

‘Welcome news’: Inflation eases its grip in November

Some analysts question accuracy of delayed data, which came in below forecasts. **In Money**

CFP first-round recap: Thrillers and comebacks

Kalen DeBoer, Alabama pass prove-it moment. Other weekend winners and losers, **in Sports**



PHILLIP FARAONE/GETTY IMAGES FOR PRIME VIDEO

Walton Goggins accepts ‘Fallout’

Veteran actor talks about exhausting schedule and playing The Ghou, who became a surprise sex symbol in Prime Video series. **In Life**

USA TODAY

THE NATION'S NEWS | \$3 | MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2025

Epstein files raise additional questions

Lawmakers, advocates say key info still missing

Josh Meyer USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department’s partial release of the long-awaited Jeffrey Epstein files raises important questions, lawmakers and victim advocates say, about potentially botched investigations – and about what other evidence the government may have about potential co-conspirators.

Many of the thousands of documents released on Dec. 19 to meet a legal deadline included entire files and grand jury transcripts with significant redactions. Other key investigative documents known to be in the government’s possession, including information leading to the federal indictment of Epstein in 2019 and of his longtime associate Ghislaine Maxwell in 2020, were missing entirely.

The release did confirm, for the first time, that authorities have identified 1,200 alleged victims who were trafficked by Epstein and Maxwell, or by relatives of those victims, whose names needed to be painstakingly redacted from the documents.

But the massive trove did nothing to support longstanding claims by figures including members of President Donald Trump’s inner circle, leading Republicans and some Democrats of a government coverup to protect wealthy accomplices of Epstein. The Justice Department released additional documents the afternoon of Dec. 20, CBS News and Politico reported.

Here are some of the key outstanding questions.

What was on Epstein computers?

An evidence list made public Dec. 19, for instance, described large quantities of computers, hard drives and digital tape recorders seized during searches of Epstein’s homes, but their contents were not released. A list

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This photo of Jeffrey Epstein was one of many included in a trove of files released by the Justice Department Dec. 19 from its investigations into the late financier and sex offender. U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT VIA REUTERS

On Politics

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Find more on the release of the Epstein files at [usatoday.com](https://www.usatoday.com).



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Brooke Wilfley stood her ground despite threats against her youth hockey teams. In the end, the teams took the ice, and a judge found the former president of the Colorado Amateur Hockey Association liable for civil theft. MICHAEL CIAGLO FOR USA TODAY

Rampant retaliation afflicts youth sports

Hockey mom who exposed theft by leader of association saw it firsthand

Kenny Jacoby USA TODAY

“I would go home and stay up at night worrying about all these other kids, just feeling like the rug was constantly being pulled out from under me.”

Brooke Wilfley

For months, Brooke Wilfley raised concerns that the president of her local youth hockey governing board was using his position for profit. • The Denver-area hockey mom discovered that the president, Randy Kanai, was secretly routing the Colorado Amateur Hockey Association’s money through his private company. • She reported his conflicts of interest and mismanagement to everyone she could: board members, club directors, coaches and four USA Hockey leaders who oversee the nonprofit. Little was done. • Then in January 2023, Wilfley received a letter from the Colorado Amateur Hockey Association’s attorney. The board, it said, was launching an investigation. • Into her.

Seeking evidence of “libelous and slanderous statements,” the letter demanded Wilfley hand over two years of her emails, texts, calendars, phone logs and any other records of her conversations about the Colorado Amateur Hockey Association’s finances. It gave her 21 days to turn in her cell phones, computers and iPads for a

forensic review. “This is an important legal duty,” the letter said, “and failure to follow these instructions may subject you to discipline.” Whistleblower retaliation occurs in every industry. But in few sectors is the

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Have last-minute concerns? Give Santa a call

Saman Shafiq USA TODAY

Santa Claus may be the busiest man on Christmas; however, he’s still taking time out of his schedule to talk to all children, even the naughty ones.

In addition to mall visits and responding to letters via his famous mail service, December’s most wanted man has a hotline, which you can call to find out if you’re on his “Nice List” or let him know what gifts you’re looking forward to this Christmas.

Father Christmas can be reached at his official hotline by calling 605-313-4000.

People can also visit [freeconferencecall.com/santa-hotline](https://www.freeconferencecall.com/santa-hotline) to call the Santa Hotline through the official website.

When you call Santa’s hotline, you are directed to his voicemail, where Santa wishes you a Merry Christmas with his signature “ho, ho, ho.”



Letters aren’t the only way children can communicate with Santa. They can also call him. STOCKNROLL/GETTY IMAGES

“This is Santa Claus, and you have reached my personal hotline,” he says. “We have been very busy making all of those toys to deliver on Christmas morning, and I want you to know that your family loves you very much, and so do I.”

Santa reminds everyone to be good

and listen to their parents. He then prompts the caller to leave a message.

“When you hear the tone, please leave me your Christmas gift wishes and holiday cheer,” says Santa. “And remember, kids – I know who’s been naughty and nice.

“Merry Christmas, and I’ll see you soon,” he adds before signing off.

You can call Santa Claus whenever you want. The line to the North Pole is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Santa will also be accepting calls on Christmas Day for last-minute wishes.

Calls to the hotline can also be made as many times as you desire.

When a call to Santa is made from a mobile number, callers will receive a text with a link to a recording of the voicemail that was left for Santa. The message can also be shared.

The hotline is 100% free but normal carrier rates may apply, according to the website.