



Court Rejects Compassionate Leave Request ... Sends Former VP To Jail

The Stipendiary Magistrate of the Monrovia City Court at the Temple of Justice, His Honor L. Ben Barco, has rejected a request made by former Vice President (VP) Jewel Howard Taylor to grant her compassionate leave that would allow her to be detained at a medical facility of her choice outside the Monrovia Central Prison pending her trial.

On Tuesday, August 25, 2026, the Monrovia City Court at the Temple of Justice entertained arguments between state prosecutors and lawyers representing the interests of the former VP in a Motion to grant compassionate leave at a medical facility of her choice outside the Monrovia Central Prison, along with a preliminary examination into her case.

During the argument, her lawyers informed the court that she has asthma and high blood pressure, conditions they described as life-threatening if not properly managed. They insisted that continued treatment by her chosen doctors was essential to preserve her life.

They also pleaded that the court consider her status as a former Vice President, her moral standing, and the rule of compassionate detention in granting the request.

In resistance to her legal team, State prosecutors opposed the motion, citing a medical report that declared Taylor's condition stable. *"The medical report states that since her release, the patient has not had any significant adverse events, and her vital signs, including blood pressure and sugar levels, have remained relatively normal with a stable pattern,"* prosecutors told the court.

Magistrate Barco ruled on the motion for compassionate leave following the heated argument and noted that, under Liberian Law, a request for formal compassionate leave rests with the Executive Branch, specifically the Ministry of Justice, and not with the Judiciary Branch of Government.

Magistrate Barco explained further by quoting Chapter 34, section 34.20.1 of the Criminal Procedure Law, which provides that: *"the Attorney General shall formulate rules and regulations governing compassionate leave for the institution and in accordance with such rules and regulations, may permit any prisoner to leave the institution for a short period of time based on compelling reasons that so appeal to compassion."*

Additionally, the magistrates mentioned that the medical report dated August 21, 2026 has the following recommendations: "due to fluctuating blood pressure and anxiety in a stressful environment, she will benefit from 48 hours admission and that 48-hrs. admission has since expired, which suggests that the defendant is in a stable condition."

Magistrate Barco, however, granted her lawyers' request for a preliminary examination, denied the request for compassionate leave, and sent her to the Monrovia Central Prison.

The former VP was forwarded to court by the Liberia National Police after nearly a week of treatment at a local medical facility in Monrovia. She reportedly fell ill while under police investigation for multiple alleged crimes, including drug-related charges allegedly linking her to the over 317M drugs bust in Liberia.