District of Columbia Sentencing Commission FY2020

Agency District of Columbia Sentencing Commission   **Agency Code** FZ0   **Fiscal Year** 2020

Mission The mission of the District of Columbia Sentencing Commission is to implement, monitor, and support the District's voluntary sentencing guidelines, to promote fair and consistent sentencing policies, to increase public understanding of sentencing policies and practices, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines system in order to recommend changes based on actual sentencing and corrections practice and research.

▾ Strategic Objectives

Objective Number	Strategic Objective
1	Provide fair, consistent and transparent sentencing policy for felony sentences imposed in the District of Columbia to ensure that similar offenders who are convicted of similar offenses receive similar sentences.
2	Provide effective education and support to improve understanding and awareness of the District's Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines to ensure citizens of the District have a clear understanding of the sentencing process.
3	Provide high quality analysis and evaluation of sentencing data to inform the development of effective sentencing policy in the District of Columbia that increases public safety while decreasing unwarrented disparity in sentences.

▾ Key Performance Indicators

Measure	Directionality	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Target
1 - Provide fair, consistent and transparent sentencing policy for felony sentences imposed in the District of Columbia to ensure that similar offenders who are convicted of similar offenses receive similar sentences. (5 Measures)					
Compliant Departures	Up is Better	91.1%	94.1%	93.8%	93%
Percent of compliant sentences that represent 11(C)(1)(c) pleas	Up is Better	New in 2019	New in 2019	13.9%	12%
Percent of Compliant Guideline Sentences	Up is Better	96.4%	96.8%	97.1%	96.5%
Compliant In-The-Box Sentences Imposed	Up is Better	87.8%	89.9%	90.1%	87.5%
Percent of judicial departure letter responses received	Up is Better	New in 2020	New in 2020	New in 2020	New in 2020
2 - Provide effective education and support to improve understanding and awareness of the District's Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines to ensure citizens of the District have a clear understanding of the sentencing process. (2 Measures)					
Effective Guideline Trainings	Up is Better	90.6%	90.7%	92.9%	83%
Guideline Questions Answered	Up is Better	98.2%	99.5%	98.6%	98.5%
3 - Provide high quality analysis and evaluation of sentencing data to inform the development of effective sentencing policy in the District of Columbia that increases public safety while decreasing unwarrented disparity in sentences. (2 Measures)					
GRID/GSS tickets resolved within 14 days	Up is Better	74.4%	75.8%	69.6%	68%
Data Request Response Time	Up is Better	95%	90.9%	91%	76%

▾ Operations

Operations Header	Operations Title	Operations Description	Type of Operations

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1 - Provide fair, consistent and transparent sentencing policy for felony sentences imposed in the District of Columbia to ensure that similar offenders who are convicted of similar offenses receive similar sentences. (3 Activities)			
SENTENCING GUIDELINE MONITORING	Identify Irregularities and Inconsistencies in Felony Sentences Imposed	Review sentencing data received from the D.C. Superior Court to identify data quality issues to be resolved; identify sentences that are outside the recommended guideline sentence; and identify emerging sentencing trends that may require review by the Commission and potential policy modifications.	Daily Service
SENTENCING GUIDELINE MONITORING	Review and Verify All Felony Sentences	Review and verify each felony sentence imposed by the D.C. Superior Court is accurate, legal; and complete. Once the verification process is completed, calculate whether the sentence imposed matches the recommended guideline sentence in an accurate and timely manner.	Daily Service
SENTENCING GUIDELINE MONITORING	Review and Verify all Criminal History Scores	A individual's prior convictions are provided by CSOSA and used to calculate a defendant's criminal history scores. If criminal history information is missing or inaccurate, CSOSA is contacted to provide the accurate information so that compliance can be calculated for each felony count sentenced.	Daily Service
2 - Provide effective education and support to improve understanding and awareness of the District's Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines to ensure citizens of the District have a clear understanding of the sentencing process. (5 Activities)			
SENTENCING GUIDELINES TRAINING	Provide Sentencing Guideline Training	Provide Sentencing Guideline training to criminal justice professional that will increase their understanding of sentencing practices under the Guidelines and ensure proper application of the Guidelines thus reducing potential sentencing errors.	Daily Service
SENTENCING GUIDELINES TRAINING	Maintain and Update Agency Website	Update the agency's website with "Guideline Alerts" to ensure the public and criminal justice community are notified of changes to sentencing policy or practices under the sentencing guidelines. Monthly update training and other guideline related materials to ensure public access to accurate and timely information about sentencing in the District of Columbia.	Daily Service
SENTENCING GUIDELINES TRAINING	Respond to Guideline Questions	On an ongoing basis the agency responds to questions from a number of sources including, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, judges, attorneys, and the public regarding criminal history scoring, sentence options, and offense rankings. Responding to these questions in an accurate and timely manner avoids procedural delays and ensure that the parties understand the sentencing options available under the Sentencing Guidelines.	Daily Service
SENTENCING GUIDELINE MONITORING	Public Access to Sentencing Data	Provide a yearly data set on the agency's website to allow researchers and the public direct access to felony sentencing related data in the District.	Key Project
SENTENCING GUIDELINES TRAINING	Increase public outreach and education regarding the Sentencing Guidelines	Prior Guideline training and outreach has previously been focused on criminal justice partners and professionals. An Guideline outreach and education strategy will be developed and implement targeting residents and community based organization to increase their understanding of the purpose, function, and impact of the Guidelines on felony sentences imposed in the District.	Key Project
3 - Provide high quality analysis and evaluation of sentencing data to inform the development of effective sentencing policy in the District of Columbia that increases public safety while decreasing unwarrented disparity in sentences. (3 Activities)			
POLICY REPORTS AND PROPOSALS	Respond to Data Requests	Effectively and efficiently respond to data requests from legislators, criminal justice professionals, and the public by providing accurate and timely sentencing information.	Daily Service
SENTENCING GUIDELINE MONITORING	Monitor and Maintain the Guideline Reporting Information Data (GRID) System	Monitor and maintain the data analysis module of the agency's GRID system used to identify and evaluate sentencing trends throughout the year to inform the development of effective sentencing policy for the District. Technical and operational issues identified will be reported to the vendor for resolution within 14 days.	Daily Service

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Sentencing Guideline Monitoring	MPD Arrest Data Enhancement Project	GRID, the agency's data system, will be enhanced to consume MPD arrest data in addition to the court and criminal history data for all felony offenders sentenced in the District. With the inclusion of electronically transferred arrest data, the agency will be able to follow an individual from time of arrest through sentencing. This enhancement will expand analysis capabilities related to sentencing trends by geographic areas, offense type, and other variables.	Key Project

▼ Workload Measures

Measure	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual
1 - Identify Irregularities and Inconsistencies in Felony Sentences Imposed (2 Measures)			
Number of Sealed Cases	2144	3026	2485
Number of DQA's Identified and Submitted	New in 2020	New in 2020	New in 2020
1 - Review and Verify all Criminal History Scores (1 Measure)			
Requests for Missing Criminal History Scores	New in 2020	New in 2020	New in 2020
1 - Review and Verify All Felony Sentences (6 Measures)			
Number of CSOSA Criminal History Scores Submitted	2004	2833	2319
Number of Felony Cases Sentenced	2182	1813	1587
Number of Felony Counts Sentenced	2658	2316	2070
Number of Departure Letters Sent	124	114	165
Number of Probation Revocations Sentenced	New in 2019	355	375
Number of sentences imposed as the result of 11(C)(1)(c) pleas	New in 2019	New in 2019	277
2 - Maintain and Update Agency Website (1 Measure)			
Number of Agency Website Hits	14,495	19,151	19,451
2 - Provide Sentencing Guideline Training (3 Measures)			
Number of Sentencing Guideline Trainings Provided	15	19	15
Agency Website Updates Completed	64	43	46
Number of individuals receiving Sentencing Guideline Training	New in 2019	New in 2019	96
3 - Monitor and Maintain the Guideline Reporting Information Data (GRID) System (4 Measures)			
Number of GRID Tickets Entered	45	69	66
Number of new charge codes mapped in GRID	New in 2018	21	165
Number Hours required to complete data requests	1688	971	1455
Number of Critical GRID Tickets Submitted	New in 2020	New in 2020	New in 2020
3 - Respond to Data Requests (2 Measures)			
Number of Data Requests Received	38	47	67
Data Sets Provided	New in 2020	New in 2020	New in 2020

▼ Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiative Title	Strategic Initiative Description	Proposed Completion Date
Increase public outreach and education regarding the Sentencing Guidelines (2 Strategic initiatives)		
Fast Facts - DC Felony Offenses	The agency will develop quarterly Fast Fact sheets focused on a single felony offense. The Fast Fact sheets will be one page in length and provide an overview of the frequency of sentences imposed, types and lengths of sentences, offender demographic information, and any significant sentencing trends indicated for a specific offense. By developing a very concise and quickly reviewed offense analysis, the public is able to learn about the how frequently certain offenses are sentenced in the District; the types of sentence imposed, and any emerging trends. Issue papers will be completed in December, March, June, and September of FY 2020	09-30-2020
Guideline Outreach and Educational Strategy	Information regarding the purpose, structure, and outcome of felony sentences imposed has previously been provided to criminal justice practitioners. This initiative will develop a specific strategy to inform the general public about how the Sentencing Guidelines operate and the factors impacting sentences imposed to create a better understanding of why sentences can vary for single offense. The Commission will identify the key objectives of the strategy by December 1, 2019. A strategy utilizing a multi faceted approach including print, social media, and presentations will be developed and approved by the Commission by February 1, 2020, focusing on sentencing for violent and gun-related offenses. Implementation of the strategy to citizens and community organizations will occur between February 15, 2020 and September 30, 2020 and will include at a minimum two public presentations about the Sentencing Guidelines. One of the presentation will be in Ward 7 or Ward 8.	02-03-2020
MPD Arrest Data Enhancement Project (1 Strategic Initiative)		
MPD Arrest Data Feed Enhancement Project	The agency will enhance the current GRID system by developing an XML arrest data interface that will transfer arrest data from the Metropolitan Police Department to the Commission, which will be then integrated with felony case information provided by the DC Superior Court and CSOSA to create a complete comprehensive felony case record from arrest through sentencing. This multi-stage project will include: (1) identifying the data system technical requirements and business needs to be completed by December 1, 2019; (2) developing and implementing an XML interface to transfer arrest data into GRID by January 30, 2020; (3) integrating arrest data into the GRID system by July 1, 2020; and (4) testing and move to full production by September 20, 2020.	09-30-2020
Provide Sentencing Guideline Training (1 Strategic Initiative)		
Sentencing Guideline Issue Papers	Issue Papers will focus on identifying, explaining or clarifying a single complex or confusing aspect of the Sentencing Guidelines for professionals and practitioners. Issue paper topics will be selected from Guideline questions which the Commission are asked to address most frequently. In a three -four page document, the issue will be identified and explained in detail, using examples to help the reader better understand the complexity of the issue. Issue papers are aimed at reducing errors in the application of the Guidelines and can also serve as a quick reference to practitioners, reducing staff resources required to answer questions. Issue papers will be completed semi-annually in March and September and posted on the agency's website	09-30-2020
Review and Verify All Felony Sentences (1 Strategic Initiative)		
Quarterly Data Quality Assurance Report	Develop a Data Quality Assurance (DQA) quarterly report that includes the (1) the type of data quality issue; (2) the frequency of the data quality error; (3) the data owner agency; (4) date DQA was submitted, and (5) the date the DQA was resolved. The DQA report will enable the agency to identify re-occurring data quality issues and work with the data owner agency to correct the data in a timely manner to ensure analysis completed by the Commission is accurate. The report format will be completed and approved by November 1, 2019. DQA reports will be completed at the end of each quarter of the fiscal year, with a cumulative yearly report completed by September 30, 2020.	09-25-2020