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# DOJ CAN UNSEAL MAXWELL RECORDS



JOHANNES EISELE, GETTY IMAGES NORTH AMERICA

Acting US Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Audrey Strauss, announces charges against Ghislaine Maxwell during a July 2, 2020, press conference in New York City.

## Judge cautions not to expect much new information

MICHAEL R. SISAK  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A federal judge granted the Justice Department’s request to publicly release grand jury transcripts and other material from Ghislaine Maxwell’s sex trafficking case Tuesday, citing a new law that requires the government to open its files on Jeffrey Epstein and his longtime confidant, but he cautioned that people shouldn’t expect to learn much new information from them.

Judge Paul A. Engelmayer, who along with other judges previously rejected Justice Department unsealing requests before the transparency law passed, said the materials “do not identify any person other than Epstein and Maxwell as having had sexual contact with a minor.”

“They do not discuss or identify any client of Epstein’s or Maxwell’s,” Engelmayer wrote. “They do not reveal any heretofore unknown means or methods of Epstein’s or Maxwell’s crimes.”

Engelmayer, in Manhattan, ruled Tuesday after the Justice Department asked judges in the wake of the law’s passage last

month to lift secrecy orders in Maxwell’s and Epstein’s cases that kept some records under wraps. A request to unseal records from Epstein’s 2019 sex trafficking case is pending.

Engelmayer is the second judge to act after the Epstein Files Transparency Act created a narrow exception to rules that normally keep grand jury proceedings secret. Last week, a Florida federal judge ordered the release of transcripts from an abandoned Epstein federal grand jury investigation in the 2000s.

The law, signed by President Donald Trump after months of public and political pressure, requires the Justice Department to provide the public with Epstein-related records by Dec. 19.

Trump campaigned for reelection last year on a promise to release the files, and his administration disclosed some records this year — almost all of them already public — but suddenly stopped in July after promising a “truckload” more.

Forced to act by the new transparency law, the Justice Department says it plans to release 18 categories of investigative mate-

rials gathered in the massive sex trafficking probe, including search warrants, financial records, notes from interviews with victims, and data from electronic devices.

Epstein, a millionaire financier, was arrested in July 2019 on sex trafficking charges and killed himself in jail a month later. Maxwell, a British socialite, was convicted of sex trafficking in December 2021. She is serving a 20-year prison sentence.

After giving an interview to the Justice Department’s second-in-command in July, she was moved from a federal prison in Florida to a prison camp in Texas.

The Justice Department said it will confer with victims and their lawyers and planned to redact or black out portions of records to protect victims’ identities and prevent dissemination of sexualized images.

Engelmayer said Manhattan U.S. Attorney Jay Clayton must personally certify that records are “rigorously reviewed” to avoid an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

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## Fed likely to cut rates for third time this year

Committee sharply divided  
on lowering costs again

CHRISTOPHER RUGABER  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Federal Reserve faces an unusually contentious meeting this week that will test Chair Jerome Powell’s ability to corral the necessary support from fellow policymakers for a third straight interest rate cut.

The Fed’s 19-member rate-setting committee is sharply divided over whether to lower borrowing costs again. The divisions have been exacerbated by

the convoluted nature of the economy: Inflation remains elevated, which would typically lead the Fed to keep its key rate unchanged, while hiring is weak and the unemployment rate has risen, which often leads to rate cuts.

Some economists expect three Fed officials could vote against the quarter-point cut that Powell is likely to support at meeting Wednesday and Thursday, which would be the most dissenting votes in six years. Just 12 of the 19 members vote on rate decisions.

Several of the non-voting officials also said they oppose another rate cut.

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MANUEL BALCE CENETA, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell speaks at a news conference Oct. 29 at the Federal Reserve Board Building in Washington.