



Ghislaine Maxwell's brother calls lock-up a 'house of horrors'; judge seeks answers for alleged treatment

Maxwell has pleaded not guilty to sex trafficking charges alleging she recruited girls for Jeffrey Epstein

By Stephanie Pagonis | Fox News

A federal judge on Thursday ordered the government to explain why guards at the New York lock-up are allegedly repeatedly flashing light into Ghislaine Maxwell's jail cell during the overnight hours, which lawyers have argued could have led to a bruise under one eye, as seen in a newly released photo.

The alleged madam's brother, Ian Maxwell, issued a statement in which he called for surveillance footage from the "house of horrors" to be reviewed for any information to show how she suffered the injury.

U.S. District Judge Alison J. Nathan issued the order after a lawyer for Maxwell complained that guards threatened to punish her client after Maxwell was unable to explain a bruise above one eye that was noticed on Wednesday night when she saw her reflection in a nail clipper.

This comes as Ian Maxwell issued a statement in which he said he was "shocked my sister's guards didn't immediately refer her for proper medical care."



Image shows Ghislaine Maxwell's black eye as of April 29, 2021. (Court documents)

"Instead," he said, "they bullied and harassed her, effectively blaming the victim. The simple solution is to review the round-the-clock security camera footage to see what may have occurred."

[GHISLAINE MAXWELL'S FIRST PHOTO FROM PRISON SHOWS UNEXPLAINED BLACK EYE — SEE IT](#)

He added: "Apart from whatever happened in this 'House of Horrors,' I can report that Ghislaine's family and friends continue to support her. We are confident, once this is over, it will be the prosecutor who has a proverbial black eye."

On Thursday, Maxwell's lawyer, Bobbi Sternheim, said in court papers that the 59-year-old Maxwell may have gotten the bruise as she tries to shield her eyes from the light that awakens her every 15 minutes as guards make sure she's breathing.

"While Ms. Maxwell is unaware of the cause of the bruise, as reported to medical and psych staff, she has grown increasingly reluctant to report information to the guards for fear of retaliation, discipline, and punitive chores," Sternheim wrote.



In this courtroom sketch, Ghislaine Maxwell, far right, appears in Manhattan Federal court seated next to her attorney Bobbi C. Sternheim, second from left, along with her sister Isabel Maxwell, far left, during her arraignment on a superseding indictment, Friday, April 23, 2021, in New York. (AP Photo/Elizabeth Williams)

Maxwell has pleaded not guilty to [sex trafficking](#) charges alleging she recruited teenage girls for ex-boyfriend [Jeffrey Epstein](#) to sexually abuse from 1994 to 2004. Epstein, a financier, killed himself in a federal Manhattan lockup in August 2019 as he awaited a sex trafficking [trial](#).

A lawyer for Maxwell told a three-judge panel for the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals earlier this week that Maxwell is being treated as if she is a suicide risk even though she is not one.

Two judges expressed concern that light is flashed in Maxwell's cell at night, interrupting her sleep.

Maxwell's lawyer told the Second Circuit she had to cover her eyes with a towel or socks because she was not provided with a mask.

A government lawyer conceded to the appeals panel that Maxwell has not been declared a suicide risk as she argued for Maxwell to remain behind bars prior to a trial scheduled for July 12. Defense lawyers have asked that the trial be delayed until next January.

The 2nd Circuit in a brief order upheld the lower court's decision to thrice deny Maxwell bail on the grounds that she is a flight risk. Defense lawyers had offered to put up \$28.5 million and hire 24-hour armed guards to prove Maxwell would not flee. Maxwell, a U.S. citizen, also offered to renounce her British and France citizenships.

The appeals court directed Nathan to deal with any complaints about Maxwell's sleep conditions. In her order Thursday, Nathan directed the government to find out if Maxwell is being subjected to flashlight surveillance every 15 minutes at night or any other atypical flashlight surveillance. If so, the judge said, the government should explain the basis for doing so and whether Maxwell can be provided appropriate eye covering.

Fox News' Marta Dharis contributed to this report, as well as The Associated Press.