

STATE OF TASMANIA v CHRISTOPHER JOHN WORKER
COMMENTS ON PASSING SENTENCE

CUTHBERTSON J
15 May 2026

Christopher John Worker, you have been pleaded to a charge of perverting the course of justice. On 29 January 2026, you appeared in the Hobart Magistrates Court for contest mention in relation to a number of charges. During those proceedings a sentence indication of a partially suspended period of imprisonment was given by the magistrate. Your matters were adjourned for a short period to give you time to think about whether you would accept the indication or not. You were bailed to appear on 16 February 2026.

On that date you did not appear. Your lawyer provided a medical certificate to the court purporting to come from a doctor at the Royal Hobart Hospital which explained you were unable to attend court due to undergoing major surgery. It was handwritten and dated 15 February 2026. The medical certificate was accepted. Your matter was adjourned in your absence. An application for a warrant for your arrest was also adjourned to the same date.

Police conducted investigations into the medical certificate. They obtained Royal Hobart Hospital medical records which established that the medical certificate presented to the court was false. While a medical certificate had been issued for you by the hospital on 25 November 2025, the records showed that you had not been a patient there at any time between 1 January and 20 February 2026. The medical certificate submitted to the court had the same Department of Health reference number and was apparently signed by the same doctor as the legitimate medical certificate issued in November 2025. The doctor who signed the November 2025 medical certificate also confirmed that he did not issue any certificate for you dated 15 February 2026.

A warrant was issued for your arrest, and you were arrested on 26 February 2026. You were interviewed by police. You claimed you had attended court on 16 February 2026. You agreed you had not been a patient at the hospital in the previous weeks. You said that your partner provided the false certificate to the court. You claimed not to have had any conversation with her about attending court and that you were not fully aware of the medical certificate but that it had something to do with the date being changed. You agreed the submission of a false certificate only benefited you. Your partner was later interviewed by police. She admitted to producing the false medical certificate at your request and submitting it to your lawyer on your behalf. She will also be charged with perverting justice for her part in the offending. She has not yet been issued a summons.

You have a significant record of prior convictions for a wide variety of offences. You have also been sentenced in this Court in 2019 and 2020 for a number of serious offences including unlawfully setting fire to property, attempting to set fire to property, being found prepared for the commission of a crime, wounding and assault. On the last occasion in this Court, you were sentenced to a home detention order which I understand that you completed successfully.

You are currently serving a sentence of imprisonment and are due for release on 6 August 2026. You have been sentenced to many periods of imprisonment in the past, both actual and suspended. There have been many applications made to breach those suspended sentences.

You are 38 years old. You are a proud Aboriginal man. You have experienced a great deal of loss in your childhood. Recently your father died. This has been a big shock to you. When in the community you receive support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It is not

clear why you committed this offence; you had indicated to your lawyer that you were going to accept the sentence indication given by the contest mention magistrate. Coincidentally, it was your birthday a couple of days after you were due to appear in court.

I take into account your plea of guilty and that it was entered at an early stage. I also take into account that you are currently serving a sentence of imprisonment. The crime of perverting justice is always regarded as serious because of its tendency to undermine the justice system and the administration of the law. In this case your conduct was directed at avoiding court in circumstances where you were on notice that you were facing a term of imprisonment. You sought to avoid, or least defer, that occurring. In my view this is a serious example of this type of offence. It is also serious because you involved another person, your partner, in your offending. You have a long history of breaching court orders, including suspended sentences and other community based orders, and you also have a history of dishonest offending.

The sentence I will impose is not only directed at punishment and deterring you from behaving in this way again, but it is also one that sends a message to others who may be minded to avoid their obligations to attend court in this way that their conduct will not be tolerated. I note that technology is making it easier for people to produce false documents like the one the subject of this charge and there is a suggestion that AI was used in this case to falsify the medical certificate.

Christopher John Worker, you are convicted for the charge of pervert the course of justice. You are sentenced to a period of imprisonment of three months cumulative to the sentence you are currently serving.