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Jeffrey Epstein's assistant ordered so many 23andMe kits, the company asked why

The order, which amounted to over \$6,000, included 30 tests

By **Ariana Bindman**, News Features Reporter

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An exterior view of 23andMe's former headquarters in South San Francisco, Calif.

Image via Google Streetview



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the Bay Area biotech company 23andMe that it prompted a representative to reach out and ask for more information about their intended use.

According to the exchange, around the summer of 2017, Epstein's former executive assistant, Lesley Groff, attempted to order over two dozen DNA kits for Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, the CEO of Dubai-based logistics company DP World, and deliver them to Epstein's New York mansion. The order contained 30 Health and Ancestry Service kits priced at \$199 each, amounting to just over \$6,000, emails released by the Justice Department show. The large purchase then flagged 23andMe's customer support team, which reached out with further questions.

On Tuesday, a 23andMe representative told SFGATE that the compliance review for large orders is standard protocol and

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relationship with Epstein, who described him as a close personal friend he had known since the early 2000s. As of Tuesday, Sulayem's name in the Justice Department's database yields over 4,000 results.

"Sultan received his personal kit from Jeffrey as a gift," Groff wrote in a follow-up email to the 23andMe representative. Groff said that Sulayem "would like to give the kits" to his co-workers "so they too may enjoy investigating their ancestry. (Sultan participated with his own DNA and found it fascinating...he wants the people he works with to participate as well)."



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Groff also asked the representative if there was any way to circumvent adding individual names to each test kit.

Correspondence from Groff shows that Sulayem had followed up on the status of the 23andMe tests, and Epstein's assistant told the 23andMe representative that they would like to "have the kits shipped as soon as possible." Subsequently, the kits were loaded onto an Emirates plane and flown to Dubai because Sulayem "did not want to wait any longer," Groff continued.

Around July of that year, however, the 23andMe employee canceled the order, citing the terms of service and stating that the kits had to be used in the U.S.

Separately, Groff ordered several 23andMe kits from Amazon in March of that year, with the handwritten memo that they were "for Jeffrey to give as gifts." It's unclear who received the

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NEWS FEATURES REPORTER



Ariana Bindman is the news features reporter at SFGATE, where she has reported and written features and breaking news stories for news, local, culture, travel, sports, food and politics verticals since January 2022. Her story on [abandoned cars in Oakland](#) won a San Francisco Press Club award in 2022, and she's been invited to speak on radio stations like NPR and KCRW. To submit tips, comments or cat videos, please reach out to her at ariana.bindman@sfgate.com

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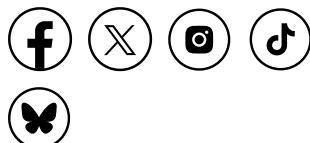
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