

Prince Andrew sued in federal court for alleged sexual abuse

The lawsuit comes almost two years to the day that Epstein died in jail.

By **James Hill**

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An alleged victim of deceased sex offender [Jeffrey Epstein](#) filed a lawsuit against Prince Andrew of Britain on Monday, accusing the embattled 61-year-old royal of sexually abusing her at Epstein's Manhattan mansion and elsewhere when she was under the age of 18, according to the complaint.

The lawsuit, filed by Virginia Roberts Giuffre in federal court in New York, comes almost two years to the day that Epstein died in a

New York jail while he was awaiting trial on conspiracy and child sex trafficking charges. The legal action also comes just days before the expiration date of a New York state law that permits alleged victims of childhood sexual abuse to file civil claims that might otherwise be barred by statutes of limitations.

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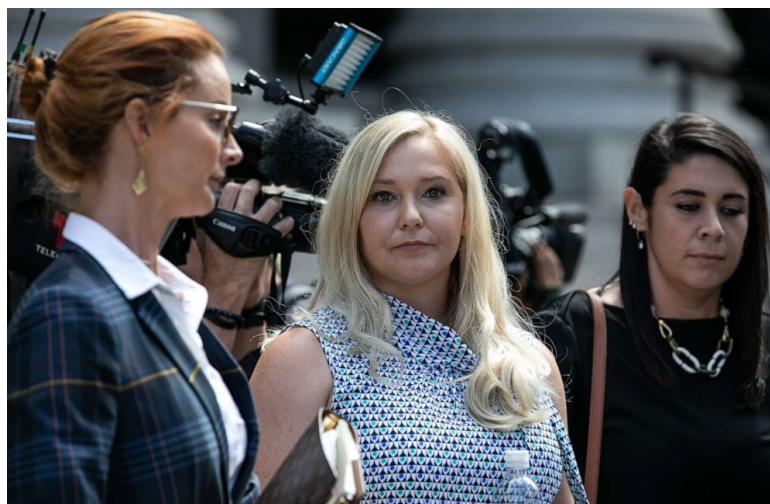
“If she doesn't do it now, she would be allowing him to escape any accountability for his actions,” Giuffre’s attorney, David Boies, chairman of Boies, Schiller Flexner, told ABC News. “And Virginia is committed to trying to avoid situations where rich and powerful people escape any accountability for their actions.”

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The lawsuit seeks unspecified compensatory and punitive damages and accuses Andrew of sexual assault and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

“Twenty years ago, Prince Andrew’s wealth, power, position, and connections enabled him to abuse a frightened, vulnerable child with no one there to protect her. It is long past the time for him to be held to account,” the lawsuit states.

Reached late Monday, a U.K.-based spokesperson for Prince Andrew said there would be no comment on the suit.



📷 *Virginia Roberts Giuffre, an alleged victim of Jeffrey Epstein, center, exits from federal court in New York on Aug. 27, 2019.*
Jeenah Moon/Bloomberg via Getty Images

"I am holding Prince Andrew accountable for what he did to me. The powerful and the rich are not exempt from being held responsible for their actions. I hope that other victims will see that it is possible not to live in silence

and fear, but one can reclaim her life by speaking out and demanding justice," Giuffre said, via her lawyers, in a statement to ABC News.

"I did not come to this decision lightly. As a mother and a wife, my family comes first. I know that this action will subject me to further attacks by Prince Andrew and his surrogates. But I knew that if I did not pursue this action, I would be letting them and victims everywhere down," the statement said.

In a 2019 interview with the [BBC](#), Andrew denied the allegations. "I've said consistently and frequently that we never had any sort of sexual contact whatever," the prince said, responding to a question about allegations from Giuffre.

Giuffre, now a 38-year-old mother living in Australia, first accused the prince of sexual abuse in public court filings in December of 2014, in a case brought by alleged Epstein victims against the U.S. Department of Justice. That lawsuit challenged Epstein's lenient deal with federal prosecutors in Florida in 2008.

Giuffre alleged in those court submissions that she was directed by Epstein and his longtime associate [Ghislaine Maxwell](#) to have sex with Andrew on three occasions in 2001,

in London, New York and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Her claims were met then with vehement denials from Maxwell and from Buckingham Palace on behalf of the prince, the second son of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

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"It is emphatically denied that [Prince Andrew] had any form of sexual contact or relationship with [Giuffre]. The allegations made are false and without any foundation," the Palace statement said.

Since that time, Giuffre's lawyers contend they have made multiple attempts to engage with Andrew or his advisers in discussions about her allegations in an effort to avoid litigation. But those efforts, Boies said, have been ignored.

"Since 2015, we've been trying to have a dialog with Prince Andrew or his lawyers," Boies said. "We have given him every opportunity to provide any explanation or context that he might have. We've tried to reach a resolution without the necessity of litigation. Prince Andrew and his lawyers have been totally non-responsive."



📷 *Prince Andrew, Duke of York, attend an athletic event at the London Stadium, Aug. 4, 2017 in London.*

Julian Finney/Getty Images, FILE

The most recent letter to the prince's presumed legal team was sent last month and warned that a lawsuit would soon be filed unless the prince agreed to enter into discussions for an alternative resolution, according to the court filing Monday.

“If she had simply failed to sue now, it would have validated the stonewalling tactics that Andrew and his advisers have employed,” Boies said.

For nearly a decade, the prince has been under scrutiny for his association with Epstein, a multi-millionaire financier and the subject of state and federal investigations since the mid-2000s for allegedly recruiting underage girls for illicit massages and sex.

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Epstein initially avoided federal charges

involving allegations of abuse of nearly three dozen girls by agreeing to plead guilty to two comparatively minor charges in Florida state court in 2008. He served just 13 months of an 18-month term in a county jail.

Prince Andrew, who said he'd first met Epstein in 1999, became embroiled in the controversy in late 2010 when he was photographed walking with the convicted sex offender through New York's Central Park shortly after Epstein's sentence ended in Florida.

Epstein was charged again, in July 2019, in a two-count federal indictment for child sex trafficking and conspiracy for alleged crimes in New York and Florida between 2002 and 2005. He died in prison on Aug. 10 from an apparent suicide.

Following those new charges against Epstein, the prince again found himself under scrutiny from the press and prosecutors for his association with Epstein both before and after the wealthy financier was designated as a sex offender.

In a rare television interview with the BBC in November 2019, Andrew categorically denied Giuffre's allegations that he had sexual contact with her. He claimed to have no memory of ever meeting her and suggested that a widely-circulated photograph of him

with his arm around the waist of then 17-year-old Giuffre, allegedly taken by Epstein in the London home of Maxwell in 2001, might have been doctored.

"I don't believe that photograph was taken in the way that has been suggested," he said. "I think it's, from the investigations that we've done, you can't prove whether or not that photograph is faked or not, because it is a photograph of a photograph of a photograph. So it's very difficult to be able to prove it, but I don't remember that photograph ever being taken."

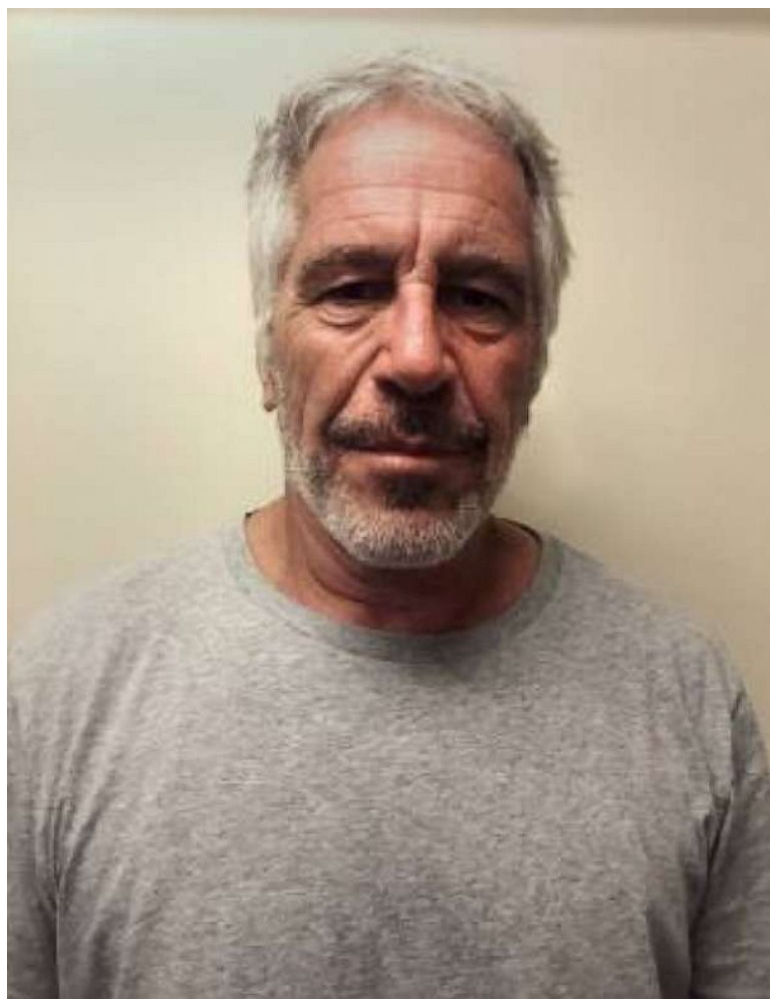
The prince also contended that he had an alibi for the date of the alleged encounter, claiming he was home with his daughter, Beatrice.


"I was at home," the prince said. "I was with the children, and I'd taken Beatrice to a Pizza Express in Woking for a party at, I suppose, sort of 4 or 5 in the afternoon. And then, because the Duchess was away, we have a simple rule in the family that when one is away the other one is there. I was on terminal leave at the time from the Royal Navy, so therefore I was at home."

The prince's interview was harshly criticized in the British press and, within days, he released a new statement conceding that his "former association" with Epstein had

become a major distraction for the royal family, and he stepped back from official duties.

He vowed in that statement that he would be willing “to help any appropriate law enforcement agency with their investigations.”



 *Jeffrey Epstein is seen in a photo released by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice.*

New York State Sex Offender Registry

But Geoffrey Berman, then the U.S. Attorney in Manhattan, publicly called out the prince a few months later for failing to live up to his stated promise. At a press conference in front

of Epstein's New York mansion early last year, Berman said Prince Andrew has provided "zero cooperation."

Giuffre's court filing Monday contains a copy of the photograph of her standing beside Andrew, along with references to flight records from Epstein's private planes that indicate Giuffre was a frequent passenger to destinations in the United States and abroad while she was under 18.

Giuffre contends in her lawsuit that the prince engaged in the alleged sexual acts with her "knowing that she was a sex-trafficking victim being forced to engage in sexual acts with him" and that he was aware of her age. She contends she did not consent to engaging in sexual acts with the prince.

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"[Giuffre] was compelled by express or implied threats by Epstein, Maxwell, and/or Prince Andrew to engage in sexual acts with Prince Andrew, and feared death or physical injury to herself or another and other repercussions for disobeying Epstein, Maxwell, and Prince Andrew due to their powerful connections, wealth, and authority," the suit alleges.

Giuffre has previously settled two federal

lawsuits she filed in connection with her allegations that she was recruited by Maxwell and Epstein into a life of sexual servitude to Epstein and other powerful men. She settled with Epstein in 2009 and reached an out-of-court settlement in her defamation claim against Maxwell in 2017. There were no admissions of wrongdoing in either case, and the financial terms of the settlements were not disclosed.

Maxwell, in deposition testimony in the defamation case, denied Giuffre's allegations and described her accuser as an "absolute liar."

"She has lied repeatedly, often, and is just an awful fantasist," Maxwell said during a 2016 deposition.

Maxwell, who is currently awaiting trial on charges she aided Epstein's alleged abuse of four underage girls, denied recruiting Giuffre for sexual activities with Epstein and denied instructing Giuffre to have sex with the prince or other men.

"I never saw any inappropriate underage activities with Jeffrey ever," Maxwell said.

Maxwell has pleaded not guilty to all the charges against her. She has not been charged in connection with Giuffre's allegations of sexual abuse, though she is facing two perjury charges for alleged false

statements in the 2016 depositions.

Boies told ABC News on Monday that it is his hope that the lawsuit finally leads to Prince Andrew agreeing to answer questions under oath.

“It's one thing to ignore me. It's another thing to ignore the judicial process of the state of New York and the United States,” Boies said. “If Prince Andrew does not take seriously the rule of law in this country, he is being very ill-advised. This is a serious lawsuit, and the court will take it seriously. We take it seriously. If he doesn't take it seriously, it is at his peril.”



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