

Ghislaine Maxwell, the onetime girlfriend and alleged accomplice of accused sex-trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, was arrested Thursday morning and charged by New York federal prosecutors with six counts in connection with an ongoing federal investigation into Epstein's accomplices, according to court documents and a person familiar with the matter. During that testimony, she denied having given anyone a massage, specifically denied having given Minor Victim-2 a massage and said, "I wasn't aware that [Epstein] was having sexual activities with anyone when I was with him other than myself. Asked whether Epstein had a "scheme to recruit underage girls for sexual massages," she replied: "I don't know what you're talking about." She has previously denied wrongdoing, and in a deposition has called at least one of her accusers "a liar." According to Thursday's indictment, however, Maxwell was the principal recruiter for victims of Epstein's sex trafficking ring. The indictment describes Maxwell's relationship with three victims, identified only as Minor Victim-1, Minor Victim-2 and Minor Victim-3. Maxwell, along with Epstein, is accused by prosecutors of luring the young girls into their circle, inquiring about their schools and families, taking them to the movies or shopping. After developing a rapport with them, she would allegedly steer the relationship into sexual territory, talking to them about sexual topics or undressing in front of them, followed by encouraging them to give Epstein's massages, during which the girls were fully or partially nude, the indictment says. Those massages, some of which Maxwell participated in, according to the indictment, sometimes developed into sexual encounters. In both the indictment of Maxwell and that of Epstein, federal prosecutors described the Epstein's resulting abuse from these encounters, which allegedly included touching a girl's genitals, using a sex toy on them or directing a girl to touch him while he masturbated. The indictment alleges that Maxwell participated in "multiple group sexual encounters" with Minor Victim-1 in New York and Florida between 1994 and 1997, gave Minor Victim-2 an unsolicited massage in New Mexico in 1996 while the girl was topless and encouraged Minor Victim-3 to give massages to Epstein in London between 1994 and 1995, "knowing that Epstein intended to sexually abuse [her] during those massages." Maxwell and multimillionaire Epstein are accused of luring them to an array of residences, including his Upper East Side mansion, his Palm Beach estate, and his sprawling Santa Fe ranch, along with her residence in London. When Epstein himself was indicted, New York federal prosecutors said they believed the Florida agreement didn't restrict their office from prosecuting him, but his lawyers argued otherwise.