

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

Criminal  
Case No. 25/1955 SC/CRML

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

v

JOELYNE JENNY MORRIS  
Defendant

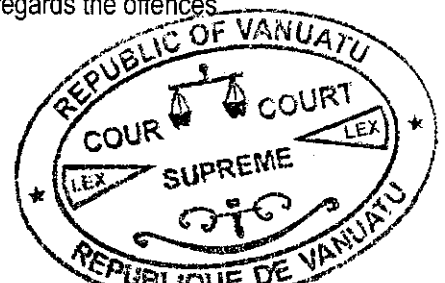
Date of Plea: 19 August 2025  
Date of Sentence: 15 September 2025  
Before: Justice E P Goldsbrough  
In Attendance: Ms Leingkon S for PPO  
Tevi, R holding papers on behalf of A, Bal for Defendant

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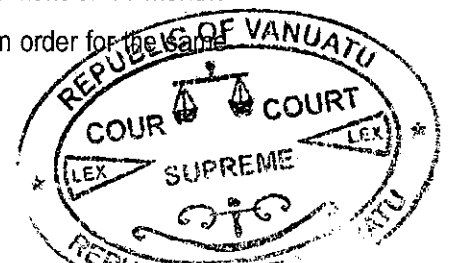
**SENTENCE**

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1. Joelyne Jenny Morris, you have pleaded guilty to two offences concerning cannabis. The first offence is unlawful possession of cannabis when you were found to have it inside your house. The quantity of cannabis was substantial, - 0.74 kilos of cannabis. The second offence is attempting unlawfully to sell and supply cannabis.
2. As a result of information received, the police obtained a search warrant to search your house, garden, and any other place to which you had access. The subsequent search uncovered this quantity of cannabis. You were arrested but made no admissions in relation to the cannabis to the police after your arrest.
3. When deciding on an appropriate sentence for these offences, the court begins by considering the maximum prescribed penalty for the two offences. Here, the maximum penalty is 20 years imprisonment or a fine not exceeding VT 100 million. The maximum prescribed penalties assist the court by demonstrating the seriousness with which the legislature regards the offences.



4. Next, the court considers those factors which make your offences more serious than others. The quantity of cannabis that you had in your possession was substantial, which is an aggravating feature. It amounts to 323 hand-rolled joints of marijuana. That you had such a large quantity of cannabis in your possession and an intention to sell the same is an aggravating feature of possession. Still, it is also reflected in the second charge of attempted sale.
5. All of these factors indicate to this court that the starting point for these two offences taken together should be two years' imprisonment.
6. The court then looks at those features about you and your background which should be held in your favour. From the pre-sentence report, it is clear that you are a person of previous good character and that you have successfully brought up three children. You have been able to do this even though your partner is working overseas. You have a medical condition which requires overseas visits and expensive prescription medication.
7. At the earliest opportunity, you pleaded guilty to these two offences for which you are entitled to receive a reduction in sentence. That reduction in sentence will amount to 1/3.
8. From the starting point of 24 months imprisonment, a 1/3 reduction leaves a sentence of 16 months imprisonment. You have not spent any time in pre-sentence custody for these offences, and so there is nothing to be taken into account there. You are a previous good character, and your circumstances, bringing up a family without the support of a resident partner, and the medical issues which you face, also suggest that a further reduction of your sentence is appropriate. That reduction from the starting point should, in this court's view, be an additional 10%. That leaves an end sentence of 14 months imprisonment.
9. When considering the imposition of imprisonment, the law prescribes that a court must consider whether the sentence should be suspended or immediate. It requires the court to consider the circumstances of the offences, the nature of the crime, and the character of the offender to determine whether suspension is appropriate.
10. Taking into account the circumstances of your offending, serious though it is, and enough to warrant a custodial sentence, and also taking into account your character, this Court determines that the sentence of imprisonment may be suspended. It also considers that you may benefit, as suggested in the pre-sentence report, from a term of supervision.
11. For your two offences, the sentence of this court is a period of imprisonment of 14 months suspended for two years, together with a suspended sentence supervision order for the same.



two years. This means that you will not go to prison today, and you will not be required to serve your sentence of imprisonment if, for the next two years, you are not convicted of any offence by any court in this country. During the two years whilst you are under the supervision of the probation service, you must report to your supervisor when required and follow his or her lawful instructions. If you fail to do that, your supervisor may bring you back to this court.

12. If you appear before any court and are convicted of any offence within the next two years, you will be liable to serve this term of imprisonment. An order is made for the confiscation and destruction of the cannabis found in your possession.
13. You have the right to appeal against this sentence, but if you wish to exercise that right, you must do so within 14 days from today.

**DATED at Port Vila this 15<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025**

**BY THE COURT**

*E. P. Goldsbrough*

Justice E. P. Goldsbrough

