

# District of Columbia Sentencing Commission FY2021

Agency District of Columbia Sentencing Commission

Agency Code FZO

Fiscal Year 2021

**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 unwarranted disparity in sentences.

## Key Performance Indicators

Measure	Directionality	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Target
<b>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. (7 Measures)</b>					
Compliant Departures	Up is Better	94.1%	93.8%	94.3%	93.5%
Percent of Compliant Guideline Sentences	Up is Better	96.8%	97.1%	94%	96.5%
Compliant In-The-Box Sentences Imposed	Up is Better	89.9%	90.1%	90.6%	89%
Percent of compliant sentences that represent 11(C)(1)(c) pleas	Up is Better	New in 2019	13.9%	15%	12.5%
Percent of judicial departure letter responses received	Up is Better	New in 2020	New in 2020	82.1%	75%
Percentage of Sentences for Violent offenses that are compliant with the Guidelines	Up is Better	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
Percentage of Sentences for Weapon Offenses Compliant with Guidelines	Up is Better	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
<b>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. (4 Measures)</b>					
Guideline Questions Answered	Up is Better	99.5%	98.6%	98.9%	98.5%
Effective Guideline Trainings	Up is Better	90.7%	92.9%	90.2%	85%
Number of Social Media Postings	Up is Better	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
Percentage of Website Hits Related to Outreach and Education Material	Up is Better	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
<b>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 unwarranted disparity in sentences. (4 Measures)</b>					
Data Request Response Time	Up is Better	90.9%	91%	92.5%	80%
GRID/GSS tickets resolved within 14 days	Up is Better	75.8%	69.6%	76.3%	68.5%
Percentage of Unique Arrests from MPD that are verified and processed in the GRID system	Up is Better	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
Percentage of MPD Arrest Charges received that are Verified and Processed in GRID System	Up is Better	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021

## Operations

Operations Header	Operations Title	Operations Description	Type of Operations
<b>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)</b>			
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

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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
<b>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)</b>			
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	In addition to providing a comprehensive yearly data set of all felony sentences imposed, multiple data sets will be placed on the agency's website to provide residents and researcher more detailed overview and a clearer understanding of felony sentencing trends for specific offense types in the District.	Daily Service
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.	Daily Service
<b>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 unwarranted disparity in sentences. (3 Activities)</b>			
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
Sentencing Guideline Monitoring	MPD Arrest Data Processing	In FY2021, the agency will begin receiving and integrating MPD arrest data into the agency's Guideline Information Reporting Data (GRID) system. On an hourly basis arrest data will be transferred to the GRID system where data will be stored, processed and integrated, allowing for analysis of felony cases from arrest through sentencing. Processing will include data validation and reliability checks to ensure the accuracy of the data for analysis purposes.	Daily Service

## Workload Measures

Measure	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual
<b>1 - Identify Irregularities and Inconsistencies in Felony Sentences Imposed (2 Measures)</b>			
Number of Sealed Cases	3026	2485	1310
Number of DQA's Identified and Submitted	New in 2020	New in 2020	97
<b>1 - Review and Verify all Criminal History Scores (1 Measure)</b>			
Requests for Missing Criminal History Scores	New in 2020	New in 2020	144
<b>1 - Review and Verify All Felony Sentences (6 Measures)</b>			
Number of CSOSA Criminal History Scores Submitted	2833	2319	794
Number of Felony Cases Sentenced	1813	1587	706
Number of Felony Counts Sentenced	2316	2070	910
Number of Departure Letters Sent	114	165	55
Number of Probation Revocations Sentenced	355	375	363
Number of sentences imposed as the result of 11(C)(1)(c) pleas	New in 2019	277	122
<b>2 - Maintain and Update Agency Website (1 Measure)</b>			
Number of Agency Website Hits	19,151	19,451	21,153
<b>2 - Provide Sentencing Guideline Training (3 Measures)</b>			
Number of Sentencing Guideline Trainings Provided	19	15	13

Measure	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual
Agency Website Updates Completed	43	46	72
Number of individuals receiving Sentencing Guideline Training	New in 2019	96	121
<b>3 - Monitor and Maintain the Guideline Reporting Information Data (GRID) System (4 Measures)</b>			
Number of GRID Tickets Entered	69	66	29
Number Hours required to complete data requests	971	1455	657
Number of new charge codes mapped in GRID	21	165	34
Number of Critical GRID Tickets Submitted	New in 2020	New in 2020	14
<b>3 - MPD Arrest Data Processing (2 Measures)</b>			
Total Number of MPD Arrest Charges Received	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
Number of Unique MPD Arrests Received	New in 2021	New in 2021	New in 2021
<b>3 - Respond to Data Requests (2 Measures)</b>			
Number of Data Requests Received	47	67	47
Data Sets Provided	New in 2020	New in 2020	18

## Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiative Title	Strategic Initiative Description	Proposed Completion Date
<b>Identify Irregularities and Inconsistencies in Felony Sentences Imposed (1 Strategic Initiative)</b>		
Rule 11(c)1(C) Sentences Quarterly Report	Rule 11(c)1(C) Sentences are the result of an agreed upon sentence among the prosecution, defense, and the court. These sentences are considered compliant under the Guidelines, regardless of whether the actual sentences imposed complies with the Guideline recommended sentence. This report will provide data on the frequency, type of sentence imposed, offense type involved the number of Rule 11(c)1(C) pleas to other pleas, as well as the percentage they represent of all sentences imposed. The report will be completed on December 30th, March 30th, June 30th and September 30th.	09-30-2021
<b>Increase public outreach and education regarding the Sentencing Guidelines (2 Strategic initiatives)</b>		
Fast Facts Series for Weapon Offenses	The agency has created Fast Facts sheets to provide sentencing information and trends for a single felony offense, which allows the reader to have a snap shot of how often an offense is sentenced and what types of sentences are imposed for a specific felony offense, with the intend of improving transparency of sentencing practices in the District. In FY 21, a Fast Fact Series will be developed that focuses on weapon offenses, including ADW, Carjacking, Felon in Possession, and Possession of Firearm During a Crime of Violence. For these four violent weapon offenses, the analysis and data provided will include frequency and sentencing trends, along with offender demographics. The Fast Fact will be completed on quarterly (December 30th, March 30th, June 30th, and September and posted on the agency's website.	09-30-2021
Virtual Sentencing Guideline Educational Presentations for District Residents	Given the restrictions regarding public gatherings, in-person community based Guideline educational training is difficult. To compensate, the agency will develop two virtual YouTube educational presentations. The first will focus on how the Guidelines operate and factors that are taken into consideration at sentencing. The second YouTube presentation will focus on the impact of using a weapon during a criminal activity to highlight the impact the use of a weapon has on both on the type and length of sentence imposed. The first YouTube video will be completed by January 15, 2021 and the second by August 2, 2021. They will be posted on the website and agency social media accounts.	08-02-2021
<b>Public Access to Sentencing Data (1 Strategic Initiative)</b>		
Public Data Sets By Offense Category	Four new public access data sets will be developed and posted on the agency's website. These data sets will be offense category based and include: Drug Offenses, Property Offenses, Violent Offenses, and Weapon Offenses. Providing sentencing related data by offense categories will inform District residents and researches of the types and lengths of sentences imposed under the Sentencing Guidelines. This initiative will be completed by April 30, 2021.	04-30-2021