



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 22, 2019

## Smollett Lied to Cops in 2007, Could Face Federal Mail-fraud Charges

Jussie Smollett, the homosexual actor who, police allege, manufactured the preposterous but widely believed story that two Trump supporters attacked him on January 29, is something of an expert at telling tall tales.

Twelve years ago, the biracial *Empire* star pleaded guilty to providing a false statement to police in Los Angeles, prosecutors in the City of Angels say. And he could also face federal mail-fraud charges, which carry a stiff prison sentence.



Yet after cops released him from the slammer yesterday, the anti-Trump boob-tube star said he feels “betrayed” because Chicago police held a press conference during which they explained how he tried to fool a nation.

The judge who presided over a hearing yesterday didn’t think much of Smollett, either.

### Press Conference and Release

Smollett’s scam began unraveling days ago, but police exposed it in full yesterday at a press conference at which the Chicago police superintendent, Eddie Johnson, administered a tongue-lashing Smollett won’t likely forget.

Smollett’s trickery was “shameful,” [Johnson said](#): “Smollett took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career. It’s shameful. It’s just despicable.”

At Smollett’s hearing yesterday, the judge said likewise, the [Chicago Tribune reported](#). “The most vile and despicable part of it, if it’s true, is the noose,” said Cook County Judge John Fitzgerald Lyke, Jr. “That symbol conjures up such evil in this country’s history.”

Like Johnson, Lyke is black. Aside from setting bail at \$100,000, [ABC News reported](#), the judge also lifted Smollett’s passport.

Smollett’s attorney, the *Tribune* reported, claimed Smollett was innocent and “vehemently denies” allegations of behavior “inconsistent with Mr. Smollett’s character.” The attorney said Smollett “wants nothing more than to clear his name,” the *Tribune* reported.

After a friend of Smollett’s posted \$10,000 of a \$100,000 bond, cops released the actor, and last night his attorneys tossed up another smoke screen.

“The presumption of innocence, a bedrock in the search for justice, was trampled upon at the expense of Mr. Smollett and notably, on the eve of a mayoral election,” a statement from the attorneys said. “Mr. Smollett is a young man of impeccable character and integrity who fiercely and solemnly maintains his innocence and feels betrayed by a system that apparently wants to skip due process and proceed directly to sentencing.”



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### **Fake Attack**

Smollett's tale had all the makings of another great hate crime, except that it was just [another great hate hoax](#).

The light-in-the-loafers actor claimed two white dudes, wearing MAGA hats of course, accosted him and put a noose around his neck while he was returning from a Subway restaurant at 2 a.m. on January 29. "This is MAGA country," they ominously said. A week earlier, Smollett supposedly received a threatening letter that bore the return address "MAGA" and [contained a message](#) in the cut-out letters of a ransom note: "You will die, black f\*g." It also contained a white powder that turned out to be acetaminophen.

Smollett was treated at a hospital for minor cuts and bruises.

Though police found no video evidence of the attack, they did have video of two suspicious-looking fellows who might be the perpetrators. The two men in the video were the now-famous Nigerian [bodybuilder brothers](#) who confessed that Smollett paid them for the attack. Police have the \$3,500 check Smollett wrote and [text messages between](#) the brothers and Smollett. Prosecutors presented the messages yesterday at the hearing.

The pair admitted that Smollett gave them \$100 to buy supplies for the attack, a purchase for which police also [have video evidence](#). They also told police Smollett was none too happy that no one on the set of his program took the threatening letter seriously.

Police said Smollett's wounds were self-inflicted.

Yesterday, [Johnson told reporters](#) that Smollett staged the attack to get a pay raise.

### **Past Lie, Mail Fraud**

Smollett has a record of lying to cops.

In 2007, [the city attorney in Los Angeles told NBC news](#), Smollett pleaded no contest to drunk driving, driving without a license, and "providing false information to law enforcement," the network reported.

That case ended in two years probation and a choice of a fine or jail, the network reported.

[Fox News legal analyst Andrew Napolitano said](#) Smollett could face federal mail-fraud charges: "If he mailed that threatening letter to himself by using the post office, he engaged in postal fraud. That's five to 10 years in jail — that's three times what he's facing for filing a false report if the feds want to go there."

*Photo: AP Images*



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