

Nathan Mayne, you plead guilty to arson. On 1 August 2025 you lit a fire on the concrete floor in the corner of an open porch at the rear of a home in Ravenswood. The fire did not develop into one which threatened the house for some hours, but it eventually spread up the brick wall, caught the bottom plate, footstep, door frame and wooden window frame of an adjacent laundry window before spreading into the eaves and roof rafters. The fire burnt through a PVC water main causing it to burst. A neighbour called the police and fire brigade. They arrived to find you inside in a rear bedroom.

Your plea of guilty is on the basis that although you did not intend to set fire to the structure of the house, you admit that you realised that this was a likely consequence of the fire you lit and you acted regardless of that risk. The damage will cost about \$55,000 to repair. I will make a compensation order but you have no means to repay it, at least for a very long time. This has had a significant impact on the life of the owner of the house.

You are now aged 41. You have been subject to disadvantage throughout your life. You have used illicit drugs which exacerbate your poor mental health. You have been subject to treatment orders arising from schizophrenia, but it is not suggested that your mental capacity was impaired so that it is relevant to sentence. You have a very long record of prior convictions commencing when you were a youth. You served a lengthy term of imprisonment for manslaughter in 2008. Since your release your record is for a range of offending including dishonesty, trespass, driving offences and breaches of bail, family violence and restraint orders and some property crime. You have served many terms of imprisonment. You have no prior convictions for arson or fire lighting. Arson is always a serious offence because of the risk it poses to property and persons, however this is not the most serious example.

There should be a reduction in the sentence because of your early plea of guilty which indicates an acceptance of responsibility, facilitates justice and avoids the need for a trial. You were released from prison on 25 July 2025. You went to live with your friend but this happened a very short time later. You were affected by drugs at the time the fire was lit but that does not excuse your conduct or lessen the seriousness of it. You are sorry for what you did to your friend's house. You have been in custody since 1 August 2025. Imprisonment is the only appropriate sentence but I think that there is benefit in suspending the balance of the term and giving the chance to sort yourself out if you can in the community. I would have ordered supervision by Community Corrections to help you reintegrate and with employment and housing but I accept the oral report which has been given by Miss Devine which indicates that you are unsuitable because of Community Corrections past experience with you. That will mean that the onus is on you to take the steps that you need to take to address your drug use and your mental health. If you reoffend it is almost certain that you will be returned to prison.

You are convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months from 1 August 2025. I suspend the balance of the term for 12 months from today. You must understand that it is a condition of that order that you are not to commit any other offence punishable by imprisonment during that period. If you breach that condition you will be required to serve the term unless that is unjust. I make a compensation order in favour of Lauren Beeton and adjourn the terms to a date to be fixed.