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What Jail Is Like for Jeffrey Epstein

Now sleeping in the bottom bunk of a windowless 8-by-8-foot cell, the financier earlier was denied house arrest at his sprawling Manhattan townhouse

Since his arrest on sex-trafficking charges, financier Jeffrey Epstein has spent much of his time in the bottom bunk of a windowless 8-by-8-foot cell, according to the lawyer of his former cellmate.

The cell is in a wing of a federal jail in downtown Manhattan that is known as “the box” and has been the subject of inmate complaints about mice and insect infestations, as well as standing water on the floor, according to lawyers of inmates.

Mr. Epstein’s roommate until Tuesday was Nicholas Tartaglione, a retired police officer accused of killing four people, according to Mr. Tartaglione’s lawyer, Bruce Barket.

“It is dark and it’s disgusting,” Mr. Barket said of the jail cell Messrs. Epstein and Tartaglione shared.

Mr. Epstein, 66 years old, was arrested July 6 and [was later denied bail](#) when a judge rejected his lawyers’ [request that he be placed on house arrest](#) in his sprawling Manhattan townhouse, which is valued at \$77 million.

Mr. Epstein [had built a fortune](#) of more than half a billion dollars by cultivating his ties to rich and powerful individuals. Prosecutors this month [said they found a “piles of cash” and dozens of diamonds](#) in a locked safe at his New York mansion.

The financier has pleaded not guilty to sex-trafficking charges stemming from what prosecutors allege was a yearslong scheme from 2002 to 2005 to recruit and sexually abuse dozens of girls.

Following his arrest, he has mostly been at the Manhattan jail, which is known as the Metropolitan Correctional Center. He was moved to a suicide-watch unit after being found [unconscious in his cell Tuesday morning](#), according to people familiar with the matter.

A lawyer for Mr. Epstein declined to comment. Mr. Tartaglione was interviewed in connection with Mr. Epstein's injuries but had no part in them, Mr. Barket said.

The jail houses 774 inmates, most of them awaiting trial. It has been home to such high-profile inmates as [Mexican drug lord Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán](#), who was sentenced earlier this month to life in prison.

Federal records show that the current occupants include Cesar Sayoc, who pleaded guilty to sending bombs to prominent Democrats and is awaiting sentencing, and Sayfullo Saipov, accused of killing eight people by driving a truck on to a Manhattan bike path. Mr. Saipov has pleaded not guilty.

Mr. Epstein and other inmates are allowed to leave their cells for an hour of recreation each day, as well as meetings with lawyers, according to a correction officer.

Mr. Barket said that Messrs. Tartaglione and Epstein were friendly and frequently spoke while they were bunkmates. Mr. Tartaglione was arrested in 2016 for killing four people in Chester, N.Y. He has pleaded not guilty.

Mr. Tartaglione's lawyer has been a vocal critic of the conditions in the jail, filing complaints to correction officials about rodents and bugs.

Lawyers for Mr. Guzmán blamed frigid temperatures, lack of clean blankets and contaminated water at the jail as reasons for their client's failing health.

Serene Gregg, a case worker at the Metropolitan Correctional Center and president of the correction workers' union chapter, said there are mice and broken toilets and sinks.

Representatives for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, which manages the Metropolitan Correctional Center, didn't respond to questions about the conditions there.

“There is no worse place you can find yourself,” Mr. Barket said.
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