

Virtually every organization Trump has run in recent years has been under investigation. Here's where those probes stand.

Federal prosecutors in New York delivered a subpoena for documents related to donations and spending by President Trump's inaugural committee on Feb. 4. (Reuters)



By [Aaron Blake](#)

February 5

News broke Monday night that federal prosecutors issued a subpoena in [the burgeoning investigation of the Trump inaugural committee](#). And we can add that one to the list of serious investigations President Trump has faced, including of himself, his campaign, his conduct as president, his business, his charity and his “university.”

Below, we break down the latest in each, along with how much trouble each could pose for Trump.

Trump inaugural committee

The latest: Federal prosecutors in the Justice Department's Southern District of New York issued [a wide-ranging subpoena](#) Monday seeking documents related to spending and

donations by the committee that put on Trump's 2017 inauguration — including possible foreign contributions, which would be illegal.

Trouble factor: This probe was [first reported in December by the Wall Street Journal](#), but we didn't know much about it until Monday. The sweeping nature of the documents request suggests a serious criminal inquiry — including, according to The Washington Post's Rosalind S. Helder and Michael Kranish, possible conspiracy to defraud the United States, mail fraud, false statements, wire fraud and money laundering.

ADVERTISING

Notably, the inaugural committee's fundraising operation was headed by Rick Gates, a former deputy Trump campaign manager who has pleaded guilty in special counsel Robert S. Mueller III's Russia investigation and is cooperating as part of a deal. It's also notable that the subpoena specifically mentions a donor, Los Angeles venture capitalist Imaad Zuberi, which suggests there is a reason for that specific interest.

Trump campaign (collusion)

The latest: Ten days ago, longtime Trump political adviser [Roger Stone was indicted on a charge of](#) obstructing an investigation of his contacts with WikiLeaks, which released Democratic emails hacked by Russia during the 2016 presidential campaign. We also learned that former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort allegedly lied about sending polling information and discussing a pro-Russian Ukraine “peace plan” with a business associate linked to Russian intelligence in 2016. And in December, Michael Cohen, a former personal lawyer for Trump, pleaded guilty to lying about his efforts to secure a Trump Tower in Moscow well into the 2016 campaign — including obscuring his contacts with aides in the Kremlin.

Trouble factor: None of these charges or plea deals — or any charges or plea deals in the Mueller investigation — has dealt with collusion or related crimes. But that doesn't mean Mueller isn't pursuing them. (Often prosecutors will charge small things before bigger things and keep evidence of larger crimes hidden.) And all three situations — and the fact that each man allegedly lied about election-year contacts related to Russia — suggest that this remains a significant area of interest for Mueller.

We also don't know how much interest remains in the Trump Tower meeting Donald Trump Jr. set up with a Russian lawyer in 2016, but there is no indication that Mueller has interviewed Trump Jr., which some suggest could mean trouble for him. Politico has reported Trump Jr. telling friends that [he's worried about being indicted](#).

Trump himself (obstruction of justice)

The latest: This investigation is more difficult to grasp, given we don't know what we see in public would be of interest to Mueller. [BuzzFeed reported](#) that Cohen has told investigators that Trump asked him to lie to Congress about Trump Tower Moscow, but Mueller's team took [the unprecedented step of issuing a denial](#). Trump has [suggested investigations of Cohen's family](#), leading to Cohen pulling out of public testimony and allegations of witness tampering. And there have been many other examples of Trump either applying pressure to or otherwise weighing in on key figures in the Russia inquiry, starting with former FBI director James B. Comey.

Trouble factor: We simply have no idea, and it all depends on what the threshold is for obstruction of justice. Although any one action, such as firing Comey, may not rise to that level, there is a clear pattern of behavior possibly geared toward affecting the investigation. Also notably, William P. Barr, Trump's nominee to become attorney general, in his confirmation hearing affirmed statements made in a 2017 memo [that a president can commit obstruction of justice just as anybody else](#) can.

Trump himself (campaign finance violations)

The latest: In December, we learned that the National Enquirer's parent company, American Media Inc., [has been given immunity in SDNY's investigation](#) of hush-money payments made on Trump's behalf of Karen McDougal and Stormy Daniels, who said they had affairs with him. SDNY also made clear that AMI said the McDougal payment was intended "to suppress [McDougal's] story so as to prevent it from influencing the election." That's key, because that's the threshold for these payments being considered campaign finance violations. That means now both Cohen and AMI have said these payments were about the campaign.

Trouble factor: In his guilty plea last year, Cohen implicated Trump in those campaign finance violations. Now, more people are establishing these as crimes. That doesn't mean prosecutors regard Trump as having done anything illegal. Trump admits that he directed the payments but [says he didn't direct Cohen to make them illegally](#). Cohen says Trump [knew it would be illegal](#), but the question is whether he has proof and how much proof prosecutors require.

The unknown levels of cooperation of both AMI head David Pecker and [longtime Trump Organization chief financial officer Allen Weisselberg](#) loom very large here.

Trump Organization

The latest: The Trump Organization is the common thread that could play in several of these investigations. But as for it specifically, attorneys general in Maryland and the District of Columbia have [subpoenaed financial records and documents related to Trump's business](#) as part of the lawsuit regarding whether it violates the Constitution's emoluments clause. The new attorney general of New York, Letitia James, has also said she [plans to open large inquiries into Trump's business practices](#), including a New York Times report that Trump's father, Fred Trump, passed hundreds of millions of dollars in wealth to his children [through tax schemes](#).

"I will be shining a bright light into every dark corner of his real estate dealings, and every dealing, demanding truthfulness at every turn," [James said](#).

Trouble factor: In this case, it's the states investigating Trump and the Justice Department that is defending Trump, particularly when it comes to [the emoluments case](#). House Democrats are also promising to dig into all this. But beyond the alleged tax schemes — which are very possibly beyond the statute of limitations — we don't know a whole lot about alleged criminal activity.

Trump Foundation

The latest: Trump [agreed in December to shut down his charity](#) after years of investigations — most notably by The Post’s David A. Fahrenthold and the New York attorney general’s office — of his use of it for personal and political purposes.

Trouble factor: The settlement arose out of [a lawsuit filed by then-New York Attorney General](#) Barbara Underwood (whom James replaced). Underwood has [urged the IRS](#) and the Federal Election Commission to look into whether the charity broke tax laws. It’s not clear whether they are investigating, but [election law experts say there is cause](#).

Trump University

The latest: A federal judge in April [finalized a \\$25 million settlement](#) for thousands of students who claimed they were defrauded by Trump University, a for-profit real estate seminar Trump set up that was not accredited.

Trouble factor: It doesn’t appear as though Trump faces further legal exposure. A Florida lawyer who wanted to reject the settlement so Trump could be brought to trial was unable [to get an appeals court to side with her](#).

