



Arizona judge lowers father's \$75M cash-only bond

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FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — An Arizona judge has reduced the cash-only bond amount for a father accused of sexually abusing his children, but the defendant's family said Monday that it still cannot afford to free him from jail.

The state appellate court ordered Yavapai County [Superior Court](#) Judge [Tina Ainley](#) to reset the \$75 million bond, declaring it unconstitutionally excessive. It was perhaps one of the largest bail amounts on record in U.S. history.

Ainley lowered it to \$2 million cash or security, saying the defendant's lack of U.S. citizenship, the nature of the charges and the wishes of the alleged victims weighed in favor of a substantial bail amount.

She also noted some mitigating factors, including that the allegations arose after the defendant and his wife started on the path to divorce in 2007 and that some witnesses were concerned the children were coached.

The man, a longtime Sedona resident and Brazilian national, remained jailed in Camp Verde on two counts of continuous sexual abuse. [The Associated Press](#) typically doesn't identify victims of sexual abuse and is withholding the defendant's name to protect the children's privacy.

If the man can post the full \$2 million or a percentage of it through a bondsman, he can live with his brother in San Diego, must surrender all passports and stay in the United States, Ainley ruled.

Prosecutors have argued that the defendant is a flight risk and expressed concern that he might harm the children if released.

An attorney for the alleged victims did not immediately return a request for comment left by The Associated Press, and prosecutors declined to comment. They have estimated in court documents that the defendant's family, namely his grandmother, has up to \$70 million.

"He has major assets and support outside the country, and it is easy for him to flee once released," the defendant's ex-wife wrote in a financial affidavit.

The defense had argued for a bond of no more than \$25,000. The defendant's brother said although his 102-year-old grandmother has valuable land in Brazil, it is protected by environmental laws and cannot be sold.

"Of course we cannot come up with that kind of money," he said of the new bail amount. "I don't have or my family doesn't have that kind of money."

The brother said he would favor returning to the state appellate court for a determination on whether the new bail amount is in line with case law and what the court envisioned when it sent the case back to Ainley. The brother's name also was withheld by the AP.

Prosecutors told the court that bond amounts of \$1 million to \$2 million have been set in the county for similar charges, according to court documents.

The trial is set to begin Nov. 30.