

Confidential Due Diligence Report

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HEADLINE: Epstein must register as NY's highest level sex offender

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BODY:

Jeffrey Epstein must register in the state of New York as the highest and most dangerous level sex offender, despite efforts by the Palm Beach billionaire, his attorneys and even a New York prosecutor to lower it.

A New York appeals court Thursday upheld a lower court's ruling that Epstein must register as a Level 3 sex offender. A Level 3 status means "high risk of repeat offense and a threat to public safety exists," according to the state's guidelines.

Even though Epstein pleaded guilty to one count of sex crimes involving a minor girl in Palm Beach and one count of solicitation, there is plenty of evidence there were many more victims, according to the four-page ruling.

Epstein's criminal convictions -- for which he served 13 months of an 18-month sentence with liberal work release hours -- requires him to register as a sex offender in every state where he owns a home. One of those homes is in Manhattan.

In siding with Epstein's request for the lowest status -- Level 1 -- the New York prosecutor "mistakenly" disregarded crimes with other minor victims that Epstein was not charged with and considered only the one count he was charged with, the ruling says.

"The strong evidence that the offense against the other victims did occur outweighs any inferences to be drawn from the manner in which this case was prosecuted in Florida," the ruling states. "The reasons for the actions taken by the Florida authorities remain unclear on this record."

Epstein has settled more than two dozen lawsuits and claims against him by teen-agers who say they were lured to his Palm Beach mansion to give him sexually charged massages and/or sex in exchange for money. The terms of all settlements are confidential.

It was during a Jan. 18 hearing on Epstein's sex offender registration act (SORA) hearing in New York that his attorneys tried to get his status set at the lowest level with the blessing of Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Gaffney. Yet, the New York State Board of Examiners of Sex Offenders recommended Epstein be designated a Level 3.

Gaffney said she was unable to rely on the Palm Beach Police's probable cause affidavit-- which listed multiple victims and multiple charges -- since the state attorney went forward on only one count of soliciting a minor. Gaffney said the victims, although they spoke to police early on, did not cooperate.

Judge Ruth Pickholz would have none of it.

"I have to tell you, I am a little overwhelmed because I have never seen a prosecutor's office do anything like this," Pickholz said. "I have done many SORAs much less troubling than this one where the [prosecutor] would never make a downward argument like this."

Gaffney said she tried to reach the assistant state attorney who handled the case (in Palm Beach County), but that prosecutor had left the office, and Gaffney said she was unable to obtain any more information.

Federal guidelines state that offenders must register as a sex offender in every state where the person has a home. Epstein has homes in Palm Beach, Manhattan, New Mexico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as well as Paris. According to his sex offender registration, Epstein's primary residence is in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

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