

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**
(Criminal Jurisdiction)

Criminal
Case No. 25/3755 SC/CRML

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

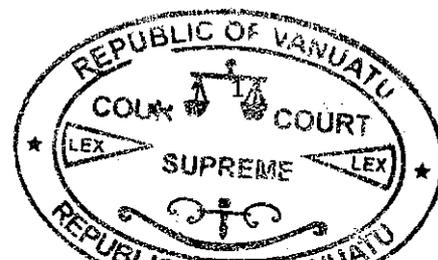
v

MORRISON JACOB

Date: 27 March 2026
Before: Justice V.M. Trief
Counsel: Public Prosecutor – Ms S. Langon
Defendant – Mr L. Moli

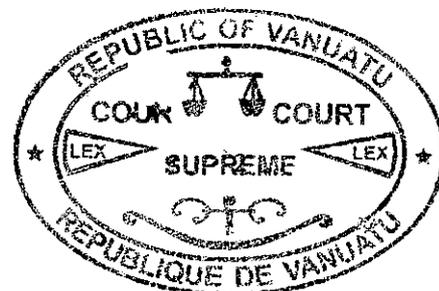
SENTENCE

1. Mr Morrison Jacob, you appear for sentence today having pleaded guilty and accepted the summary of facts in relation to two charges of unlawful possession of cannabis contrary to subs. 2(62) and s. 17 of the *Dangerous Drugs Act* [CAP. 12]. You are convicted on your own pleas and the admitted facts.
2. On 8 October 2025, around 8.30pm at Fatumaru Bay area in Port Vila, the complainant Police officer found you in possession of one large package containing cannabis, which was covered in aluminium foil. He confiscated the material. Police testing confirmed the material to be cannabis weighing 41 grams (Count 1).
3. On 9 October 2025, around 4pm at the Police Drugs Unit in Port Vila, whilst in Police custody, Sgt Rodney Taivakalo saw you push your hands inside the right pocket of your trousers and take out five packages of cannabis substance covered in aluminium foil. You tried to hide them by fitting them into a small pocket of your



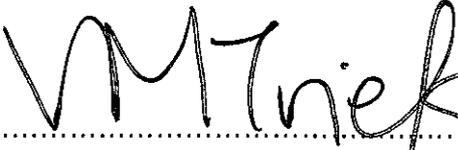
camouflage jacket. Sgt Taivakalo asked you what was inside your pocket and you replied that it was cannabis and you wanted to smoke it. You showed him the five packages and he confiscated them. Police testing confirmed the material to be cannabis weighing 9.67 grams (Count 2).

4. You were found in possession of a total of 50.67 grams on two separate occasions.
5. On 19 October 2025, you admitted the offending under caution.
6. The sentence start point is assessed having regard to the maximum sentence available, and the mitigating and aggravating factors of the offending.
7. The maximum penalty for the offence of unlawful possession of cannabis is 20 years imprisonment, a fine of up to VT100 million or both.
8. There are no aggravating or mitigating factors to this offending.
9. Taking the foregoing matters into account, the global sentence start point that I adopt is 12 months imprisonment.
10. One third (4 months) is deducted for your early guilty pleas.
11. You are 30 years old. You are single. You are employed by Wan Smol Bag Theatre and work as an actor and cooking tutor. You have good family and community support. You have no prior convictions. You cooperated with the Police and have pleaded guilty at the first opportunity. Accordingly, a further 2 months is deducted from the sentence start point for your personal factors.
12. You served time in custody from 9 October 2025 to 23 October 2025, an effective term of imprisonment of one month. Accordingly, a further month is deducted from the sentence start point.
13. The end sentence imposed for unlawful possession of cannabis (Counts 1 and 2) is 5 months imprisonment.
14. The applicable sentencing principles are expressing disapproval of this offending on behalf of the people of Vanuatu, general and specific deterrence, and holding you to account for your offending.



15. The Court has a discretion under s. 57 of the *Penal Code* to suspend all or part of the sentence where it is not appropriate to make an offender suffer immediate imprisonment "... (i) in view of the circumstances; and (ii) in particular the nature of the crime; and (iii) the character of the offender."
16. This was serious offending. There is a need for general and specific deterrence, given the prevalence of this crime in the country. I also take into account your prior clean record, your strong community and family support, and prospects of rehabilitation which favour suspension of the sentence. In view of the circumstances, the Court is exercising its discretion to suspend your sentences. The end sentences are suspended for 2 years on the condition that you commit no further offence within that period. You are warned that if you are convicted of any offence in the next 2 years, that you will be taken into custody and serve your sentence of imprisonment imposed today as well as the penalty imposed for the further offending.
17. In addition, you are to complete 100 hours of community work within the next 12 months, and supervision for 6 months. You are to attend any rehabilitation program required of you by the Probation Services of the Department of Correctional Services.
18. You have 14 days to appeal the sentence.
19. The drugs are to be destroyed.

**DATED at Port Vila this 27th day of March, 2026
BY THE COURT**


.....
Justice Viran Molisa Trief

