

# Billionaire Collector Leon Black Accused of Rape of Minor in Jeffrey Epstein's Home

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A federal lawsuit alleges that Leon Black, billionaire and prolific art collector, raped a 16-year-old girl in 2002 at the Manhattan townhouse of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

According to the lawsuit filed in US District Court for Southern New York on Tuesday, the plaintiff, named in court documents as Jane Doe, was trafficked to Black by Epstein and his longtime partner, Ghislaine Maxwell, who was convicted on sex trafficking charges.

The lawsuit identifies the plaintiff, now in her 30s, as autistic. Doe was also born with Mosaic Down Syndrome, a condition that includes significant intellectual delays and disabilities, the lawsuit says.

Doe was able to sue Black under an amendment to a New York City law that allows lawsuits concerning gender-based violence to be filed within a two-year window that began on March 1, despite the statute of limitations.

Black's lawyer, Susan Estrich, told the *Washington Post* that the lawsuit was "frivolous," and shared an emailed statement by Black's spokesman which described the allegations as "totally made up" and "entirely uncorroborated."

"Mr. Black has never met this individual," the statement continued.

Black has also faced other rape allegations, which he has denied. In May, a judge dismissed a former Russian model's lawsuit, which accused the former CEO of rape and defamation. Another woman also has accused Black of raping her in Epstein's home.

Last week, the *New York Times* reported that Black paid \$62.5 million to the US Virgin Islands in January to avoid any potential legal action over his ties to Epstein. A spokesman for Black told the newspaper that the settlement contained "no suggestion ... that Mr. Black was aware of or participated in any misconduct."

Black's settlement with the Virgin Islands does not cover claims by anyone else against Black, and the settlement can not be used as "evidence of wrongdoing by Black," according to the document.

This is the third accusation of rape filed against Black, a trustee and the former board chair of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and a recurring figure on the *ARTnews* Top 200 Collectors list.

In a [lawsuit](#) filed in New York State Supreme Court last year, Cheri Pierson alleged that Black “brutally” raped her 2002 in Epstein’s Upper East Side home. Wigdor LLP, who represents Pierson, also represents Guzel Ganieva, a former model who in a March 2021 tweet accused Black of sexually harassing and abusing her “for years.” Ganieva claimed that Black had mentioned Epstein’s “sexual proclivities” multiple times and once flew her “to Florida without her consent, to satisfy the sex needs of Epstein, his ‘best friend,’” according to *Vanity Fair*.

Black admitted to having a relationship with Ganieva but denied the rape accusation. In October 2021, Black sued the former model for defamation.

In March 2021, amid mounting rumors of his connections to Epstein, over 150 artists and activities [signed a petition](#) asking MoMA to cut ties with Black. He subsequently [stepped down as MoMA board chair](#) and as chief executive and chairman of the private equity firm Apollo Global Management Inc., which he led for over 30 years.

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(Bloomberg) -- Uber Technologies Inc. averted a rare trial over a bicyclist’s claims that he was “doored” by a driver’s vehicle, settling the case just before opening statements were set to start in a San Francisco court.

The settlement follows Uber’s usual practice of resolving such claims out of court. The bicyclist’s lawsuit would likely have been the first such case to go to trial in California and threatened to expose details about the company’s training practices.

Jurors in the San Francisco court waited for more than 1 1/2 hours before being told by state court Judge Jeffrey S. Ross that what was supposed to be a monthlong trial would not move forward. Details of the settlement weren’t announced.

Edgard Velarde, 64, had earlier refused to settle out of court for injuries he alleges he sustained after being hit by the door of passenger exiting an Uber vehicle, turning down a \$1 million offer from Uber in exchange for keeping quiet about the incident.

Velarde had been seeking “many millions” in damages and had promised to expose lies he says the rideshare company told him and details of the lack of training it provides to its drivers.

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