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Judge delays release of Palm Beach financier Epstein's secret deal in teen prostitution case

By [SUSAN SPENCER-WENDEL](#)

Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

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WEST PALM BEACH — A judge this morning declined to suspend his ruling to unseal financier Jeffrey Epstein's secret non-prosecution deal with federal prosecutors, but delayed the document's release until Thursday.

The delay gives Epstein's attorneys time to challenge the ruling in the Fourth District Court of Appeal.

Jeffrey Epstein



Billionaire
financier
Jeffrey
Epstein has

been sentenced to 18 months for felony solicitation of prostitution following accusations by teen girls.

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"We'll let the appellate court tell us, teach us what the law in this case will be," Circuit Judge Jeffrey Colbath said.

Epstein's attorneys Jack Goldberger and Robert Critton argued that release of the confidential document would violate a federal rule restricting release of information about federal grand juries and would also cause Epstein irreparable harm.

"If the proverbial horse is out of the barn, you can't get him back in," Critton argued.



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Attorneys for women now suing Epstein, together with an attorney for The Palm Beach Post, had asked Colbath to release the deal, arguing the

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public has right to see it and the victims have a right to use it in their litigation.

Post Attorney Deanna Shullman argued that a week's delay is too long and that the non-prosecution agreement remains under seal when it clearly should not be.

Epstein pleaded guilty in state court nearly a year ago to solicitation of prostitution and procuring teenagers for prostitution and was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

His plea followed investigations by both state and federal authorities checking accounts of teenage girls brought to Epstein's Palm Beach manse for massages and sexual encounters.

At the time of his plea, his secret deal with federal prosecutors to avoid charges by them was sealed and placed in his court file with no regard to court rules that govern sealing.

The seven-page agreement - which Epstein's own attorneys have referred to in federal filings as "unprecedented" and "highly unusual" - promises a behind-the-scenes look at justice for the New York money manager who, according to *Vanity Fair*, hobnobbed with the likes of Prince Andrew and former President Bill Clinton, as he managed accounts for billionaires.

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