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Waikato man Roger 'living man' Blake jailed for selling bleach as cure for Covid-19

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P A man who “seized upon the tragedy of the Covid pandemic as a money-making opportunity” by selling **bleach as a cure** for the virus, making his company more than \$100,000 during the global event, has been sent to jail.

Today, Roger Blake - who goes by the name “Roger William living man” - appeared before Judge Brett Crowley in Hamilton District Court.

The public gallery was near capacity with people there in support of Blake who was being sentenced on 29 charges he was found guilty of at an earlier trial.

The charges related to breaches laid by MedSafe under the Medicines Act, along with others of obstructing a Ministry of Health officer.

There were also charges of making a false statement about himself and his company possessing, advertising and selling products dubbed “MMS”, or Miracle Mineral Solution; essentially chlorine dioxide - bleach - mixed with water.

[American Jim Humble](#), who founded the Genesis II Church of Health and Healing, originally funded MMS products.

The MMS solution has been falsely promoted as a cure for a number of illnesses.

Blake had previously been warned about promoting the product in 2009, 2010, and 2011, when it was then claimed it cured cancer.

However, when the pandemic kicked off in February 2020, he and his company began to market it as a cure for Covid.

In court, Crown prosecutor Paige Noorland said there was a degree of commerciality to his offending explaining the company's profits shot up by 265 per cent between December 2019 and mid-July 2020 and saw it bank at least \$106,798.76.

While she submitted the offending was not overly sophisticated, he did target vulnerable people and it involved "scaremongering to the highest degree" given it occurred during a global pandemic.

Blake also refused to co-operate with a pre-sentence report writer to assess electronically-monitored sentencing options.

Given those actions, combined with his offending, Noorland said Blake should receive a sentence of imprisonment.

He has already spent the past **28 days in custody** after he refused to sign a bail bond during an appearance in December following Judge Crowley's finding of guilt on the 29 charges.

At the sentencing, Blake was asked for his thoughts on sentencing by Judge Crowley, and for the first time offered, albeit in the third person, some remorse for his actions.

"Roger has something to say for the court record," he began, before stating he had come to realise he was in "deep water" due to his lack of understanding of the court's procedures.

"I myself acknowledge my mistakes.

"Looking back would I have done things differently? Yes. Looking forward, will I do anything different? Yes.

"As a God-fearing man, I am remorseful for any inconvenience or damages ... and I do acknowledge and accept responsibility for all my actions."

He felt he had "paid back my debt to society" for the events over the past three-and-a-half years, mostly with his 28 days in custody which had seen his livelihood turn to near ruin, he said.

But Judge Crowley queried several aspects of his statement including his reason for being in "deep water".

The judge said it was not due to not understanding court processes but because "you wouldn't stop dealing in new medicines".

In reply, Blake said he sold water purifiers for water treatment.

After another bout of too-and-fro, and Blake talking over the judge, Judge Crowley finally got around to sentencing him.

He found the product posed a risk to the public and although only one person became ill after using it, there could be another explanation for that.

Blake had written "hundreds if not thousands of pages" to the court claiming that various people were indebted to him for at least several billion dollars, and he had twice approached the judge's bench, including most recently in December, when he waved documents in Judge Crowley's face.

"His behaviour has been utterly disgraceful," the judge said.

"The way in which Mr Blake seized upon the tragedy of the Covid pandemic as a money-making opportunity gives the offending more gravity, in my view."

As well as jailing him for 10 months and two weeks, the judge also ordered Blake to pay half the costs incurred by Medsafe of \$4620.

He granted Blake leave to apply for home detention should he wish to work with probation and complete a report.

Belinda Feek is an Open Justice reporter based in Waikato. She has worked at NZME for eight years and been a journalist for 19.

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