

# Jussie Smollett Indicted on 16 Felony Charges

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Illinois: A grand jury indicted actor Jussie Smollett on 16 felony charges and he faces a sentence of up to 3 years in prison for each individual charge that is based on each alleged falsehood Smollett relayed to police officers and detectives. Smollett, who is gay and black, told police he was attacked at 2:00 am on January 29 by two white men, who poured bleach on him, wrapped a noose around his neck, assaulted him, and spewed racist and homophobic slurs. Authorities claim the two attackers, who are black, have confessed to their role in the hoax after Smollett paid them \$3,500 to stage the incident. Smollett may also face federal charges for mail fraud on allegations that he mailed a hate speech letter to himself that contained a white powder that was later found to be harmless. If it can be proved he deliberately used the mail to commit a fraudulent act, he faces 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

According to the New York Times, Jussie Smollett comes from an activist family and grew up in San Francisco in the orbit of the Black Panthers.

Link for NY Times article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/13/arts/television/the-smollett-family-business-acting-and-activism.html>

From the Washington Times:

A federal mail fraud charge that could mean up to 20 years in prison is the shoe left to drop in the Jussie Smollett scandal.

On Friday, the State of Illinois hit suspended *Empire* star Smollett with 16 class 4 felony **counts**

of disorderly conduct pertaining to allegations he filed a false police report after conspiring to orchestrate a hate crime hoax against himself for publicity purposes.

The 16 counts are based on each alleged falsehood Smollett relayed to the police officers who initially responded to his call and the detectives assigned later.

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