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Key details about the Bill Cosby case

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LUCAS JACKSON/REUTERS/FILE

Bill Cosby in 2011.

By Matt Rocheleau

GLOBE STAFF DECEMBER 30, 2015

After a torrent of public allegations that he raped numerous women, entertainer Bill Cosby has faced civil lawsuits. Now he faces criminal charges that could land him behind bars.

Here are some key details about the case from The Associated Press and other wire reports:

What charge does he face?

Cosby was charged by prosecutors in Montgomery County, Pa., with aggravated indecent assault. He is to be arraigned Wednesday afternoon.

What do prosecutors allege?

Cosby is alleged to have drugged and sexually assaulted a woman 12 years ago in his home in the Philadelphia suburb of Cheltenham.

He was accused of rendering the woman unable to resist by plying her with pills and wine, then penetrating her digitally without her consent, when she was unconscious or unaware of what was happening.



Bill Cosby charged with sexual assault

Entertainer Bill Cosby has long maintained that his extramarital conquests over the years were all consensual.

She was “frozen, paralyzed, unable to move,” Kevin Steele, the county’s district attorney-elect, said in

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announcing the charges.

The charge was filed just days before the 12-year statute of limitations for bringing charges was set to run out.

What could the penalty be?

Cosby faces a possible maximum penalty of five to 10 years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.

Who was the victim?

At the time of the alleged assault, the victim, Andrea Constand, was an employee at Temple University working for the women's basketball team.

She met Cosby, an alumnus and then a trustee of the university, in the early 2000s.

Constand is now 42 and lives in Toronto, where she works as a massage therapist.

What is the victim's account?

One night in January 2004, Constand went to Cosby's home to seek career advice. She says she was assaulted there. Constand has said she was semi-conscious when Cosby assaulted her, after he gave her pills he said would relax her.

Constand first told police about the alleged assault in 2005, but prosecutors declined to charge Cosby then.

After the criminal case went nowhere, Constand settled a lawsuit against Cosby in 2006 on confidential terms.

Her lawyer has said Constand is gay and was dating a woman when she met Cosby.

Earlier this year, the former district attorney who had declined to charge Cosby in 2005 said that newly-publicized information from Constand's lawsuit contained allegations that were more serious than the account she gave police. If that information had been known at the time, "we might have

been able to make a case,” he said.

What’s Cosby’s account?

Documents from Constand’s civil suit, unsealed earlier this year, showed that Cosby acknowledged a string of affairs and sexual encounters.

He testified that he obtained Quaaludes in the 1970s to give to women. He denied giving women drugs without their knowledge and said he had used the now-banned sedative “the same as a person would say, ‘Have a drink.’”

In the deposition, Cosby said he fondled Constand that night, taking her silence as a green light.

“I don’t hear her say anything. And I don’t feel her say anything. And so I continue and I go into the area that is somewhere between permission and rejection. I am not stopped,” Cosby testified.

He said Constand was not upset when she left that night.

As for the other allegations he has faced, Cosby, through his representatives, accused some of the women of trying to extract money from him or get ahead in show business.

The Associated Press said that calls it made to his attorneys were not immediately returned Wednesday.

What other allegations and legal trouble does he face?

Allegations similar to Constand’s have been made publicly about Cosby over the years but did not receive widespread attention until late 2014 after comedian Hannibal Buress called him a rapist during a standup routine, which prompted even more allegations.

Women mostly from the world of modeling, acting, or other entertainment fields came forward and described being offered a drink by Cosby and waking up to find they had apparently been sexually assaulted.

Because many of the alleged assaults are decades old, the statute of limitations for criminal charges has expired in nearly every case.

But Cosby faces numerous sex-abuse and defamation lawsuits, including suits in Springfield, Mass.,

Los Angeles, and Pennsylvania.

What ties are there to Massachusetts?

Cosby is a long-time resident of Shelburne Falls, Mass.

Also, some of the women who are suing Cosby for defamation in US District Court in Springfield could wind up being called to testify against Cosby in the criminal case out of Philadelphia.

The news website Philly.com reported earlier this month that some of the women in the case out of Springfield had been lined up as potential witnesses for Constand's civil lawsuit before she settled in 2006.

Joseph Cammarata, the attorney representing the women in the ongoing case out of Springfield told the news outlet that his clients could be witnesses in a criminal case.

Cammarata could not immediately be reached for comment Wednesday.

Material from The Associated Press was used in this report. Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele)

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