# Woman receives suspended sentence for cannabis smuggling attempt



A 24-year-old woman, Jeanine Mulombo, has been handed a nine-month suspended prison sentence for attempting to smuggle 12 kilograms of cannabis into the UK. The incident occurred on July 16, 2022, when Mulombo arrived at Newcastle Airport on a flight from Dubai.

Prior to her arrival in Newcastle, Mulombo had travelled from Gatwick Airport to Thailand, embarking on her journey just six days before. Upon her arrival at Newcastle Airport, she was observed behaving suspiciously while waiting for her suitcase at the baggage carousel. Notably, she checked her bag before repeatedly waiting for it to circle back, a behaviour that raised concerns among the airport authorities.

Upon searching her suitcase, officials discovered 22 packs of cannabis weighing a total of 12 kilograms. Mulombo, who has no fixed address, was subsequently arrested. In court, she pleaded guilty to the fraudulent evasion of import restrictions regarding the drug and was sentenced by Judge Gavin Doig at Newcastle Crown Court.

During the sentencing, Judge Doig emphasised the severity of the offence, stating, "Bringing drugs back into the country is a very serious offence. Many defendants receive immediate custodial sentences for it and you could not complain if you received an immediate custodial sentence today."

In her defence, counsel for Mulombo expressed that she is a vulnerable individual who had been taken advantage of, highlighting her lack of previous convictions and her expression of remorse. The judge subsequently opted for a suspended sentence, requiring her to engage in rehabilitation over a 21-month period in lieu of immediate imprisonment.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gov.uk/penalties-carrying-drugs> - This URL provides information on the penalties for drug offenses in the UK, which can include imprisonment for smuggling drugs into the country.
* <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/drug-offences> - This URL offers guidance on drug offenses from the Crown Prosecution Service, including the seriousness of drug smuggling and the factors considered in sentencing.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-60442222> - Although not directly related to Jeanine Mulombo's case, this URL provides news coverage of drug-related incidents at Newcastle Airport, highlighting the vigilance of airport authorities.
* <https://www.judiciary.uk/you-and-the-judiciary/going-to-court/sentencing/> - This URL explains the principles of sentencing in UK courts, including factors that might lead to suspended sentences for vulnerable individuals.
* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/controlled-drugs-legal-requirements> - This URL outlines the legal requirements and restrictions related to controlled drugs in the UK, which are relevant to cases involving drug smuggling.