

Jussie Smollett indicted on 16 felony counts following Chicago attack allegations

“Empire” actor Jussie Smollett was indicted Friday on 16 felony counts following his Chicago attack allegations.

A spokesperson for the Cook County State’s Attorney did not immediately respond to Fox News’ request for comment. A lawyer for Smollett did not immediately respond to Fox News’ request for comment.

CHICAGO POLICE BLAST JUSSIE SMOLLETT ‘PHONY ATTACK’: ‘BOGUS POLICE REPORTS CAUSE REAL HARM’

Earlier this week, it was revealed that the Chicago Police opened an internal investigation into Smollett’s case.

In a statement to Fox News on Thursday, a spokesperson for the force confirmed that “an internal investigation has been opened.”

“I would like to point out that a lot of the information out there was inaccurate and there were numerous agencies involved in this investigation,” the statement continued. “As a standard procedure when there are allegations of information being leaked, an internal investigation has been opened and we are also looking at our vulnerabilities.”

JUSSIE SMOLLETT’S ALLEGED CHICAGO ATTACK DETAILS UNFOLD: A TIMELINE OF EVENTS

In January, Smollett told police that he was attacked by two masked men as he was walking home from a sandwich shop in the early morning on Jan. 29. The actor, who is black and gay, said the masked men beat him, made derogatory comments and yelled, “This is MAGA country” — an apparent reference to President Trump’s campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again” — before fleeing.

But that isn’t how police say it all went down.

Smollett, who is accused of filing a false police report, was charged last month with felony disorderly conduct. After turning himself in, a judge set Smollett's bond for \$100,000 and he was released from jail. If convicted, he will face up to three years behind bars.

According to the Chicago Police Department, Smollett paid Abimbola "Abel" and Olabinjo "Ola" Osundairo by check for a "phony attack" in order to take "advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career."

'EMPIRE' ACTOR JUSSIE SMOLLETT'S BOND SET AT \$100G, JUDGE CALLS EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM 'OUTRAGEOUS'

Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson said at a press conference last month that police found the "check that [Smollett] used to pay [two brothers]" to fake the beating, adding he paid them \$3,500 "for the two of them in total, and then \$500 upon return."

He said the attack "was staged, the brothers had on gloves during the (air quotes) 'staged attack' where they punched him a little, but as far as we can tell, the scratching and bruising that you saw on [Smollett's] face was most likely self-inflicted."

Smollett has maintained his innocence. The actor's legal counsel told Fox News after Smollett was accused of filing the fake police report that the nation "witnessed an organized law enforcement spectacle that has no place in the American legal system.

JUSSIE SMOLLETT'S LAWYERS BLAST AUTHORITIES, SAY ACTOR WAS 'BETRAYED BY A SYSTEM THAT WANTS TO SKIP DUE PROCESS'

"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," his team continued.

"Mr. Smollett is a young man of impeccable character and integrity who fiercely and solemnly maintains his innocence betrayed by a system that apparently wants to skip due process and proceed directly to sentencing."

Illinois attorney Rod Drobinski reviewed the indictment and told Fox News the grand jury hit Smollett with a separate count for every different crime he alleged

had been perpetrated against him (eight in all) — to each of the officers he spoke with (two). Thus, the 16 total counts.

This is a developing story. Check back here for updates.

Fox News' Sasha Savitsky and Julius Young and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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