



By: TA | AP Insight

# FBI concluded Epstein wasn't running a sex trafficking ring for powerful men



The FBI collected ample proof that Jeffrey Epstein sexually abused underage girls but found scant evidence the well-connected financier led a sex trafficking ring serving **powerful men**, an Associated Press review of internal Justice Department records shows.

Videos and photos seized from Epstein's homes in New York, Florida and the Virgin Islands didn't depict victims being abused or implicate anyone else in his crimes, a prosecutor wrote in one 2025 memo.

An examination of Epstein's financial records, including payments he made to entities linked to influential figures in academia, finance and global diplomacy, found no connection to criminal activity, said another internal memo in 2019.

Summarizing the investigation in an email last July, agents said "four or five" Epstein accusers claimed other men or women had sexually abused them.

But, the agents said, there "was not enough evidence to federally charge these individuals."

The AP and other media organizations are still reviewing **millions of pages of documents**, many of them previously confidential, that the Justice Department released under the Epstein Files Transparency Act and it is possible those records contain evidence overlooked by investigators.

Here are takeaways from what the documents show about the FBI investigation and why U.S. authorities ultimately decided to close it without additional charges.

## Origins of the investigation

The Epstein investigation began in 2005, when the parents of a 14-year-old girl reported that she had been molested at the millionaire's home in Palm Beach, Florida.

Then-Miami U.S. attorney **Alexander Acosta** struck a deal letting Epstein plead guilty to state charges of soliciting prostitution from an

underage girl. Sentenced to 18 months in jail, Epstein was free by mid-2009.

In 2018, a series of Miami Herald stories about the plea deal prompted federal prosecutors to take a fresh look at the accusations.

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A year later, prosecutors charged Epstein's longtime confidant, Ghislaine Maxwell, saying she'd recruited several of his victims and sometimes joined the sexual abuse. Convicted in 2021, Maxwell is serving a 20-year prison term.

## Lack of evidence for coconspirators

Prosecution memos, case summaries and other documents made public in the department's latest release of Epstein-related records show that FBI agents and federal prosecutors diligently pursued potential coconspirators.

Even seemingly outlandish and incomprehensible claims, called in to tip lines, were examined. Some allegations couldn't be verified, investigators wrote.

In 2011 and again in 2019, investigators interviewed Virginia Roberts Giuffre, who in lawsuits and news interviews had accused Epstein of arranging for her to have sexual encounters with numerous men, including Britain's former **Prince Andrew**.

Investigators said they confirmed that Giuffre had been sexually abused by Epstein. But other parts of her story were problematic.

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She had also offered shifting accounts in interviews with investigators, they wrote.

Two other Epstein victims who Giuffre had claimed were also "lent out" to powerful men told investigators they had no such experience, prosecutors wrote in a 2019 internal memo.

## Photos and video don't implicate others

Investigators seized a multitude of videos and photos from Epstein's electronic devices and homes in New York, Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

They found CDs, hard copy photographs and at least one videotape containing nude images of females.



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Had they existed, the government "would have pursued any leads they generated," Comey wrote. "We did not, however, locate any such videos."

Investigators who scoured Epstein's bank records found payments to more than 25 women who appeared to be models – but no evidence that he was engaged in prostituting women to other men, prosecutors wrote.

Prosecutors weighed the possibility of charging some of Epstein's close associates, including an assistant and business clients, but ultimately decided against it because of lack of evidence.

## No client list found

Attorney General Pam Bondi told Fox News in February 2025 that Epstein's never-before-seen "client list" was "sitting on my desk right now." But FBI agents wrote superiors saying the client list didn't exist.

On Dec. 30, 2024, about three weeks before President Joe Biden left office, then-FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate reached out through subordinates to ask "whether our investigation to date indicates the 'client list,' often referred to in the media, does or does not exist," according to an email summarizing his query.

**While media coverage of the Jeffrey Epstein case references a 'client list,' investigators did not locate such a list during the course of the investigation - FBI supervisory special agent**

A day later, an FBI official replied that the case agent had confirmed no client list existed.

On Feb. 19, 2025, two days before Bondi's Fox News appearance, an FBI supervisory special agent wrote: "While media coverage of the Jeffrey Epstein case references a 'client list,' investigators did not locate such a list during the course of the investigation."