

The Columbus Dispatch

Why wasn't Larry Householder and Matt Borges taken to prison and what's next?



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Jurors found former Ohio House speaker Larry Householder and ex-Ohio Republican chairman Matt Borges guilty earlier this month in a [sweeping public corruption case](#), but the two men have yet to go to prison.

[U.S. District Court Judge Timothy S. Black](#), who will impose sentences, decided to allow them to be free until sentencing. Black is awaiting a pre-sentencing investigation report from court staff that will help him decide what punishment they should each receive. The investigation takes about three months.

The maximum sentence is 20 years in prison.

Defense attorneys [Diane Menashe](#) of Ice Miller and [David Axelrod](#) of Shumaker answered our questions. Their answers are edited for clarity and brevity:

Why weren't Householder and Borges taken into custody after the verdict?

Typically, people who are out on bond before their trial are allowed to remain free pending sentencing. Bond is a set of conditions required by the court, such as surrendering a passport and weapons, submitting to drug tests and or abiding by travel restrictions. And the defendants are allowed to self-report to the federal Bureau of Prisons once a prison sentence is imposed.

When will they be sentenced?

The judge will likely schedule it a month or so after receiving the pre-sentencing report. Householder and Borges may also file sentencing memos that argue for lighter punishment. Those filings may take some time. They were tried together but won't necessarily be sentenced together.

How much prison time will they get?

Federal sentencing guidelines, criminal histories and the offense all go into the decision. The monetary value – \$61 million in bribes – is also a factor. Since [they went to trial](#), they won't get points for accepting responsibility. Whether they each get the maximum will depend on their ultimate federal sentencing range and whether the judge deviates from it.

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Do they have grounds for appeal?

Criminal appeals generally raise a battery of issues, such as evidentiary issues, pre-trial issues which were preserved for appellate review and if different counsel handles the appeal, ineffective assistance of counsel. Householder and Borges' lawyers objected to the use of [the Neil Clark tapes](#) since the defendants couldn't cross-examine him. Clark, who was charged as a co-conspirator, died by suicide in March 2021. Householder's legal team also accused the judge of bias against him.

Householder and Borges can ask that their prison sentences be delayed while they appeal their convictions. It'll be up to Judge Black to determine that issue.