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Federal judge Marra weighs victims' position in Jeffrey Epstein plea deal with state

By [MARGIE KACOKA](#)

Daily News Staff Writer

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A federal judge is seeking more information before deciding whether to quash a plea agreement that put Palm Beach billionaire Jeffrey Epstein behind bars for 18 months.

Brad Edwards, a Hollywood attorney representing three girls who claim they were sexually abused by Epstein, appeared before U.S. District Judge Kenneth Marra late last week in an attempt to have the judge throw out the deal reached in Palm Beach County Circuit Court.

That deal, which calls for 12 months of house arrest at Epstein's El Brillo Way home and community service after he leaves the Palm Beach County Jail, includes an agreement that the federal government will not prosecute Epstein.

Edwards said his clients were not consulted when the plea deal was negotiated. The girls, each identified publicly as a "Jane Doe," were about to be named as victims in a federal indictment against Epstein, Edwards said.

But in Marra's courtroom Friday, U.S. Attorney Dexter Lee said the federal District Court has no jurisdiction over the plea agreement approved in state Circuit Court.

Marra did not rule but asked for more information about the girls' involvement, if any, in the plea negotiations. Marra, according to Edwards, also expressed concern about the issue of federal versus state jurisdiction.

Epstein, a 55-year-old Manhattan investment banker, was handcuffed and taken to the Palm Beach County Jail at the conclusion of his plea hearing June 30.

Epstein attorney Jack Goldberger could not be reached for comment Tuesday afternoon regarding the question before the federal court. Guy Lewis, another of Epstein's attorneys, also was unavailable by telephone at his Miami office.

The case drew the ire of Palm Beach Police Chief Michael Reiter, whose department conducted a nearly yearlong investigation of Epstein that found he paid underage girls for massages and sometimes sex at his mansion.

Reiter turned the findings over to State Attorney Barry Krischer's office with a recommendation that Epstein be arrested on four counts of unlawful sex acts with a minor, a second-degree felony, and one count of lewd and lascivious molestation, also a second-degree felony.

But Krischer did not arrest Epstein, instead choosing to send the case to a grand jury, which indicted Epstein on one third-degree felony count of solicitation of prostitution.

The June 30 plea by Epstein acknowledged solicitation of one underage girl for prostitution.

Edwards, the victims' attorney, on Tuesday referred to Epstein as a "serious sexual predator" who is receiving "clear, transparent, favorable treatment" and "using his wealth to insulate [himself] from his crimes."

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