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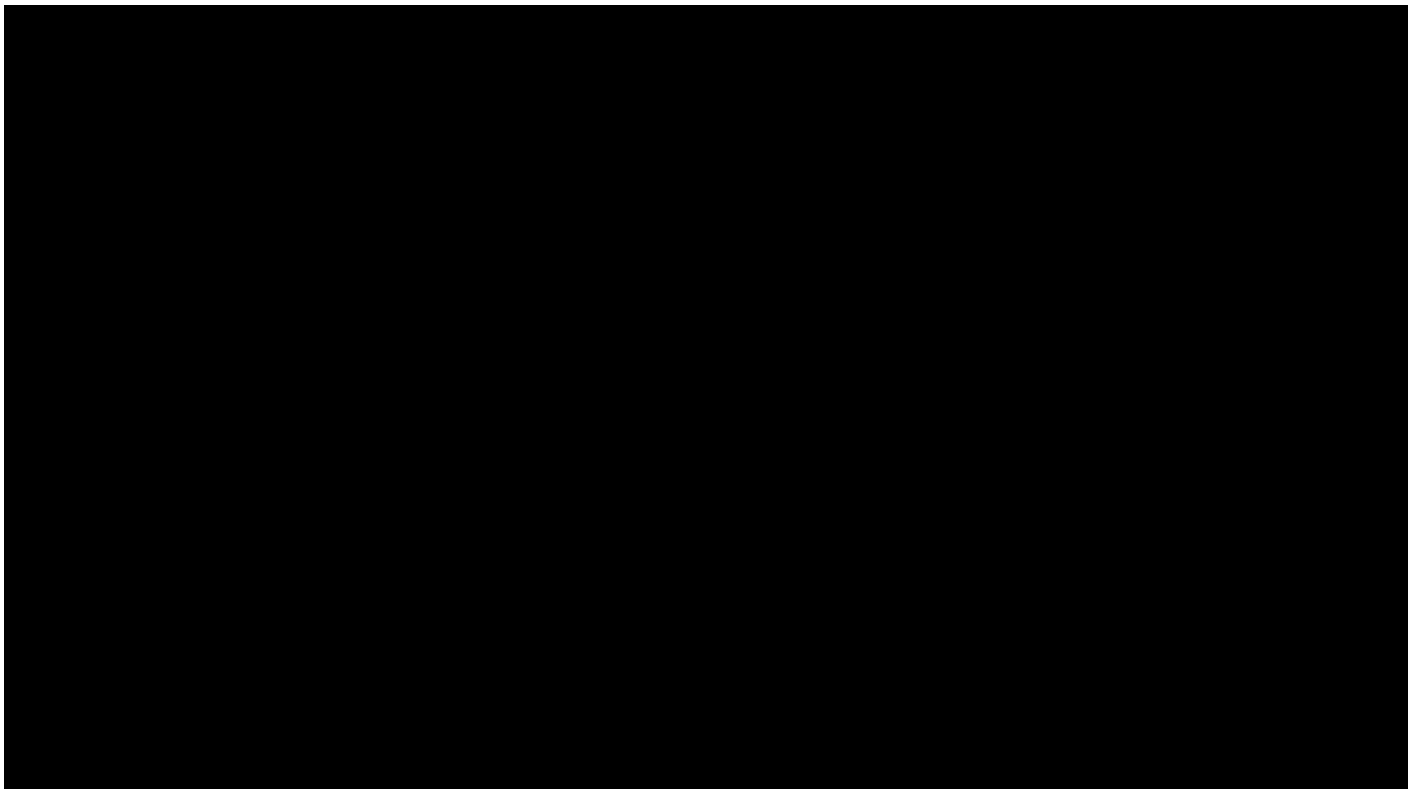
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US NEWS **EXCLUSIVE**

Epstein prison guard googled him minutes before body found — and made mysterious deposit before pedophile's suicide: DOJ

By **Gabrielle Fahmy**

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One of Jeffrey Epstein's prison guards googled the sex predator minutes before he was found dead — and also made a mysterious \$5,000 cash deposit 10 days before the predator's jail-cell suicide, new Department of Justice documents reveal.

Tova Noel was one of the two Metropolitan Correctional Center workers accused of falsifying records to say they checked on Epstein throughout the night before his Aug. 10, 2019, suicide.

The guards were fired but criminal **charges against both were later dropped.**



Criminal charges against Noel and the other guard were dropped in December 2021 by a federal judge.

AP

Noel googled “latest on Epstein in jail” at 5:42 a.m. and then again at 5:52 a.m. — less than 40 minutes before her colleague, **correctional officer Michael Thomas**, found the disgraced financier dead in his cell by hanging at 6:30 a.m., according to an FBI record of Noel's internet search history that night.

Earlier that shift, Noel, 37, **shopped for furniture online** and snoozed on the job instead of making the mandated checks on Epstein every 30 minutes, while Thomas perused motorcycles, prosecutors said.

The FBI highlighted the eerie internet search in its 66-page forensic examination of the Bureau of Prisons desktop computers of Noel and Thomas. It was the only search highlighted.

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When questioned during her sworn statement to the DOJ in 2021, Noel denied googling Epstein.

"I don't remember doing that," she claimed, according to a transcript. She said FBI records were not "accurate. I don't recall looking him up."

Noel, who has since been **sued in Westchester County Supreme Court for alleged assault at her new job** as a medical office assistant at Montefiore Einstein Advanced Care, also claimed to investigators that everyone at the Manhattan federal lockup failed to do rounds and falsified records about it.



Epstein was found dead in his cell when Thomas and Noel brought him breakfast at 6:30 a.m. on Aug. 10, 2019.

William Farrington

“I’ve never worked in the Special Housing Unit and actually done rounds every 30 minutes,” she told investigators.

Meanwhile, Chase Bank flagged cash deposits in Noel’s bank account in a “suspicious activity report” to the FBI in November 2019, another file from the DOJ revealed.

A total of 12 deposits began in April 2018, the bank said, and culminated in the largest deposit, for \$5,000, on July 30, 2019, the records showed. **5**

Noel
began
working
in the
MCC’s
Special
Housing
Unit,
where
Epstein
was
housed,
in 2019.



The FBI
highlighted
the eerie
early
morning
Google
search in
its files.
DOJ

The files only contain Noel's bank records beginning in December 2018. They show seven cash deposits totaling \$11,880. Noel started working at the Special Housing Unit — where Epstein had been held — beginning on July 7, 2019, just weeks before his death.

Noel, who drove a \$62,000 2019 Land Rover Range Rover, wasn't asked about the cash during her DOJ interview, records showed.

An internal FBI briefing, also released in the DOJ files, reveals the agency thought Noel was likely the **mysterious orange shape** spotted in a blurry surveillance video near Epstein's cell around 10:40 p.m. that night.

"At approximately 10:40 pm, a correctional officer, believed to be Tova Noel, carried linen or inmate clothing up to the L-Tier, last time any correctional officer approached the only entrance to the SHU tier," the agency wrote. Epstein apparently hanged himself with strips of orange cloth.

In the sworn statement, Noel, who was working a double shift that day, told investigators she last saw Epstein alive "somewhere around after 10" and that she "never gave out linen — ever" or clothing to inmates because that's done the shift before.

The identity of the **pixelated orange blob** in the video has been a source of debate and conspiracies since the FBI released the footage last summer.



Epstein
was
housed
at the
MCC
after
his July
6, 2019
arrest,
until
his
death.
AP

The original 2023 inspector general report said it was “unidentified correctional officers,” making the recently released FBI document the first time a name was publicly put to the mysterious shape.

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She testified she didn't know why Epstein had extra linen in his cell. The other guard on duty was sleeping between 10 p.m. and midnight, she said.

A prison employee entering the area of Epstein's cell alone would be a policy violation, workers have said.



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Lawyers for Noel declined to comment. Asked during her sworn statement if she had any part in Epstein's death, Noel replied “no.”

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