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Jeffrey Epstein

Jes Staley pressed JPMorgan to keep Jeffrey Epstein as client

Retention efforts shed further light on relationship that later prompted Barclays chief to resign



Jes Staley, right, stepped down as chief of Barclays last year after an investigation by UK regulators over whether he had mischaracterised his relationship with Jeffrey Epstein © FT montage/Corbis/Getty/Bloomberg

Joshua Franklin in New York JANUARY 25 2022

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Jes Staley pressed JPMorgan Chase to keep Jeffrey Epstein as a client — despite the fact that the disgraced financier had been convicted of prostitution offences — before the bank cut him off as a customer in 2013, according to two people involved in the discussions.

Staley made the argument to other senior officials of the bank as JPMorgan examined whether Epstein's conviction in 2008 of soliciting sex from a minor, which resulted in a 13-month prison sentence, was grounds to remove him as a client of its private bank, the people said.

Staley, then head of JPMorgan's investment bank, argued during the year before the bank dropped Epstein as a client that he had served his sentence and paid his debt to society, one of the people said.

JPMorgan declined to comment. A spokesperson for Staley declined to comment.

Staley's efforts to retain Epstein as a JPMorgan client shed further light on their relationship, which forced Staley to [resign](#) as chief executive of Barclays in November.

He stepped down after seeing preliminary conclusions of an investigation by UK regulators over whether he had mischaracterised his relationship with Epstein as purely professional. Staley is contesting the findings and is awaiting the results of his appeal.

The Financial Times recently [reported](#) that the UK inquiry uncovered 1,200 emails between the two men while Staley was at JPMorgan, with content that included unexplained terms such as “snow white”.

Staley worked at JPMorgan for more than 30 years. He developed ties with Epstein during the period when he was an executive at the bank's asset management operations. Staley headed JPMorgan's private bank from 1999 until 2001. He then took charge of the asset and wealth management division, which houses the private bank, from 2001 to 2009.

He was promoted to be head of the investment bank in 2009 and was serving in that role when the conversations to cut ties with Epstein were taking place. By that point, Mary Erdoes was running JPMorgan's asset and wealth management division.

Staley left JPMorgan in January 2013, joining US hedge fund BlueMountain Capital. He became Barclays chief executive in 2015.

The decision by JPMorgan to cut ties with Epstein came amid increased pressure on US banks from regulators regarding their anti-money laundering controls, with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, a banking regulator, [identifying](#) compliance deficiencies by JPMorgan in early 2013.

When Epstein's relationship with JPMorgan ended in 2013, he became a client of Deutsche Bank's wealth management business, the FT has [reported](#).

Staley has said previously that his relationship with Epstein began to "taper off" after he left JPMorgan. However, just a few months before joining Barclays, Staley sailed his yacht to Epstein's private Caribbean island.

Epstein [died](#) by suicide in 2019 while awaiting trial on charges that he sex-trafficked underage girls.

Additional reporting by Stephen Morris in London

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