

Judge says Rudy Giuliani must pay \$148 million judgment immediately

By Rachel Weiner
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Rudy Giuliani must immediately pay the \$148 million he owes two Georgia women he falsely accused of helping steal the 2020 election, a federal judge ruled Wednesday in a scathing order accusing the former Trump attorney of ongoing dishonesty.

Judge Beryl A. Howell wrote that there is a strong danger Giuliani is likely to hide his assets from plaintiffs Ruby Freeman and Wandrea ArShaye “Shaye” Moss and is unlikely to succeed in having last week’s jury verdict overturned or cut down on appeal.

Attorneys for the two women still have to enforce the judgment against Giuliani, which may involve further court proceedings. But they do not have to wait the standard 30 days to begin trying to seize his assets.

“Giuliani has never denied that he has taken steps to hide his assets from judgment creditors, and has offered no affirmative pledge that he will take no steps to do so,” Howell wrote.

Giuliani has repeatedly said he does not have the money to pay a high penalty for his defamatory comments. At trial, his lawyer said the \$43 million sought by the plaintiffs was “the civil equivalent of the death penalty” and “would be the end of Mr. Giuliani.” The jury’s verdict was more than three times as much.

As Howell noted, it is unclear how much money Giuliani has because he ignored court orders that would have offered insight into his finances. But she said he has failed to “contend, let alone demonstrate with documentary or other proof,” that he can’t pay at least some chunk of the hefty penalty. He owns property in New York and Florida and has multiple bank accounts, she pointed out. And, she added, his claims of penury “are difficult to square with the fact that Giuliani affords a spokesperson, who accompanied him daily to trial.”

Howell ordered sanctions of Giuliani for his failure to turn over information, requiring him to pay some of the plaintiffs’ legal fees. She reminded him in

Wednesday's ruling that he "has simply ignored" those orders, "without ... making any excuse."

The judge also ruled before trial that Giuliani had defamed the two women, because he chose not to contest their claims rather than give them information they were entitled to have about why he targeted them and whether he profited from doing so. He faces criminal prosecution in Georgia related to Trump's alleged effort to subvert the state's election results, and anything he revealed in the D.C. case could be used against him there.

The two women sued Giuliani again on Monday for continuing to make comments about them that his lawyer conceded in court were untrue.

Attorneys for the former New York mayor wrote in a filing Tuesday that "if Giuliani had intentions of absconding with or fraudulently transferring assets, he has ample time to do it." Howell dismissed that reassurance as "cheekily" made and "not persuasive."

She also brushed aside Giuliani's suggestion that he should have time to appeal the verdict against him as unreasonable. It would be "difficult" for him to convince the court he should be allowed to appeal without first posting a bond equivalent to the judgment, she said. And, she said, considering what jurors heard about his "past and continuing — including up to and during trial — defamation of" the two women, the judgment was "conservative."