



IN THE CENTRAL MAGISTRATES COURT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS AT HONIARA

(Criminal Jurisdiction)

Criminal Cases No. 688 of 2025 and No. 769 of 2025

REX-V-JOHN GWETA

Coram: HOLLISON F (PRINCIPAL MAGISTRATE)

Appearances:

Mr Philip Muliungu, Police Prosecutions Department, for the Crown

Mr Vincent Nomae, Senior Legal Officer, Public Solicitors Office, for the Defendant

Date of Ruling: 1st September 2025

Notice: *This copy of the Court's Reasons for Judgment/Sentence is subject to formal revision prior to publication.*

SENTENCE

Introduction

1. The defendant, John Gweta, pleaded guilty to two counts of domestic violence contrary to sections 4 and 58 of the *Family Protection Act 2014*. He is now convicted based on the plea entered. The complainant is the wife of the defendant.

Facts

2. The first incident occurred on the 19th June 2025 at about 2200 hours, the complainant, Ms Irene Tosai (Irene Iroga), was at her brother's house at Rifle Range in Honiara. The defendant went to the complainant's brother's house but he was not welcomed by his in-laws and the complainant. He felt bad and walked away. The complainant then followed the defendant which he did not like. The defendant then threatened to shoot the complainant who was in the company of their son at the time.
3. On the 11th July 2025, a second incident occurred. The complainant went to the defendant's workplace and swore at the defendant following rumors of him being unfaithful and that he was allegedly seeing another woman. The defendant was embarrassed and attempted to calm her down but she persisted. The defendant then slapped the complainant on the face with his open left palm.

Discussion and Analysis

4. I am guided by the principles of sentencing such as punishment, retribution, deterrence and rehabilitation. The sentence should always be proportionate to the gravity of the offence.
5. This offence carries a maximum sentence of 3 years imprisonment or 30,000 penalty units.¹ The *Family Protection Act 2014* was enacted by Parliament to protect the victims of domestic violence in the country including both men and women.
6. The defendant, although, a first-time offender has committed the same offence twice within a span of 1 month which suggests he might be a habitual offender. This is despite the fact that what he did in both occasions are not very serious.
7. After having considered the aggravating factors and also the mitigating factors such as an early guilty plea, remorse shown, first-time offender and his personal circumstances, I am of the view that a penalty fine is appropriate for both counts.
8. Therefore, I sentence the defendant Mr Gweta to pay a penalty fine of \$500 for the first count of domestic violence, particularly a psychological abuse, and a penalty fine of \$500 for the second count domestic violence contrary to sections 4 and 58 of the *Family Protection Act 2014*.
9. The total penalty fine is \$1000 which is due on the 3rd of September 2025 at 4:30pm. If the defendant does not pay the total fine, he shall be imprisoned for 30 days at the correctional facility at Rove in Honiara.
10. A bound over in the sum of \$2000 for 24 months is also imposed against the defendant.
11. This experience should serve as a lesson for the defendant and he should not reoffend in the future.
12. Right of appeal applies.
13. The court so orders.



PRINCIPAL MAGISTRATE FELIX HOLLISON
THE COURT

¹ *Family Protection Act 2014*, ss4 and 58.