

Jeffrey Epstein

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US judge rejects Trump administration's bid to unseal Epstein grand jury transcripts

Administration mired in scandal over president's previous links to sex offender in case that has rocked Maga base

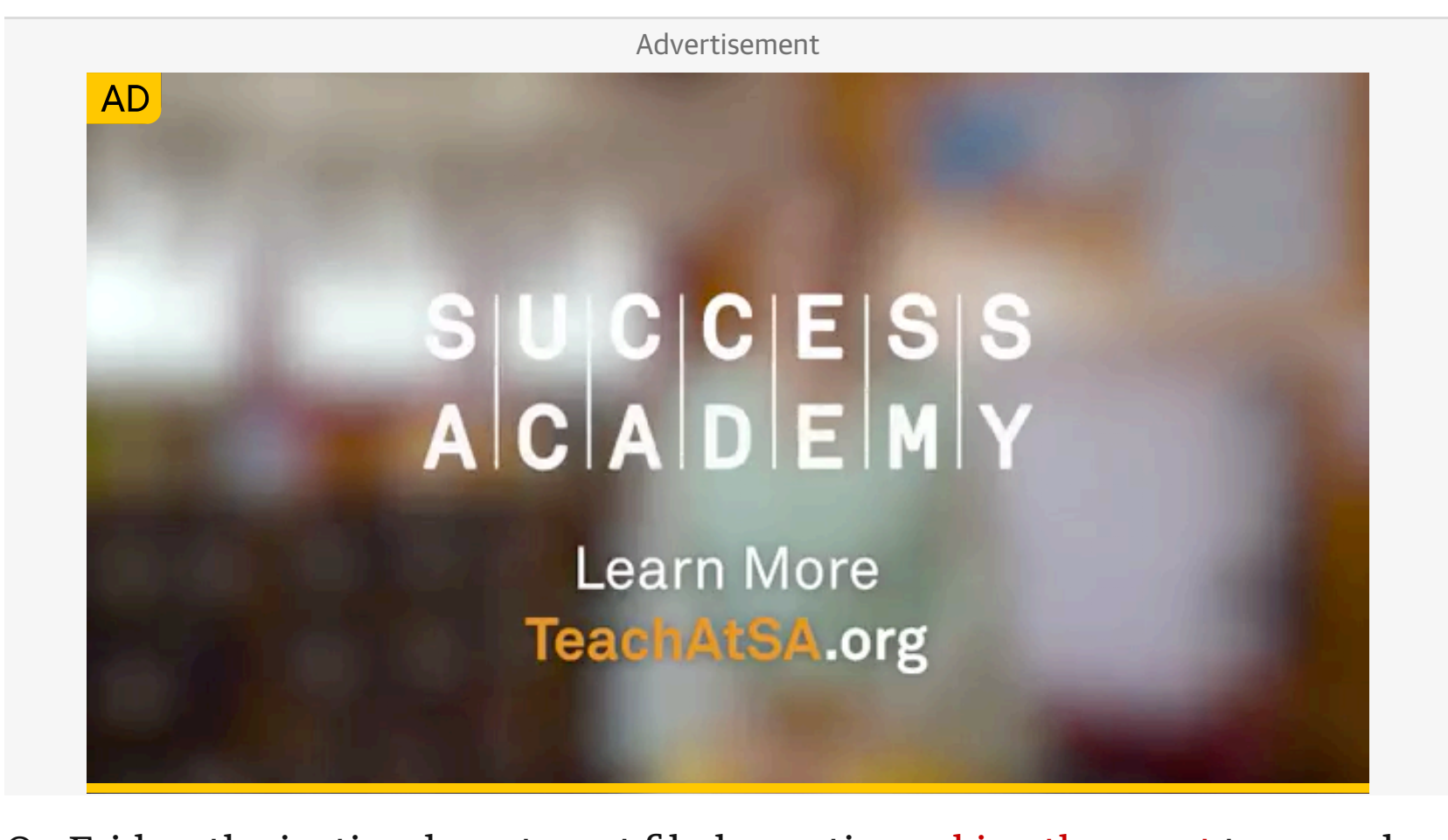


Jeffrey Epstein appears in court in West Palm Beach, Florida, on 30 July 2008. Photograph: Uma Sanghvi/AP

A US federal judge on Wednesday denied a justice department request to unseal grand jury transcripts related to a criminal investigation of the late sex offender and financier **Jeffrey Epstein** in south Florida from the mid-2000s.

The move is the first ruling in a series of attempts to release more information on the case by Donald **Trump's administration**, which has been mired in a scandal in recent weeks, after the justice department announced **it would not be releasing** any additional files related to the Epstein case – despite earlier promises from the president and the the US attorney general, **Pam Bondi**.

The justice department's memo sparked renewed focus on and scrutiny of Trump's past ties to Epstein and **drew backlash** from some Trump supporters and conservative commentators.



On Friday, the justice department filed a motion **asking the court** to unseal the grand jury transcripts related to the federal investigations into Epstein in 2005 and 2007, according to court documents.

But on Wednesday, US district judge Robin Rosenberg **ruled that the department's request** in Florida did not fall into any of the exceptions to rules requiring grand jury material be kept secret.

Rosenberg **wrote** that the court's “hands are tied” and said the government had not requested the grand jury's findings for use in a judicial proceeding, pointing out that district courts in the US are largely prohibited from unsealing grand jury testimony except in very narrow circumstances.

“Eleventh circuit law does not permit this court to grant the government's request,” Rosenberg wrote. “The court's hands are tied – a point that the Government concedes.”

The justice department still has pending requests to unseal transcripts in Manhattan federal court related to a later indictment brought against Epstein, who died by suicide in 2019 shortly after his arrest while awaiting trial, and his former associate **Ghislaine Maxwell**, who is currently serving a 20-year sentence for sex trafficking.

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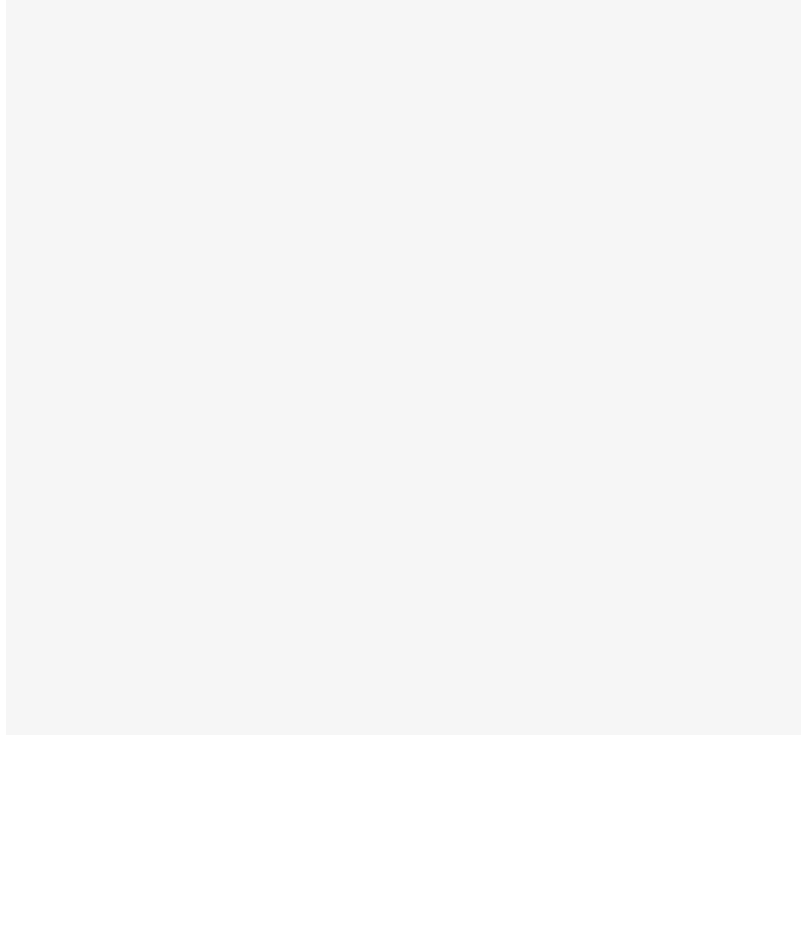
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