

Jeff Bezos, Lauren Sánchez prenup may include 'signing bonus' after billionaire's costly first divorce: expert

Amazon founder likely faced prenup discussions with Lauren Sánchez following his \$36B divorce from ex-wife MacKenzie Scott

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From luxurious vacations to PDA-filled outings, [Jeff Bezos](#) and Lauren Sánchez seem to be living a fairytale romance. However, the couple — who are expected to wed this week in Venice, Italy — likely had to discuss their finances prior to tying the knot.

Bezos, who is the billionaire founder and CEO of Amazon, has been married once before; so has Sánchez. Bezos didn't have a prenup with his first wife [MacKenzie Scott](#), and the separation left her with a 4% stake in the online shopping giant, or around \$36 billion at the time. "Bezos handled his first divorce as fast as an Amazon delivery," Christopher Melcher, a [top family law attorney](#) told Fox News Digital of Bezos' first marriage. He is a partner at Walzer Melcher & Yoda LLP, which is ranked as a [best family law firm in Los Angeles, California](#). "It was quick but not painless. Billions of dollars were at stake, which were earned during marriage and had to be split because there was no premarital agreement."



Lauren Sánchez and Jeff Bezos are set to be married in Venice, Italy this week. (Neilson Barnard/Getty Images for Vanity Fair)

"People sometimes make a new spouse pay the price for their prior failed marriage by insisting on one-sided or overly harsh terms in a premarital agreement," Melcher said. "The need for protection is understandable, but it can go too far and harm the relationship by keeping the couple from being true partners."

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"For Bezos, his enormous wealth will allow him to be generous in his marriage with Lauren. He has enough money to provide for his existing children, to make charitable donations, while also creating a strong community estate with Lauren."

Bezos — who is currently worth \$223.7 billion, according to [Fortune](#) — was married to Scott for 25 years before their 2019 divorce.

"A prenuptial agreement destroys romance and can make a prospective spouse feel unequal," celebrity lawyer Chris Melcher, who is not representing Bezos or Sanchez, said. "The negotiation of a prenup looks like a divorce, just done in advance of marriage. The desire to protect assets could end up destroying the marriage before it started by creating resentment."

"Because Bezos has children [four children with Scott] and other uses for his money, there is a legitimate need to create some guardrails around his premarital estate," he continued. "This can be done while also creating a partnership with Lauren. For

example, there could be a large upfront payment at date of marriage, like a signing bonus, or a large payment on separation, like a severance."

"Lauren might have an interest in keeping her property separate, but it is really Bezos who would benefit from a prenup," he added.

According to Fortune, there are several common components likely to be presented in the couple's prenup — including the sharing of assets, providing support for Sánchez, and death provisions.

"They've likely been through a nightmare before, which is litigation over their prior divorce and how much you're giving the other side, or getting, and they don't want to do that," high-profile divorce attorney Robert Cohen, of Cohen Clair Lans Greifer & Simpson, told the outlet.

"[Bezos] is also going to want to consider what he's done to terminate his first marriage, because there may be obligations in that that would affect the prenup," he added.

Sánchez, who was married to her first husband Patrick Whitesell until 2019, allegedly signed a prenuptial agreement with Whitesell. According to TMZ, the former couple's assets and properties were divided per the agreement.

Sánchez has one son with ex-boyfriend Tony Gonzalez and two children with Whitesell. The Bezos-Sánchez wedding is reportedly being held in Venice, Italy, within the next few days. There is expected to be a star-studded guest list, with friends of the couple making appearances. Leonardo DiCaprio, Orlando Bloom, Ivanka Trump and Oprah Winfrey are said to be attending, per Page Six. Ivanka Trump was seen arriving in Venice with her family on Tuesday.

As guests continue to arrive, more and more Venetian citizens have voiced their frustrations over the event that could possibly pose a threat to a city that is already impacted by mass tourism.



The couple's wedding has been faced with protests from locals in Venice, Italy. (Getty Images)

However, despite the [ongoing backlash](#), the couple's wedding planners told Fox News Digital that Bezos and Sanchez specifically instructed them to minimize the disruptions to the best of their ability out of respect to the locals.

"As event organizers who have been working in Venice for over 24 years, we feel obliged to set the record straight given the misinformation, untruths and misunderstandings circulating about the Bezos wedding," the team at Lanza & Baucina Limited said in a statement. "From the outset, instructions from our client and our own guiding principles were abundantly clear: the minimizing of any disruption to the city, the respect for its residents and institutions and the overwhelming employment of locals in the crafting of the events.

"Rumors of 'taking over' the city are entirely false and diametrically opposed to our goals and to reality," the statement continued. "No exaggerated quantity of water taxis or gondolas have ever been booked, the number of taxis reserved being proportionate for the number of guests. Before the recent news of protests arose, we had worked for

there to be minimal negative impact or disruption to the lives of Venetians and the city's visitors.

"We have always acknowledged the wider debate and critical issues surrounding the city's future, and from the outset our client has been honored to support the city and its all-important lagoon through non-profit organizations and associated projects," the statement concluded.

Mayor Luigi Brugnaro told the Associated Press that the city is "very proud."

"We are very proud," Brugnaro said. "I don't know if I will have time [to meet [Bezos and Sánchez](#)], or if he will, to meet and shake hands, but it's an honor that they chose Venice. Venice once again reveals itself to be a global stage."

The Italian wedding comes after the two started dating in 2019 and got engaged in 2023. In late 2024, there were rumors that the pair were set to tie the knot in a \$600 million Aspen nuptials, but Bezos shut down the reports, saying, "This whole thing is completely false."