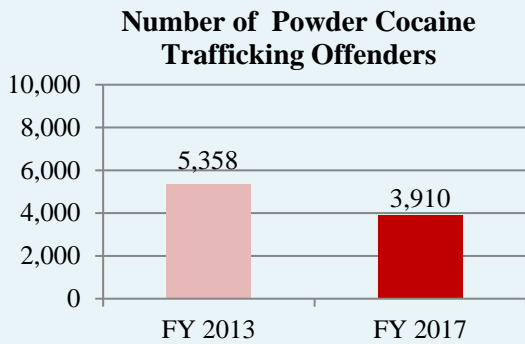




Quick Facts

- ▶ THERE WERE 66,873 CASES REPORTED TO THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION IN FISCAL YEAR 2017.
- ▶ OF THESE CASES, 19,240 INVOLVED DRUG TRAFFICKING.¹
- ▶ 20.3% OF DRUG TRAFFICKING OFFENSES INVOLVED POWDER COCAINE.

Powder Cocaine Trafficking Offenses



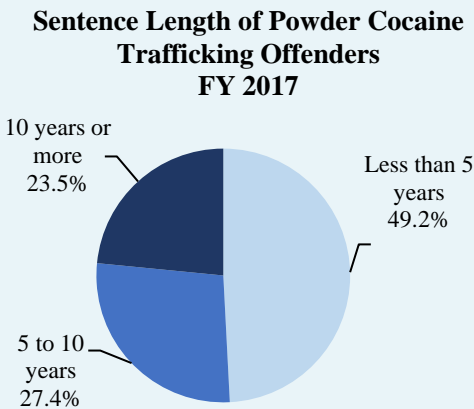
In fiscal year 2017, there were 3,910 powder cocaine trafficking offenders, who accounted for 20.3% of all offenders sentenced under the drug trafficking guidelines. The number of powder cocaine offenders has decreased by 27.0% since fiscal year 2013.

Offender and Offense Characteristics

- In fiscal year 2017, most powder cocaine trafficking offenders were men (90.1%).
- Sixty-five percent of powder cocaine trafficking offenders were Hispanic (65.0%) followed by Black (28.2%), White (6.1%), and Other Races (0.7%).
- The average age of these offenders at sentencing was 37 years.
- Sixty-one percent of powder cocaine trafficking offenders were United States citizens (61.0%).
- Almost two-thirds (63.9%) of powder cocaine traffickers had little or no prior criminal history (*i.e.*, assigned to Criminal History Category I). A small percentage (4.5%) were Career Offenders (§4B1.1).
- The median base offense level in these cases was 30. This corresponds to a quantity of drugs between 11 and 33 pounds of powder cocaine.
- Powder cocaine trafficking sentences were increased for:
 - ◆ 15.0% of offenders because the offense involved the possession of a weapon;
 - ◆ 8.8% of offenders for having a leadership or supervisory role in the offense.
- Powder cocaine trafficking sentences were decreased for:
 - ◆ 19.0% of offenders because they were a minor or minimal participant in the offense;
 - ◆ 42.8% of offenders because they met the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines.

Top Five Districts Powder Cocaine Trafficking Offenders FY 2017

| |
|---|
| Southern District of Florida (N=433) |
| Middle District of Florida (N=355) |
| District of Puerto Rico (N=294) |
| Southern District of Texas (N=257) |
| Western District of Texas (N=221) |



Punishment

- Most powder cocaine trafficking offenders were sentenced to imprisonment (97.4%).
- The average sentence for powder cocaine trafficking offenders was 72 months.
- Nearly 60 percent of all powder cocaine trafficking offenders were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty (59.1%).
 - ◆ However, more than sixty percent (61.0%) of these offenders were not subject to any mandatory minimum penalty at sentencing because:
 - ◇ 15.0% provided the government with substantial assistance in the investigation or prosecution of other offenders, 33.1% were eligible for relief through the statutory safety valve provision, and 12.9% received both forms of relief.

¹ Drug trafficking offenses include cases with complete guideline application information in which the offender was sentenced under USSG §§2D1.1 (Drug Trafficking), 2D1.2 (Protected Locations), 2D1.5 (Continuing Criminal Enterprise), 2D1.6 (Use of a Communication Facility), 2D1.8 (Rent/Manage Drug Establishment), 2D1.10 (Endangering Human Life), or 2D1.14 (Narco-Terrorism).

Quick Facts

Powder Cocaine Trafficking Offenses

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

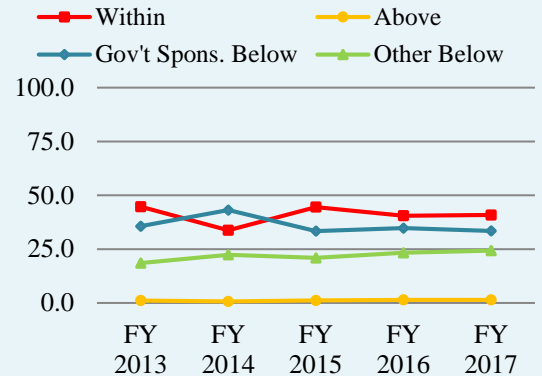
- The rate of within range sentences for powder cocaine trafficking offenders in fiscal year 2017 was 40.8%.
- The rate of government sponsored below range sentences for powder cocaine trafficking offenders in fiscal year 2017 was 33.5%.
 - ◆ The rate of powder cocaine trafficking offenders receiving a substantial assistance departure has decreased in recent years, from more than one-quarter of offenders in fiscal years 2013 and 2014 to 21.7% in fiscal year 2017.
 - ◇ In fiscal year 2017, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 47.0%.
 - ◆ Early Disposition Program (EDP) departures² were granted for a small proportion of approximately three to four percent of powder cocaine trafficking offenders in each of the last five years.
 - ◇ In fiscal year 2017, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 48.5%.
 - ◆ The rate of powder cocaine trafficking offenders receiving a below range sentence sponsored by the government for reasons other than substantial assistance or participation in an EDP was 7.5% in fiscal year 2017.
 - ◇ In fiscal year 2017, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 40.9%.
- The rate of non-government sponsored below range sentences for powder cocaine traffickers has generally increased in recent years, from 20.9% in fiscal year 2015 to 24.3% in fiscal year 2017.
 - ◆ In fiscal year 2017, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 34.4%.
- The average guideline minimum for powder cocaine trafficking offenders has decreased in each of the last five fiscal years. Average sentences for these offenders followed a similar pattern for fiscal years 2013 through 2016, but increased slightly in fiscal year 2017.
 - ◆ The average guideline minimum decreased from 102 months in fiscal year 2013 to 93 months in fiscal year 2017;
 - ◆ The average sentence imposed decreased from 79 months in fiscal year 2013 to 70 months in fiscal year 2016, but increased to 72 months in fiscal year 2017.

² “Early Disposition Program (or EDP) departures” are departures where the government sought a sentence below the guideline range because the defendant participated in the government’s Early Disposition Program, through which cases are resolved in an expedited manner. See USSG §5K3.1.

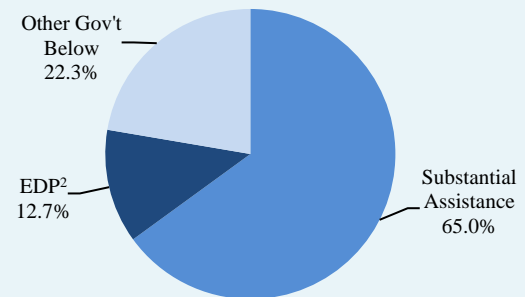
SOURCE: United States Sentencing Commission, 2013 through 2017 Datafiles, USSCFY13-USSCFY17.

For other *Quick Facts* publications, visit www.ussc.gov/research/quick-facts.

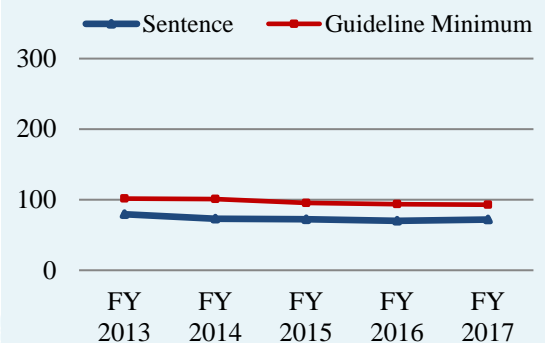
Sentence Relative to the Guideline Range



Government Sponsored Below Range Sentences FY 2017



Average Sentence and Average Guideline Minimum (in months)



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