

# Sean 'Diddy' Combs' properties searched by feds as part of sex trafficking probe, sources say

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Two law enforcement officials have told The Associated Press that two properties belonging to rapper Sean “Diddy” Combs in Los Angeles and Miami were searched by federal Homeland Security Investigations agents and other law enforcement as part of an ongoing sex trafficking investigation.

NEW YORK (AP) — Two properties belonging to music mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs in Los Angeles and Miami were searched Monday by federal Homeland Security Investigations agents and other law enforcement as part of an ongoing sex trafficking investigation by federal authorities in New York, two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press.

It’s not clear whether Combs was the target of the investigation. The officials were not authorized to publicly discuss details of the investigation and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

In a statement, Homeland Security Investigations said it “executed law enforcement actions as part of an ongoing investigation, with assistance from HSI Los Angeles, HSI Miami, and our local law enforcement partners.”

A spokesperson for the U.S. attorney’s office in Manhattan declined to comment.

Messages to Combs’ lawyers and other representatives seeking comment were not immediately returned.

A police line was set up around the Los Angeles house in the wealthy Holmby Hills neighborhood near Beverly Hills. Helicopter video from KABC-TV showed a group of agents with vests that indicated they were from Homeland Security Investigations gathered in the home’s backyard near the pool. A command post was set up outside the house and agents were still entering and leaving hours after the search began.

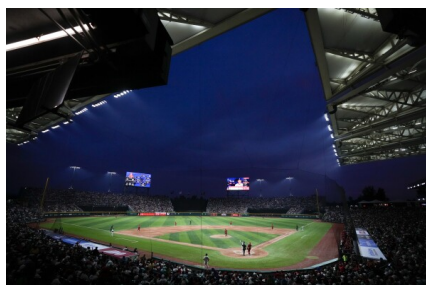
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There have been several sexual assault lawsuits filed against Combs in recent months.

In February a music producer filed a lawsuit alleging Combs coerced him to solicit prostitutes and pressured him to have sex with them. Combs' attorney Shawn Holley has said of those allegations that "we have overwhelming, indisputable proof that his claims are complete lies."

Combs' former protege and girlfriend, the R&B singer Cassie, sued him in November alleging years of sexual abuse, including rape. The lawsuit said he forced her to have sex with male prostitutes while he filmed them. The suit was settled the day after it was filed.

Another of Combs' accusers was a woman who said the rap producer raped her two decades ago when she was 17.

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they have been sexually abused unless they come forward publicly as Cassie did.

Combs had said in a December statement, "I did not do any of the awful things being alleged."

Douglas Wigdor, an attorney who represents Cassie and another woman who sued Combs, said in a statement Monday, "Hopefully, this is the beginning of a process that will hold Mr. Combs responsible for his depraved conduct."

It is not clear whether the search is related to any of the allegations raised in the lawsuits.

Combs is among the most influential hip-hop producers and executives of the past three decades. Formerly known as Puff Daddy, he built one of hip-hop's biggest empires, blazing a trail with several entities attached to his famous name. He is the founder of Bad Boy Records and a three-time Grammy winner who has worked with a slew of top-tier artists including Notorious B.I.G., Mary J. Blige, Usher, Lil Kim, Faith Evans and 112.

Combs created the fashion clothing line Sean John, launched the Revolt TV channel with a focus on music, and produced the reality show "Making the Band" for MTV.

His latest album, "The Love Album - Off the Grid," was released last year days after Combs was honored at the MTV VMAs. It was nominated for best progressive R&B album at February's Grammy Awards, which the rapper-mogul did not attend.

The entertainment industry has been beset with a steady stream of career-ending sexual misconduct allegations in the years since stories about movie mogul Harvey Weinstein spawned the #MeToo movement in 2017. Weinstein and "That '70s Show" star Danny Masterson are each serving prison sentences after rape convictions. Dozens of civil lawsuits have been filed against prominent figures.

The music industry has not faced a reckoning to the same degree, but singer and producer R. Kelly is serving a prison sentence for sexually abusing young fans, seven women have sued hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons alleging he raped them and two women have sued Aerosmith singer Steven Tyler alleging sexual assault.

Weinstein, Masterson and Kelly are appealing their convictions, and Simmons has denied all of the allegations against him. One lawsuit against Tyler has been dismissed and he is contesting the other.

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This story has been updated to correct the month Sean “Diddy” Combs denied the allegations against him. The statement was issued on Instagram in December 2023, not November.

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AP Entertainment Writer Andrew Dalton contributed from Los Angeles.