

STATE OF TASMANIA v TYLER ANTHONY JAMES CAUSON
COMMENTS ON PASSING SENTENCE

2 APRIL 2026
SHANAHAN CJ

Tyler Anthony James Causon you have pleaded guilty to two counts of assault contrary to s 184 of the *Criminal Code* 1924 on indictment 347 of 2025. The first count alleges that at Glenorchy in Tasmania on or about 22 April 2024, you unlawfully assaulted Zachary Leslie Gromek by striking him to the head and face with a metal shifter. The second count, at the same place and same date, relates to a similar assault of Alan Kenneth King.

You were aged 28 years old at the time of the offending. The first complainant, Zachary Lesley Gromek, was aged 23 years old at the time. The second complainant, Alan Kenneth King, was aged 29 years old. Both complainants resided at 2 Jackson Street, Glenorchy, at the material time. Caitlin Louise Hill, Mr King's partner also lived there.

On 22 April 2024, at approximately 11.30 pm, Mr Gromek, Mr King, and Ms Hill were at 2 Jackson Street Glenorchy when you went to that address and were led inside. You were accompanied by an unidentified man. Shortly after you arrived, you had a verbal altercation with Mr Gromek.

The altercation escalated with you taking possession of a silver shifter or wrench.

You struck Mr Gromek to the head and face with the shifter. Mr King and his partner Ms Hill were in the bathroom during the altercation.

Ms Hill heard some loud noises and went to investigate. Mr King stayed in the bathroom. As Ms Hill approached the bedroom, she saw the accused and the unidentified male standing over Mr Gromek.

Ms Hill saw the accused hitting Mr Gromek with a metal shifter.

Ms Hill then ran back to the bathroom and locked the door. She told Mr King what she had seen. Mr King left the bathroom to help Mr Gromek. Ms Hill remained in the bathroom until the end of the incident. Mr King saw Mr Gromek lying on the ground with the accused standing over him and hitting him with a metal shifter.

You turned around and saw Mr King. You rushed towards him. You struck Mr King with your fist whilst holding the shifter, once to the back of his head and once to his right eye. You attempted to hit him on the top of his head. When you struck these blows the shifter was in your hand, a hand that was made into a fist, but it's your first that struck Mr King not the shifter.

Mr King blocked the last strike with his hand, which resulted in a cut to his hand. You and the unidentified male left the residence shortly thereafter. Ms Hill and Mr King took Mr Gromek to the Royal Hobart Hospital for treatment.

On 24 April at 3.15pm, you attended the Glenorchy Police Station. You participated in a video record of interview with police. Under caution you made the following comments. You went around to Jackson Street, you were led inside, people there started mouthing off, you hit Alan King multiple times, and you hit Zach Gromek multiple times.

You have some 39 pages of prior convictions but you do not have any prior convictions for code assault. You have seven prior convictions for common assault.

The State submitted that general deterrence looms large in this matter as the form of violence you employed involved strikes committed whilst holding a weapon in your hand.

There are no victim impact statements, but this was obviously a terrifying experience for the three people living at the address in Glenorchy and a brutal assault on the complainants.

It was submitted in mitigation that you suffer from "pervasive ADHD symptoms", including impulsivity and aggression. I was told that you are not currently treated for ADHD but that you have been in the

past. Further that you have unresolved childhood trauma which requires treatment, and that treatment has been recommended.

The recommended treatment is counselling, and I was provided with a now aged report from Dr Jordan, forensic psychiatrist, dated 11 February 2022. It was submitted that childhood trauma has caused you mental health problems, issues which have been compounded by a significant history of substance abuse since your early teenage years.

At the time of sentencing submissions you were 30 years of age.

I was told that you have had a dysfunctional childhood which has been a catalyst for negative changes in your behaviour and circumstances. You have a complex family background with a number of siblings and a half-sibling, and a history of child safety services intervention. I am told you were removed from your mother's care and placed into state care at various times after age 4.

I was put that you were exposed, and subjected, to physical violence perpetrated by your father and various stepfathers, or partners of your mother, and that you witnessed violence against your mother and other family members. At a young age, you were also subjected to sexual violence perpetrated by one of your mother's friends.

One of your "stepfathers" attempted to drown you in a bathtub and you were then referred to Clare House, a counselling service for mental health issues for children. You commenced counselling for five years but that was not continued in your later years.

You were later diagnosed with ADHD at a very early age and medicated until your teenage years, and I was informed that your medication for ADHD was not continued in your teenage years due to substance abuse.

In your teenage years, you began using intravenous drugs, primarily methamphetamine.

You have formed very few trusting relationships with your relatives, aside from some of your siblings and grandmother. It was submitted that, as a result of your un-medicated ADHD your teenage years were marked with anxiety, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

In respect of your prior convictions I was told that they are largely, offences of dishonesty, stealing, burglaries, and breaches of bail. There are some aggravated burglaries and some breaches of family violence orders, and a number of convictions for common assault.

Your drug use commenced with cannabis but moved on to using amphetamine. It was submitted that your drug use was an attempt to cope with your medical symptoms and your life circumstances.

You were educated to year 7 level after which you disengaged from school. Whilst detained at Ashley Youth Detention Centre you completed year 10. Despite poor literacy you graduated from the "U-Turn program" and showed promise in automotive mechanics, However, you have never held employment.

Your offending was explained on the basis that it's always almost been committed whilst under the influence of drugs and usually in the company of others. Your counsel submitted that past reports prepared by Youth Justice and Community Corrections have noted a tendency for you to be a follower and to be swayed by the influence of others, which has resulted in lengthy periods of detention at Ashley Youth Detention Centre. Of course whilst you may be a follower you cannot avoid responsibility for your own actions.

During a period of living with your grandmother in the community in 2018 you managed to abstain from drug use for over 12 months. I am told that your time in custody has seen you become

institutionalised, and that your life skills need to be developed for a proper re-entry into the community upon release.

You have been in custody for the most of the last couple of years, largely due to breaches of bail as opposed to serving sentences. You have a poor history of bail compliance. I was told the effect of your dysfunctional upbringing and your ADHD result in very poor emotional and behavioural regulation.

You have had supervision in the community, but not recently.

By way of background to your offending I was told that as part of the trauma you were exposed to as a child, you have experienced a number of traumatic and tragic events over the last 10 years. Both of your parents died on separate occasions, and as a result of the nature of your upbringing you had very difficult relationships with them. Your grandfather has also passed, and your sister died after a struggle with cancer, all in the space of a short period of time.

It was submitted that the most significant of these tragic events was eight years ago in 2018, when you witnessed the death of your brother Blake in a motor vehicle accident. I am told this is the incident which is largely attributable to your trauma and your need for counselling now. You and your brother Blake shared an exceptionally close relationship. You were at home with your brother just before the accident. Your brother left the house in an upset state, and you watched his brother's motorbike collide with a car on the bend. You ran to assist him and you were present at the scene when an ambulance attended and when your brother was pronounced dead. You were traumatised by that experience.

Dr Jordan assessed you in 2022. Dr Jordan reported that the trauma of your brother's death affects your mental health in the form of distressing symptoms characteristic of post-traumatic stress disorder, and deep depression. Dr Jordan also notes that your use of methamphetamine increased to the extent that you suffered two psychotic episodes, which resulted in hospitalisation in 2019.

You experience nightmares regarding your brother's death which are intrusive and recurrent and continue. Dr Jordan recommended that you pursue psychological counselling to deal with this trauma, but that has not occurred, although I am told you have been on the waiting list for treatment on and off when you have been in the community.

It was submitted that you have requested a drug and alcohol support counsellor and you now have a counsellor but only for about a month. You have also made inquiries about two drug and alcohol rehabilitation services Serenity House and Missiondale.

It was agreed by the State that you have served 323 days in custody which is currently unallocated.

In relation to the offending I was told that the owner of the household who was not present at the material time, is a female who used to be in a relationship with your brother Blake. Whilst you were in custody your brother's ashes were taken from your family's residence and ended up in that female's possession. When you were released from custody and found out where your brother's ashes were, you made attempts to retrieve them. I was told by your counsel that you had permission from the homeowner, your brother's ex-girlfriend, to retrieve the ashes.

You went to collect your brother's ashes and that was your sole reason for attending at the relevant address. The two complainants in the indictment do not reside at that residence but were present there on the day. When you arrived you were unarmed.

It was submitted that when you attended the address the complainant Mr Gromek saw you, and he began to make derogatory remarks about your brother. Mr Gromek is now in a relationship with your brother's former girlfriend. You say at that stage you felt as though you blacked out. You say that Mr Gromek was the male armed with the shifter. You were incensed to a degree by what you saw as unjustified remarks about your brother. You went toward Mr Gromek. You say you were struck first by Mr Gromek, but you reacted fairly quickly and punched him and disarmed him of the shifter and Mr Gromek was struck twice. When you turned around, you had the shifter in your hand after disarming Mr Gromek. Mr King was right behind him. You moved towards Mr King because you were

anticipating an attack from Mr King. You punched Mr King in the belief that you were going to be attacked, and you struck him twice whilst holding the shifter in a clenched fist with the shifter protruding either side of your fist.

You have pleaded guilty to the two counts of assault. I will sentence you on the basis that whatever the circumstances, you accept that you were responsible for those assaults. I am told that you went to the police station two days later of your own accord and were interviewed.

You have pleaded guilty for which there is always a benefit, even if only utilitarian.

I was told that you are remorseful for your actions, and that your actions were not premeditated but driven by what occurred at the material time.

It was put on your behalf that the effects of a background of significant deprivation do not diminish over time and are to be given full weight in sentencing, and I have done so.

Tyler Anthony James Causon, you are convicted on counts 2 and 3 on the indictment. Your offending must have occasioned significant fear and distress in the complainants. Striking the two complainants to the head and face whilst holding a metal shifter was a very violent response to the situation in which you found yourself. Such actions demand a sentence reflecting the need for general and specific deterrence.

However, your counsel made lengthy submissions about your background of significant deprivation and your mental health issues. She also noted your institutionalised background following periods of incarceration. You went to the police station two days later of your own accord and were interviewed. You have pleaded guilty. You had some 323 days unallocated on 11 March 2026, now 345 days. On my calculation any sentence should be back dated to 22 April 2025.

I have also considered the *Verdins* principles in relation to your mental health and the report of Dr Jordan. I consider that there is some mitigation in the impact of your ADHD, post-traumatic stress disorder, and deep depression in the context of the *Verdins* principles and I have taken that into account.

A term of immediate imprisonment is necessary to express the need for general and specific deterrence but for your self-reporting, plea of guilty and the *Verdins* factors I have referred to, I would have sentenced you to a longer period of imprisonment and would have had to reconsider what portion, if any, of that sentence should be suspended.

In your circumstances I impose a single sentence backed dated to 22 April 2025. I sentence you to 15 months imprisonment. I also make an order suspending 3 months of your sentence subject to the supervision of a probation officer under s 24(2) of the *Sentencing Act* in which regard I make the following community corrections order.

I make a community corrections order under s 42AN of the *Sentencing Act* to commence on your release, and operate for a period 12 months. That order will include all the core conditions under s 42AO of the *Sentencing Act* and the following conditions will also apply:

- (a) You must, during the operational period of the order, submit to the supervision of a probation officer as required by the probation officer;
- (b) You must, during the operation period of this order, maintain in operating condition an active mobile phone service, provide the contact details to Community Corrections and be accessible for contact through this device at all times;
- (c) You must not, during the operational period of the order, take any illicit or prohibited substances. Illicit and prohibited substances include:

- i any controlled drug as defined by the *Misuse of Drugs Act 2001*; and
 - ii any medication containing an opiate, benzodiazepine, bupropion, hydrochloride or pseudoephedrine, unless you provide written evidence from your medical professional that you have been prescribed the relevant medication;
- (d) You must not, during the operational period of the order, consume alcohol, and you must if directed to do so by a police officer or community corrections officer, submit to a breath test, urine test or other test for the presence of alcohol; and
- (e) You must, during the operational period of the order, submit to medical, psychological or psychiatric assessment or treatment as directed by a probation officer.

You must attend the Community Corrections office at Hobart for induction into this order. You must attend that service for induction during business hours and no later than 10:00 am on the first business day following your release.

The effect of the order under s 24(2) of the *Sentencing Act* is that the community corrections order works as a condition upon which the suspension of three months of your sentence rests. If you breach those conditions you may be brought back to the Court for re-sentencing and required to serve the balance of the term of imprisonment imposed today. By making those orders under s 24(2) I further acknowledge the seriousness of your offending. It is to be hoped that a period of supervision in the community will provide you with the services you need to turn your life around. Of course whether it does or not is entirely a matter for you.