

Alex Jones and pro-Trump conspiracy theorists face legal consequences | The Washington Post

By Aaron Blake

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Misinformation has always been a problem in politics. What has changed over the last six years or so is how much one movement in particular — the one led by former president Donald Trump — has embraced it as an organizing principle. Trump and his allies have also aligned with the kind of extremist purveyors of conspiracy theories who were once given the cold shoulder in polite society.

Increasingly, though, a bit of a reckoning is taking place. Trump allies spouting wild, baseless theories and otherwise taking our political discourse down misinformation rabbit holes are confronting consequences in court or otherwise facing bona fide legal penalties for their actions.

The question, as ever, is whether it will change anything — whether those penalties will serve as the deterrent they are supposed to be.

Right-wing conspiracy theorist Alex Jones is the latest to be ordered to pay up by a court. As The Post's Timothy Bella reported Friday, a judge ruled Jones was liable for all damages in lawsuits over his claims that the massacre of 20 schoolchildren and six others at Sandy Hook Elementary was a "false flag" and a "giant hoax." The conspiracy theory has led to the harassment of the victims' families.

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