

# Billionaire Sex Offender Fights Firm's Sanctions Bid

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Law360 (April 9, 2018, 8:05 PM EDT) -- Convicted billionaire sex offender Jeffrey Epstein shot back Monday against a law firm's bid to sanction him for allegedly retaining copies of confidential documents in violation of a bankruptcy court order, saying he never received the documents and should not be punished if his former [Fowler White Burnett PA](#) counsel did.

The recently disbanded South Florida firm of [Farmer Jaffe Weissing Edwards Fistos & Lehrman PL](#) had said in a [March 19 motion](#) that recent developments in ongoing litigation between Epstein and former Farmer Jaffe partner Bradley J. Edwards, who represented several of Epstein's victims, showed that Fowler White retained a copy of confidential documents and that they had been passed along to Epstein's current counsel and to Epstein himself.

But in a filing Monday, Epstein said he does not have and has never had the disc in question and said the motion levels "speculative allegations against Fowler White as to a matter of which Epstein had absolutely no knowledge and over which he could not possibly have had any control." The copies of the documents in question were made in late 2010, and at that time, Epstein was never given his own copy, he said.

"An assessment of sanctions against Epstein or any other relief for something Fowler White may or may not have done, without his knowledge or consent, is wholly inappropriate," Epstein said.

He added that the motion is a "transparent and frivolous attempt" to divert the court's attention from Edwards' repeated flouting of legitimate discovery requests for documents that Epstein says would kill Edwards' malicious prosecution counterclaim against Epstein.

Farmer Jaffe filed its motion last month in the bankruptcy liquidation case of law firm Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler PA, where Edwards had been practicing when he represented several of Epstein's child sex-abuse victims. Edwards is representing Farmer Jaffe in the sanctions matter.

During the bankruptcy of RRA, which collapsed following the revelation of founder Scott Rothstein's \$1.2 billion Ponzi scheme in 2010, Epstein subpoenaed thousands of Edwards' attorney communications from Farmer Jaffe, according to the motion.

Farmer Jaffe asked that Epstein bear the costs of copying and organizing the documents but also expressed concern about Epstein and his counsel at Fowler White possibly misappropriating them, Farmer Jaffe recounted.

The bankruptcy court granted the copying request with strict instructions that Fowler White was not to retain any copies. The court included an enforcement provision stating that if it was determined that the firm retained images or copies of the documents, the court would retain jurisdiction to award sanctions.

The pending litigation between Epstein and Edwards, who recently formed Edwards Pottinger LLC, started with racketeering claims Epstein filed alleging that Edwards, his victim client known as "L.M." and Rothstein had used the civil claims against Epstein as part of Rothstein's Ponzi scheme, which involved selling shares in sham legal settlements.

Epstein has dropped his claims against Edwards, but Edwards is pursuing a malicious-prosecution claim against Epstein in state court in Palm Beach County.

Epstein pled guilty to felony charges involving solicitation of prostitution and procurement of minors for prostitution. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison and is registered as a sex offender.

Edwards represented nine of Epstein's victims and filed three civil suits alleging sexual offenses against Epstein, according to court documents. He also filed a suit accusing federal prosecutors of arranging with Epstein to keep the plea deal from the victims in violation of the Crime Victims' Rights Act. That case is still pending.

Scott Link of Link & Rockenbach PA, who represents Epstein, told Law360 that Edwards' "cries of foul play are simply an old magician's trick to divert attention from their real concern that the emails will be unsealed and Edwards' case against Epstein will be eviscerated."

Edwards' attorney Jack Scarola of [Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart & Shipley PA](#) said that it is Epstein who is trying to "hide behind a curtain of distortions and distractions."

"Violating a federal court order is apparently no big deal to someone who has managed to evade justice for as long as Epstein has, and his response is evidence of that," Scarola said. "However, the day of reckoning will not be delayed much longer."

An attorney for Fowler White did not respond to a request for comment Monday. Farmer Jaffe Weissing Edwards Fistos & Lehrman PL is represented by Bradley J. Edwards and Brittany N. Henderson of Edwards Pottinger LLC.

Epstein is represented by Scott J. Link and Kara Rockenbach of Link & Rockenback PA and Chad P. Pugatch of [Rice Pugatch Robinson Storfer & Cohen PLLC](#).

Fowler White Burnett PA is represented by Niall T. MacLachlan of [Carlton Fields](#).

Edwards is represented by Jack Scarola and David P. Vitale of Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart & Shipley PA.

The case is In re: Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler PA, case number [0:09-bk-34791](#), in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Florida. The state court case is Epstein v. Rothstein et al., case number 50-2009CA04800XXXX MB AG, in the 15th Judicial Circuit Court of the State of Florida.

--Additional reporting by Nathan Hale. Editing by Edrienne Su.

*Update: This story has been updated to add comments from counsel.*