terms of his bond—as he is very likely to do within days, if not hours, of his attorneys signing off on his conduct. Legally, his bond could be forfeited, his bail revoked, and he could be taken to the Fulton County jail. Politically, that is highly unlikely.

The bond agreement came on the same day that Trump had pledged to hold a press conference in Atlanta where he would supposedly set out the evidence that the 2020 election in that state was rigged and stolen. No such evidence exists and Trump quietly canceled the press conference Friday, without making any explanation.

In addition to ducking the press conference—where he would have faced questions from the media about his claims about the 2020 election—Trump announced over the weekend that he would not participate in Wednesday’s first debate among Republican presidential candidates, or in any future debate.

The two decisions suggest the combination of authoritarian bullying and political cowardice that define the ex-president’s character. He is effectively demanding that the Republican presidential nomination be awarded to him by right, while at the same time refusing to participate in any event where his lies about the “stolen election”—and myriad other political topics—might come under fire.

Meanwhile, in Washington, the office of the special counsel filed papers Monday with the federal court opposing the motion brought by Trump’s lawyers seeking an April 2026 trial date for the federal charges related to the 2020 election, including some linked indirectly to the January 6, 2021 mob assault on Capitol Hill.

Smith’s office argued that such a long delay “would deny the public its right to a speedy trial.” They argued for their proposed January 2, 2024 trial date. Judge Tanya Chutkan has set a hearing for August 28 to schedule the trial date.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact