CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, AUTHORITY, AND GENERAL APPLICATION PRINCIPLES

PART A — INTRODUCTION AND AUTHORITY

Introductory Commentary

The United States Sentencing Commission ("Commission") is an independent agency in the judicial branch composed of seven voting and two non-voting, *ex officio* members. Congress directed the Commission to establish sentencing policies and practices for the federal criminal justice system and develop guidelines that further the purposes of sentencing. This part provides the statutory authority and mission of the Commission to promulgate federal sentencing guidelines, policy statements, and commentary.

The guidelines and policy statements promulgated by the Commission are issued pursuant to Section 994(a) of Title 28, United States Code, and are set forth in this Guidelines Manual.

The Guidelines Manual is structured to reflect the advisory sentencing scheme established following the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Booker*, 543 U.S. 220 (2005), recognizing both essential steps of the court's inquiry in imposing a sentence "sufficient, but not greater than necessary." *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). The guidelines and policy statements set forth throughout the Guidelines Manual represent the first step in the sentencing process and are one of multiple factors judges must consider under 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a).

Originally, consistent with the pre-*Booker* sentencing system, the Guidelines Manual included an additional step for determining a sentence by providing for a number of "departures," which were provisions that allowed the court to impose a sentence outside the applicable guideline range or otherwise different from the guideline sentence before the court's consideration of the additional sentencing factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). The departure provisions were set forth throughout the Guidelines Manual as part of the commentary to numerous guidelines and in policy statements contained in Chapter Four, Part A, and Chapter Five, Parts H and K.

Following *Booker*, courts are permitted to impose sentences outside the applicable guideline range as "variances," both for reasons related to the operation of the applicable guideline provisions and in light of individual characteristics unrelated to guideline provisions. In the years after *Booker*, courts used departures with much less frequency in favor of variances.

In 2025, the Commission amended the Guidelines Manual to remove departures and policy statements relating to specific personal characteristics. (*See* USSG App. C, amendment 836). The Commission sought to make these changes to better align the requirements placed on the court and acknowledge the growing shift away from the use of departures provided for within the Guidelines Manual in the wake of *Booker* and subsequent decisions. The Commission envisioned and framed this 2025 amendment to be outcome neutral, intending that judges who would have relied upon facts previously identified as a basis for a departure would continue to have the authority to rely upon such facts to impose a sentence outside of the applicable guideline range as a variance under 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). The removal of departures from the Guidelines Manual does not limit the information courts may consider in imposing a sentence nor does it reflect a view from the Commission that such facts

should no longer inform a court for purposes of determining the appropriate sentence. In this regard, Appendix B of the Guidelines Manual compiles the departure provisions as they were last provided in the 2024 edition of the Manual. Similarly, information describing the historical development and evolution of the federal sentencing guidelines is also set forth in Appendix B of the Guidelines Manual.

1. AUTHORITY

§1A1.1. Commission's Authority

The Sentencing Reform Act of 1984 (Title II of the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984) provides that a sentencing court "shall impose a sentence sufficient, but not greater than necessary, to comply with" the purposes of sentencing: (1) to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote respect for the law, and to provide just punishment for the offense; (2) deterrence; (3) protection of the public from further crimes; and (4) rehabilitation. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). The Act also provides for the development of guidelines by the Commission that further those purposes.

The guidelines, policy statements, and commentary set forth in this Guidelines Manual, including amendments thereto, are promulgated by the United States Sentencing Commission pursuant to: (1) section 994(a) of title 28, United States Code; and (2) with respect to guidelines, policy statements, and commentary promulgated or amended pursuant to specific congressional directive, pursuant to the authority contained in that directive in addition to the authority under section 994(a) of title 28, United States Code.

The Commission has ensured that the guidelines, policy statements, and commentary used to calculate the guideline range are: (1) neutral as to the race, sex, national origin, creed, and socioeconomic status of the defendant; and (2) generally do not reflect consideration of education, vocational skills, employment record, family ties and responsibilities, and community ties of the defendant, in recommending a term of imprisonment or length of imprisonment. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(d), (e).

Commentary

Background: The Sentencing Reform Act of 1984 (Title II of the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984) (the "Act") provides that courts must consider a variety of factors when imposing a sentence "sufficient, but not greater than necessary" to comply with the purposes of sentencing as set forth in the Act—to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote respect for the law, to provide just punishment for the offense, deterrence, protection of the public from further crimes, and rehabilitation. 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). The Act provides for the development of guidelines that will (1) further these statutory purposes of sentencing; (2) provide certainty and fairness in meeting the purposes of sentencing, avoiding unwarranted sentencing disparities among defendants with similar records who have been found guilty of similar criminal conduct while maintaining sufficient flexibility to permit individualized sentences when warranted by mitigating or aggravating factors not taken into account

in the establishment of general sentencing practices; and (3) reflect, to the extent practicable, advancement in knowledge of human behavior as it relates to the criminal justice process. 28 U.S.C. § 994(f).

As background, Congress provided specific directives to the Commission when setting a guideline range for "each category of offense involving each category of defendant." 28 U.S.C. § 994(b)(1).

First, the Act directs the Commission to consider, for purposes of establishing categories of offenses, whether the following seven matters, "among others," have any relevance to the nature, extent, place of service, or other aspects of an appropriate sentence: (1) the grade of the offense; (2) the circumstances under which the offense was committed which mitigate or aggravate the seriousness of the offense; (3) the nature and degree of the harm caused by the offense, including whether it involved property, irreplaceable property, a person, a number of persons, or a breach of public trust; (4) the community view of the gravity of the offense; (5) the public concern generated by the offense; (6) the deterrent effect a particular sentence may have on the commission of the offense by others; and (7) the current incidence of the offense in the community and in the Nation as a whole. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(c).

Second, the Act directs the Commission to consider, for purposes of establishing categories of defendants, whether the following eleven matters, "among others," have any relevance to the nature, extent, place of service, or other aspects of an appropriate sentence, and to take them into account in the guidelines and policy statements only to the extent that they do have relevance: (1) age; (2) education; (3) vocational skills; (4) mental and emotional condition to the extent that such condition mitigates the defendant's culpability or to the extent that such condition is otherwise plainly relevant; (5) physical condition, including drug dependence; (6) previous employment record; (7) family ties and responsibilities; (8) community ties; (9) role in the offense; (10) criminal history; and (11) degree of dependence upon criminal activity for a livelihood. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(d). The Act also directs the Commission to ensure that the guidelines and policy statements "are entirely neutral" as to five characteristics—race, sex, national origin, creed, and socioeconomic status. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(d).

Third, the Act directs the Commission to ensure that the guidelines and policy statements, in recommending a term of imprisonment or length of a term of imprisonment, reflect the "general inappropriateness" of considering five of those characteristics—education; vocational skills; employment record; family ties and responsibilities; and community ties. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(e).

In formulating the guidelines used to calculate the guideline range, the Commission remains cognizant of these detailed instructions directing the Commission to consider whether, and to what extent, specific offense-based and offender-based factors are relevant to sentencing. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(c), (d). Similarly, the Commission has ensured that the guidelines, policy statements, and commentary used to calculate the guideline range are: (1) neutral as to the race, sex, national origin, creed, and socioeconomic status of the defendant; and (2) generally do not reflect consideration of education, vocational skills, employment record, family ties and responsibilities, and community ties of the defendant in recommending a term of imprisonment or length of imprisonment. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 994(d), (e).

The requirements and limitations imposed upon the Commission by 28 U.S.C. § 994, however, do not apply to the sentencing court. To the contrary, Congress set forth the factors that a court must consider in imposing a sentence that is "sufficient but not greater than necessary" to comply with the purposes of sentencing in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). These statutory factors permit a sentencing court to consider the "widest possible breadth of information" about a defendant ensuring the court is in "possession of the fullest information possible concerning the defendant's life and characteristics." *See Pepper v. United States*, 562 U.S. 476, 488 (2011); *see also Concepcion v. United States,* 597 U.S. 481, 493 (2022). Accordingly, the application instructions set forth in the following part are structured to reflect this two-step process whereby the sentencing court must first correctly calculate the applicable guide-

line range as the "starting point and initial benchmark" and then must determine an appropriate sentence upon consideration of all the factors set forth by Congress in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). *See Gall v. United States*, 552 U.S. 38, 49–51 (2007).

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective November 1, 1989 (amendments 67, 68, and 271); November 1, 1990 (amendment 307); November 1, 1992 (amendment 466); November 1, 1995 (amendment 534); November 1, 1996 (amendment 538); November 1, 2000 (amendments 602 and 603); October 27, 2003 (amendment 651); November 1, 2008 (amendments 717 and 725); November 1, 2014 (amendment 789); November 1, 2018 (amendment 813); November 1, 2023 (amendment 821); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836).

PART B — GENERAL APPLICATION PRINCIPLES

§1B1.1. Application Instructions

(a) STEP ONE: CALCULATION OF GUIDELINE RANGE AND DETERMINATION OF SENTENCING REQUIREMENTS AND OPTIONS UNDER THE GUIDELINES MANUAL.—The court shall determine the kinds of sentence and the guideline range as set forth in the guidelines (*see* 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(4)) by applying the provisions of this manual in the following order, except as specifically directed:

(1) Determine, pursuant to §1B1.2 (Applicable Guidelines), the offense guideline section from Chapter Two (Offense Conduct) applicable to the offense of conviction. *See* §1B1.2.

(2) Determine the base offense level and apply any appropriate specific offense characteristics, cross references, and special instructions contained in the particular guideline in Chapter Two in the order listed.

(3) Apply the adjustments as appropriate related to victim, role, and obstruction of justice from Parts A, B, and C of Chapter Three.

(4) If there are multiple counts of conviction, repeat steps (1) through (3) for each count. Apply §3D1.1 (Procedure for Determining Offense Level on Multiple Counts) to determine the combined offense level applicable to all counts.

(5) Apply the adjustment for the defendant's acceptance of responsibility and the reduction pursuant to an early disposition program, as appropriate, from Parts E and F of Chapter Three.

(6) Determine the defendant's criminal history category as specified in Part A of Chapter Four. Determine from Parts B and C of Chapter Four any other applicable adjustments.

(7) Determine the guideline range in Part A of Chapter Five that corresponds to the offense level and criminal history category determined above.

(8) For the particular guideline range, determine from Parts B through G of Chapter Five the sentencing requirements and options related to probation, imprisonment, supervision conditions, fines, and restitution.

(9) Apply, as appropriate, Part K of Chapter Five.

(b) STEP TWO: CONSIDERATION OF FACTORS SET FORTH IN 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a).—After determining the kinds of sentence and guidelines range pursuant to subsection (a) of §1B1.1 (Application Instructions) and 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(4) and (5), the court shall consider the other applicable factors in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a) to determine a sentence that is sufficient, but not greater than necessary, to comply with the purposes of sentencing. Specifically, as set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), in determining the particular sentence to be imposed, the court shall also consider—

(1) the nature and circumstances of the offense and the history and characteristics of the defendant;

(2) the need for the sentence imposed to meet the purposes of sentencing listed in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(2);

(3) the kinds of sentences available;

(4) the need to avoid unwarranted sentence disparities among defendants with similar records who have been found guilty of similar conduct; and

(5) the need to provide restitution to any victims of the offense.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. **Frequently Used Terms Defined.**—The following are definitions of terms that are used frequently in the guidelines and are of general applicability (except to the extent expressly modified in respect to a particular guideline or policy statement):

(A) "***Abducted***" means that a victim was forced to accompany an offender to a different location. For example, a bank robber's forcing a bank teller from the bank into a getaway car would constitute an abduction.

(B) "***Bodily injury***" means any significant injury; *e.g.*, an injury that is painful and obvious, or is of a type for which medical attention ordinarily would be sought.

(C) "***Brandished***" with reference to a dangerous weapon (including a firearm) means that all or part of the weapon was displayed, or the presence of the weapon was otherwise made known to another person, in order to intimidate that person, regardless of whether the weapon was directly visible to that person. Accordingly, although the dangerous weapon does not have to be directly visible, the weapon must be present.

(D) "***Court protection order***" means "protection order" as defined by 18 U.S.C. § 2266(5) and consistent with 18 U.S.C. § 2265(b).

(E) "***Dangerous weapon***" means (i) an instrument capable of inflicting death or serious bodily injury; or (ii) an object that is not an instrument capable of inflicting death or serious bodily injury but (I) closely resembles such an instrument; or (II) the defendant used the object in

a manner that created the impression that the object was such an instrument (*e.g.*, a defendant wrapped a hand in a towel during a bank robbery to create the appearance of a gun).

(F) "***Destructive device***" means any article described in 26 U.S.C. § 5845(f) (including an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas — (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses).

(G) "***Firearm***" means (i) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (ii) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (iii) any firearm muffler or silencer; or (iv) any destructive device. A weapon, commonly known as a "BB" or pellet gun, that uses air or carbon dioxide pressure to expel a projectile is a dangerous weapon but not a firearm.

(H) "***Offense***" means the offense of conviction and all relevant conduct under §1B1.3 (Relevant Conduct) unless a different meaning is specified or is otherwise clear from the context. The term "***instant***" is used in connection with "offense," "federal offense," or "offense of conviction," as the case may be, to distinguish the violation for which the defendant is being sentenced from a prior or subsequent offense, or from an offense before another court (*e.g.*, an offense before a state court involving the same underlying conduct).

(I) "***Otherwise used***" with reference to a dangerous weapon (including a firearm) means that the conduct did not amount to the discharge of a firearm but was more than brandishing, displaying, or possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon.

(J) "***Permanent or life-threatening bodily injury***" means injury involving a substantial risk of death; loss or substantial impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty that is likely to be permanent; or an obvious disfigurement that is likely to be permanent. In the case of a kidnapping, for example, maltreatment to a life-threatening degree (*e.g.*, by denial of food or medical care) would constitute life-threatening bodily injury.

(K) "***Physically restrained***" means the forcible restraint of the victim such as by being tied, bound, or locked up.

(L) "***Serious bodily injury***" means injury involving extreme physical pain or the protracted impairment of a function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or requiring medical intervention such as surgery, hospitalization, or physical rehabilitation. In addition, "serious bodily injury" is deemed to have occurred if the offense involved conduct constituting criminal sexual abuse under 18 U.S.C. § 2241 or § 2242 or any similar offense under state law.

2. **Definition of Additional Terms.—**Definitions of terms also may appear in other sections. Such definitions are not designed for general applicability; therefore, their applicability to sections other than those expressly referenced must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

The term "***includes***" is not exhaustive; the term "***e.g.***" is merely illustrative.

3. **List of Statutory Provisions.—**The list of "Statutory Provisions" in the Commentary to each offense guideline does not necessarily include every statute covered by that guideline. In addition, some statutes may be covered by more than one guideline.

4. **Cumulative Application of Multiple Adjustments.—**

   (A) **Cumulative Application of Multiple Adjustments within One Guideline.—**The offense level adjustments from more than one specific offense characteristic within an offense guideline are applied cumulatively (added together) unless the guideline specifies that only the greater (or greatest) is to be used. Within each specific offense characteristic, however, the offense level adjustments are alternative; only the one that best describes the conduct is to be used. For example, in §2A2.2(b)(3), pertaining to degree of bodily injury, the subdivision that best describes the level of bodily injury is used; the adjustments for different degrees of bodily injury (subparagraphs (A) – (E)) are not added together.

   (B) **Cumulative Application of Multiple Adjustments from Multiple Guidelines.—**Absent an instruction to the contrary, enhancements under Chapter Two, adjustments under Chapter Three, and determinations under Chapter Four are to be applied cumulatively. In some cases, such enhancements, adjustments, and determinations may be triggered by the same conduct. For example, shooting a police officer during the commission of a robbery may warrant an injury enhancement under §2B3.1(b)(3) and an official victim adjustment under §3A1.2, even though the enhancement and the adjustment both are triggered by the shooting of the officer.

5. **Two or More Guideline Provisions Equally Applicable.—**Where two or more guideline provisions appear equally applicable, but the guidelines authorize the application of only one such provision, use the provision that results in the greater offense level. *E.g.*, in §2A2.2(b)(2), if a firearm is both discharged and brandished, the provision applicable to the discharge of the firearm would be used.

6. **Use of Abbreviated Guideline Titles.—**Whenever a guideline makes reference to another guideline, a parenthetical restatement of that other guideline's heading accompanies the initial reference to that other guideline. This parenthetical is provided only for the convenience of the reader and is not intended to have substantive effect. In the case of lengthy guideline headings, such a parenthetical restatement of the guideline heading may be abbreviated for ease of reference. For example, references to §2B1.1 (Larceny, Embezzlement, and Other Forms of Theft; Offenses Involving Stolen Property; Property Damage or Destruction; Fraud and Deceit; Forgery; Offenses Involving Altered or Counterfeit Instruments Other than Counterfeit Bearer Obligations of the United States) may be abbreviated as follows: §2B1.1 (Theft, Property Destruction, and Fraud).

Background: The court must impose a sentence "sufficient, but not greater than necessary," to comply with the purposes of sentencing set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(2). *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). This guideline is structured to reflect the advisory sentencing scheme established following the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Booker*, 543 U.S. 220 (2005), by setting forth both essential steps of the court's inquiry in making this determination.

Originally, the guidelines were mandatory, with limited exceptions. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3553(b). Later, in *United States v. Booker*, 543 U.S. 220 (2005), the Supreme Court held that the provision in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(b) making the guidelines mandatory was unconstitutional. Following *Booker,* district courts are first required to properly calculate and consider the guidelines when sentencing. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(4), (a)(5); *Booker*, 543 U.S. at 264 ("The district courts, while not bound to apply the Guidelines, must . . . take them into account when sentencing."); *Rita v. United States*, 551 U.S. 338, 351 (2007) (stating that a district court should begin all sentencing proceedings by correctly calculating the applicable Guidelines range); *Gall v. United States*, 552 U.S. 38, 49 (2007) ("As a matter of administration and to secure nationwide consistency, the Guidelines should be the starting point and the initial benchmark."); *Peugh v. United States*, 569 U.S. 530 (2013) (noting that "the post-

Booker federal sentencing system adopted procedural measures that make the guidelines the 'lodestone' of sentencing"). Step one sets forth the steps for properly calculating the guidelines.

District courts are then required to fully and carefully consider the additional factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), which include: (1) the nature and circumstances of the offense and the history and characteristics of the defendant; (2) the need for the sentence imposed to meet the purposes of sentencing listed in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(2); (3) the kinds of sentence available; (4) the need to avoid unwarranted sentence disparities among defendants with similar records who have been found guilty of similar conduct; and (5) the need to provide restitution to any victims of the offense. *See Rita*, 551 U.S. at 351. Step two, as set forth in subsection (b), reflects this step of the sentencing process.

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective January 15, 1988 (amendment 1); November 1, 1989 (amendments 69, 70, 71, 72 and 303); November 1, 1990 (amendment 361); November 1, 1991 (amendment 388); November 1, 1993 (amendment 497); November 1, 1997 (amendments 545 and 546); November 1, 2000 (amendments 591 and 601); November 1, 2001 (amendment 617); October 27, 2003 (amendment 651); November 1, 2003 (amendment 661); November 1, 2006 (amendment 684); November 1, 2010 (amendment 741); November 1, 2014 (amendment 789); November 1, 2018 (amendment 805); November 1, 2023 (amendment 824); November 1, 2024 (amendment 831); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836); November 1, 2026 (amendment 840).

§1B1.2. Applicable Guidelines

(a) Determine the offense guideline section in Chapter Two (Offense Conduct) applicable to the offense of conviction (*i.e.*, the offense conduct charged in the count of the indictment or information of which the defendant was convicted). However, in the case of a plea agreement (written or made orally on the record) containing a stipulation that specifically establishes a more serious offense than the offense of conviction, determine the offense guideline section in Chapter Two applicable to the stipulated offense.

Refer to the Statutory Index (Appendix A) to determine the Chapter Two offense guideline, referenced in the Statutory Index for the offense of conviction. If the offense involved a conspiracy, attempt, or solicitation, refer to §2X1.1 (Attempt, Solicitation, or Conspiracy) as well as the guideline referenced in the Statutory Index for the substantive offense. For statutory provisions not listed in the Statutory Index, use the most analogous guideline. *See* §2X5.1 (Other Offenses). The guidelines do not apply to any count of conviction that is a Class B or C misdemeanor or an infraction. *See* §1B1.9 (Class B or C Misdemeanors and Infractions).

(b) After determining the appropriate offense guideline section pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, determine the applicable guideline range in accordance with §1B1.3 (Relevant Conduct).

(c) A plea agreement (written or made orally on the record) containing a stipulation that specifically establishes the commission of additional offense(s) shall be treated as if the defendant had been convicted of additional count(s) charging those offense(s).

(d) A conviction on a count charging a conspiracy to commit more than one offense shall be treated as if the defendant had been convicted on a separate count of conspiracy for each offense that the defendant conspired to commit.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. This section provides the basic rules for determining the guidelines applicable to the offense conduct under Chapter Two (Offense Conduct). The court is to use the Chapter Two guideline section referenced in the Statutory Index (Appendix A) for the offense of conviction. However, (A) in the case of a plea agreement (written or made orally on the record) containing a stipulation that specifically establishes a more serious offense than the offense of conviction, the Chapter Two offense guideline section applicable to the stipulated offense is to be used; and (B) for statutory provisions not listed in the Statutory Index, the most analogous guideline, determined pursuant to §2X5.1 (Other Offenses), is to be used.

   In the case of a particular statute that proscribes only a single type of criminal conduct, the offense of conviction and the conduct proscribed by the statute will coincide, and the Statutory Index will specify only one offense guideline for that offense of conviction. In the case of a particular statute that proscribes a variety of conduct that might constitute the subject of different offense guidelines, the Statutory Index may specify more than one offense guideline for that particular statute, and the court will determine which of the referenced guideline sections is most appropriate for the offense conduct charged in the count of which the defendant was convicted. If the offense involved a conspiracy, attempt, or solicitation, refer to §2X1.1 (Attempt, Solicitation, or Conspiracy) as well as the guideline referenced in the Statutory Index for the substantive offense. For statutory provisions not listed in the Statutory Index, the most analogous guideline is to be used. *See* §2X5.1 (Other Offenses).

   As set forth in the first paragraph of this note, an exception to this general rule is that if a plea agreement (written or made orally on the record) contains a stipulation that establishes a more serious offense than the offense of conviction, the guideline section applicable to the stipulated offense is to be used. A factual statement or a stipulation contained in a plea agreement (written or made orally on the record) is a stipulation for purposes of subsection (a) only if both the defendant and the government explicitly agree that the factual statement or stipulation is a stipulation for such purposes. However, a factual statement or stipulation made after the plea agreement has been entered, or after any modification to the plea agreement has been made, is not a stipulation for purposes of subsection (a). The sentence that shall be imposed is limited, however, to the maximum authorized by the statute under which the defendant is convicted. *See* Chapter Five, Part G (Implementing the Total Sentence of Imprisonment). For example, if the defendant pleads guilty to theft, but admits the elements of robbery as part of the plea agreement, the robbery guideline is to be applied. The sentence, however, may not exceed the maximum sentence for theft. *See* H. Rep. 98-1017, 98th Cong., 2d Sess. 99 (1984).

   The exception to the general rule has a practical basis. In a case in which the elements of an offense more serious than the offense of conviction are established by a plea agreement, it may unduly complicate the sentencing process if the applicable guideline does not reflect the seriousness of the defendant's actual conduct. Without this exception, the court would be forced to use an artificial guideline and then impose a sentence that is greater than the otherwise applicable guideline range to the degree the court found necessary based upon the more serious conduct established by the plea agreement. The probation officer would first be required to calculate the guideline for the offense of conviction. However, this guideline might even contain characteristics

that are difficult to establish or not very important in the context of the actual offense conduct. As a simple example, §2B1.1 (Theft, Property Destruction, and Fraud) contains monetary distinctions which are more significant and more detailed than the monetary distinctions in §2B3.1 (Robbery). Then, the probation officer might need to calculate the robbery guideline to assist the court in determining an appropriate sentence in a case in which the defendant pled guilty to theft but admitted committing robbery. This cumbersome, artificial procedure is avoided by using the exception rule in guilty or *nolo contendere* plea cases where it is applicable.

As with any plea agreement, the court must first determine that the agreement is acceptable, in accordance with the policies stated in Chapter Six, Part B (Plea Agreements). The limited exception provided here applies only after the court has determined that a plea, otherwise fitting the exception, is acceptable.

2. Section 1B1.2(b) directs the court, once it has determined the applicable guideline (*i.e.*, the applicable guideline section from Chapter Two) under §1B1.2(a) to determine any applicable specific offense characteristics (under that guideline), and any other applicable sentencing factors pursuant to the relevant conduct definition in §1B1.3. Where there is more than one base offense level within a particular guideline, the determination of the applicable base offense level is treated in the same manner as a determination of a specific offense characteristic. Accordingly, the "relevant conduct" criteria of §1B1.3 are to be used, unless conviction under a specific statute is expressly required.

3. Subsections (c) and (d) address circumstances in which the provisions of Chapter Three, Part D (Multiple Counts) are to be applied although there may be only one count of conviction. Subsection (c) provides that in the case of a stipulation to the commission of additional offense(s), the guidelines are to be applied as if the defendant had been convicted of an additional count for each of the offenses stipulated. For example, if the defendant is convicted of one count of robbery but, as part of a plea agreement, admits to having committed two additional robberies, the guidelines are to be applied as if the defendant had been convicted of three counts of robbery. Subsection (d) provides that a conviction on a conspiracy count charging conspiracy to commit more than one offense is treated as if the defendant had been convicted of a separate conspiracy count for each offense that he conspired to commit. For example, where a conviction on a single count of conspiracy establishes that the defendant conspired to commit three robberies, the guidelines are to be applied as if the defendant had been convicted on one count of conspiracy to commit the first robbery, one count of conspiracy to commit the second robbery, and one count of conspiracy to commit the third robbery.

4. Particular care must be taken in applying subsection (d) because there are cases in which the verdict or plea does not establish which offense(s) was the object of the conspiracy. In such cases, subsection (d) should only be applied with respect to an object offense alleged in the conspiracy count if the court, were it sitting as a trier of fact, would convict the defendant of conspiring to commit that object offense. Note, however, if the combined offense level for the object offenses specified in the conspiracy count is determined pursuant to 3D1.1(a) (*e.g.*, a conspiracy to steal three government checks) it is not necessary to engage in the foregoing analysis.

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective January 15, 1988 (amendment 2); November 1, 1989 (amendments 73, 74, 75 and 303); November 1, 1991 (amendment 434); November 1, 1992 (amendment 438); November 1, 2000 (amendment 591); November 1, 2001 (amendments 613 and 617); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836); November 1, 2026 (amendment 840).

§1B1.3. Relevant Conduct (Factors that Determine the Guideline Range)

(a) CHAPTERS TWO (OFFENSE CONDUCT) AND THREE (ADJUSTMENTS).—Unless otherwise specified, (i) the base offense level where the guideline specifies more than one base offense level, (ii) specific offense characteristics and (iii) cross references in Chapter Two, and (iv) adjustments in Chapter Three, shall be determined on the basis of the following:

(1) (A) all acts and omissions committed, aided, abetted, counseled, commanded, induced, procured, or willfully caused by the defendant; and

(B) in the case of a jointly undertaken criminal activity (a criminal plan, scheme, endeavor, or enterprise undertaken by the defendant in concert with others, whether or not charged as a conspiracy), all acts and omissions of others that were—

(i) within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity,

(ii) in furtherance of that criminal activity, and

(iii) reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity;

that occurred during the commission of the offense of conviction, in preparation for that offense, or in the course of attempting to avoid detection or responsibility for that offense;

(2) solely with respect to offenses described in subsection (d) below, all acts and omissions described in paragraphs (1)(A) and (1)(B) above that were part of the same course of conduct or common scheme or plan as the offense of conviction;

(3) all harm that resulted from the acts and omissions specified in subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) above, and all harm that was the object of such acts and omissions; and

(4) any other information specified in the applicable guideline.

(b) CHAPTERS FOUR (CRIMINAL HISTORY AND CRIMINAL LIVELIHOOD) AND FIVE (DETERMINING THE SENTENCING RANGE AND OPTIONS UNDER THE GUIDELINES).—Factors in Chapters Four and Five that establish the guideline range shall be determined on the basis of the conduct and information specified in the respective guidelines.

(c) ACQUITTED CONDUCT.—Relevant conduct does not include conduct for which the defendant was criminally charged and acquitted in federal court, unless such conduct also establishes, in whole or in part, the instant offense of conviction.

(d) OFFENSES COVERED BY SUBSECTION (a)(2).—Subsection (a)(2) applies to offenses where the offense level is determined largely on the basis of the total amount of harm or loss, the quantity of a substance involved, or some other measure of aggregate harm, or where the offense behavior is ongoing or continuous in nature and the offense guideline is written to cover such behavior.

Subsection (a)(2) applies to offenses covered by the following guidelines:

§2A3.5;
§§2B1.1, 2B1.4, 2B1.5, 2B4.1, 2B5.1, 2B5.3, 2B6.1;
§§2C1.1, 2C1.2, 2C1.8;
§§2D1.1, 2D1.2, 2D1.5, 2D1.11, 2D1.13;
§§2E4.1, 2E5.1;
§§2G2.2, 2G3.1;
§2K2.1;
§§2L1.1, 2L2.1;
§2N3.1;
§2Q2.1;
§2R1.1;
§§2S1.1, 2S1.3;
§§2T1.1, 2T1.4, 2T1.6, 2T1.7, 2T1.9, 2T2.1, 2T3.1.

Subsection (a)(2) does not apply to the offenses covered by the following guidelines:

all offenses in Chapter Two, Part A (except §2A3.5);
§§2B2.1, 2B2.3, 2B3.1, 2B3.2, 2B3.3;
§2C1.5;
§§2D2.1, 2D2.2, 2D2.3;
§§2E1.3, 2E1.4, 2E2.1;
§§2G1.1, 2G1.3, 2G2.1;
§§2H1.1, 2H2.1, 2H4.1;
§§2L2.2, 2L2.5;
§§2M2.1, 2M2.3, 2M3.1, 2M3.2, 2M3.3, 2M3.4, 2M3.5, 2M3.9;
§§2P1.1, 2P1.2, 2P1.3;
§2X6.1.

For offenses covered by guidelines that are not listed, subsection (a)(2) may or may not apply. In such instances, a case-by-case determination must be

made based upon the facts of the case and the applicable guidelines (including specific offense characteristics and other adjustments) used to determine the offense level.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. **Sentencing Accountability and Criminal Liability.**—The principles and limits of sentencing accountability under this guideline are not always the same as the principles and limits of criminal liability. Under subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2), the focus is on the specific acts and omissions for which the defendant is to be held accountable in determining the applicable guideline range, rather than on whether the defendant is criminally liable for an offense as a principal, accomplice, or conspirator.

2. **Accountability Under More Than One Provision.**—In certain cases, a defendant may be accountable for particular conduct under more than one subsection of this guideline. If a defendant's accountability for particular conduct is established under one provision of this guideline, it is not necessary to review alternative provisions under which such accountability might be established.

3. **Jointly Undertaken Criminal Activity (Subsection (a)(1)(B)).—**

   (A) **In General.**—A "***jointly undertaken criminal activity***" is a criminal plan, scheme, endeavor, or enterprise undertaken by the defendant in concert with others, whether or not charged as a conspiracy.

   In the case of a jointly undertaken criminal activity, subsection (a)(1)(B) provides that a defendant is accountable for the conduct (acts and omissions) of others that was:

   (i) within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity;

   (ii) in furtherance of that criminal activity; and

   (iii) reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity.

   The conduct of others that meets all three criteria set forth in subdivisions (i) through (iii) (*i.e.*, "within the scope," "in furtherance," and "reasonably foreseeable") is relevant conduct under this provision. However, when the conduct of others does not meet any one of the criteria set forth in subdivisions (i) through (iii), the conduct is not relevant conduct under this provision.

   (B) **Scope.**—Because a count may be worded broadly and include the conduct of many participants over a period of time, the scope of the "jointly undertaken criminal activity" is not necessarily the same as the scope of the entire conspiracy, and hence relevant conduct is not necessarily the same for every participant. In order to determine the defendant's accountability for the conduct of others under subsection (a)(1)(B), the court must first determine the scope of the criminal activity the particular defendant agreed to jointly undertake (*i.e.*, the scope of the specific conduct and objectives embraced by the defendant's agreement). In doing so, the court may consider any explicit agreement or implicit agreement fairly inferred from the conduct of the defendant and others. Accordingly, the accountability of the defendant for the acts of others is limited by the scope of his or her agreement to jointly undertake the particular criminal activity. Acts of others that were not within the

scope of the defendant's agreement, even if those acts were known or reasonably foreseeable to the defendant, are not relevant conduct under subsection (a)(1)(B).

In cases involving contraband (including controlled substances), the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity (and thus the accountability of the defendant for the contraband that was the object of that jointly undertaken activity) may depend upon whether, in the particular circumstances, the nature of the offense is more appropriately viewed as one jointly undertaken criminal activity or as a number of separate criminal activities.

A defendant's relevant conduct does not include the conduct of members of a conspiracy prior to the defendant joining the conspiracy, even if the defendant knows of that conduct (*e.g.*, in the case of a defendant who joins an ongoing drug distribution conspiracy knowing that it had been selling two kilograms of cocaine per week, the cocaine sold prior to the defendant joining the conspiracy is not included as relevant conduct in determining the defendant's offense level).

(C) **In Furtherance.**—The court must determine if the conduct (acts and omissions) of others was in furtherance of the jointly undertaken criminal activity.

(D) **Reasonably Foreseeable.**—The court must then determine if the conduct (acts and omissions) of others that was within the scope of, and in furtherance of, the jointly undertaken criminal activity was reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity.

Note that the criminal activity that the defendant agreed to jointly undertake, and the reasonably foreseeable conduct of others in furtherance of that criminal activity, are not necessarily identical. For example, two defendants agree to commit a robbery and, during the course of that robbery, the first defendant assaults and injures a victim. The second defendant is accountable for the assault and injury to the victim (even if the second defendant had not agreed to the assault and had cautioned the first defendant to be careful not to hurt anyone) because the assaultive conduct was within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity (the robbery), was in furtherance of that criminal activity (the robbery), and was reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity (given the nature of the offense).

With respect to offenses involving contraband (including controlled substances), the defendant is accountable under subsection (a)(1)(A) for all quantities of contraband with which he was directly involved and, in the case of a jointly undertaken criminal activity under subsection (a)(1)(B), all quantities of contraband that were involved in transactions carried out by other participants, if those transactions were within the scope of, and in furtherance of, the jointly undertaken criminal activity and were reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity.

The requirement of reasonable foreseeability applies only in respect to the conduct (*i.e.*, acts and omissions) of others under subsection (a)(1)(B). It does not apply to conduct that the defendant personally undertakes, aids, abets, counsels, commands, induces, procures, or willfully causes; such conduct is addressed under subsection (a)(1)(A).

4. **Illustrations of Conduct for Which the Defendant is Accountable under Subsections (a)(1)(A) and (B).—**

(A) **Acts and omissions aided or abetted by the defendant.—**

(i) Defendant A is one of ten persons hired by Defendant B to off-load a ship containing marihuana. The off-loading of the ship is interrupted by law enforcement officers and

one ton of marihuana is seized (the amount on the ship as well as the amount off-loaded). Defendant A and the other off-loaders are arrested and convicted of importation of marihuana. Regardless of the number of bales he personally unloaded, Defendant A is accountable for the entire one-ton quantity of marihuana. Defendant A aided and abetted the off-loading of the entire shipment of marihuana by directly participating in the off-loading of that shipment (*i.e.*, the specific objective of the criminal activity he joined was the off-loading of the entire shipment). Therefore, he is accountable for the entire shipment under subsection (a)(1)(A) without regard to the issue of reasonable foreseeability. This is conceptually similar to the case of a defendant who transports a suitcase knowing that it contains a controlled substance and, therefore, is accountable for the controlled substance in the suitcase regardless of his knowledge or lack of knowledge of the actual type or amount of that controlled substance.

In certain cases, a defendant may be accountable for particular conduct under more than one subsection of this guideline. As noted in the preceding paragraph, Defendant A is accountable for the entire one-ton shipment of marihuana under subsection (a)(1)(A). Defendant A also is accountable for the entire one-ton shipment of marihuana on the basis of subsection (a)(1)(B) (applying to a jointly undertaken criminal activity). Defendant A engaged in a jointly undertaken criminal activity and all three criteria of subsection (a)(1)(B) are met. First, the conduct was within the scope of the criminal activity (the importation of the shipment of marihuana). Second, the off-loading of the shipment of marihuana was in furtherance of the criminal activity, as described above. And third, a finding that the one-ton quantity of marihuana was reasonably foreseeable is warranted from the nature of the undertaking itself (the importation of marihuana by ship typically involves very large quantities of marihuana). The specific circumstances of the case (the defendant was one of ten persons off-loading the marihuana in bales) also support this finding. In an actual case, of course, if a defendant's accountability for particular conduct is established under one provision of this guideline, it is not necessary to review alternative provisions under which such accountability might be established. *See* Application Note 2.

(B) **Acts and omissions aided or abetted by the defendant; acts and omissions in a jointly undertaken criminal activity.—**

(i) Defendant C is the getaway driver in an armed bank robbery in which $15,000 is taken and a teller is assaulted and injured. Defendant C is accountable for the money taken under subsection (a)(1)(A) because he aided and abetted the act of taking the money (the taking of money was the specific objective of the offense he joined). Defendant C is accountable for the injury to the teller under subsection (a)(1)(B) because the assault on the teller was within the scope and in furtherance of the jointly undertaken criminal activity (the robbery), and was reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity (given the nature of the offense).

As noted earlier, a defendant may be accountable for particular conduct under more than one subsection. In this example, Defendant C also is accountable for the money taken on the basis of subsection (a)(1)(B) because the taking of money was within the scope and in furtherance of the jointly undertaken criminal activity (the robbery), and was reasonably foreseeable (as noted, the taking of money was the specific objective of the jointly undertaken criminal activity).

(C) **Requirements that the conduct of others be within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity, in furtherance of that criminal activity, and reasonably foreseeable.—**

(i) Defendant D pays Defendant E a small amount to forge an endorsement on an $800 stolen government check. Unknown to Defendant E, Defendant D then uses that check as a down payment in a scheme to fraudulently obtain $15,000 worth of merchandise. Defendant E is convicted of forging the $800 check and is accountable for the forgery of this check under subsection (a)(1)(A). Defendant E is not accountable for the $15,000 because the fraudulent scheme to obtain $15,000 was not within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity (*i.e.*, the forgery of the $800 check).

(ii) Defendants F and G, working together, design and execute a scheme to sell fraudulent stocks by telephone. Defendant F fraudulently obtains $20,000. Defendant G fraudulently obtains $35,000. Each is convicted of mail fraud. Defendants F and G each are accountable for the entire amount ($55,000). Each defendant is accountable for the amount he personally obtained under subsection (a)(1)(A). Each defendant is accountable for the amount obtained by his accomplice under subsection (a)(1)(B) because the conduct of each was within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity (the scheme to sell fraudulent stocks), was in furtherance of that criminal activity, and was reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity.

(iii) Defendants H and I engaged in an ongoing marihuana importation conspiracy in which Defendant J was hired only to help off-load a single shipment. Defendants H, I, and J are included in a single count charging conspiracy to import marihuana. Defendant J is accountable for the entire single shipment of marihuana he helped import under subsection (a)(1)(A) and any acts and omissions of others related to the importation of that shipment on the basis of subsection (a)(1)(B) (*see* the discussion in example (A)(i) above). He is not accountable for prior or subsequent shipments of marihuana imported by Defendants H or I because those acts were not within the scope of his jointly undertaken criminal activity (the importation of the single shipment of marihuana).

(iv) Defendant K is a wholesale distributor of child pornography. Defendant L is a retail-level dealer who purchases child pornography from Defendant K and resells it, but otherwise operates independently of Defendant K. Similarly, Defendant M is a retail-level dealer who purchases child pornography from Defendant K and resells it, but otherwise operates independently of Defendant K. Defendants L and M are aware of each other's criminal activity but operate independently. Defendant N is Defendant K's assistant who recruits customers for Defendant K and frequently supervises the deliveries to Defendant K's customers. Each defendant is convicted of a count charging conspiracy to distribute child pornography. Defendant K is accountable under subsection (a)(1)(A) for the entire quantity of child pornography sold to Defendants L and M. Defendant N also is accountable for the entire quantity sold to those defendants under subsection (a)(1)(B) because the entire quantity was within the scope of his jointly undertaken criminal activity (to distribute child pornography with Defendant K), in furtherance of that criminal activity, and reasonably foreseeable. Defendant L is accountable under subsection (a)(1)(A) only for the quantity of child pornography that he purchased from Defendant K because he is not engaged in a jointly undertaken criminal activity with the other defendants. For the same reason, Defendant M is accountable under subsection (a)(1)(A) only for the quantity of child pornography that he purchased from Defendant K.

(v) Defendant O knows about her boyfriend's ongoing drug-trafficking activity, but agrees to participate on only one occasion by making a delivery for him at his request when he was ill. Defendant O is accountable under subsection (a)(1)(A) for the drug quantity involved on that one occasion. Defendant O is not accountable for the other drug sales made by her boyfriend because those sales were not within the scope of her jointly undertaken criminal activity (*i.e.*, the one delivery).

(vi) Defendant P is a street-level drug dealer who knows of other street-level drug dealers in the same geographic area who sell the same type of drug as he sells. Defendant P and the other dealers share a common source of supply, but otherwise operate independently. Defendant P is not accountable for the quantities of drugs sold by the other street-level drug dealers because he is not engaged in a jointly undertaken criminal activity with them. In contrast, Defendant Q, another street-level drug dealer, pools his resources and profits with four other street-level drug dealers. Defendant Q is engaged in a jointly undertaken criminal activity and, therefore, he is accountable under subsection (a)(1)(B) for the quantities of drugs sold by the four other dealers during the course of his joint undertaking with them because those sales were within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity, in furtherance of that criminal activity, and reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity.

(vii) Defendant R recruits Defendant S to distribute 500 grams of cocaine. Defendant S knows that Defendant R is the prime figure in a conspiracy involved in importing much larger quantities of cocaine. As long as Defendant S's agreement and conduct is limited to the distribution of the 500 grams, Defendant S is accountable only for that 500 gram amount (under subsection (a)(1)(A)), rather than the much larger quantity imported by Defendant R. Defendant S is not accountable under subsection (a)(1)(B) for the other quantities imported by Defendant R because those quantities were not within the scope of his jointly undertaken criminal activity (*i.e.*, the 500 grams).

(viii) Defendants T, U, V, and W are hired by a supplier to backpack a quantity of marihuana across the border from Mexico into the United States. Defendants T, U, V, and W receive their individual shipments from the supplier at the same time and coordinate their importation efforts by walking across the border together for mutual assistance and protection. Each defendant is accountable for the aggregate quantity of marihuana transported by the four defendants. The four defendants engaged in a jointly undertaken criminal activity, the object of which was the importation of the four backpacks containing marihuana (subsection (a)(1)(B)), and aided and abetted each other's actions (subsection (a)(1)(A)) in carrying out the jointly undertaken criminal activity (which under subsection (a)(1)(B) were also in furtherance of, and reasonably foreseeable in connection with, the criminal activity). In contrast, if Defendants T, U, V, and W were hired individually, transported their individual shipments at different times, and otherwise operated independently, each defendant would be accountable only for the quantity of marihuana he personally transported (subsection (a)(1)(A)). As this example illustrates, the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity may depend upon whether, in the particular circumstances, the nature of the offense is more appropriately viewed as one jointly undertaken criminal activity or as a number of separate criminal activities. *See* Application Note 3(B).

5. **Application of Subsection (a)(2).—**

(A) **In General.—**Application of subsection (a)(2) does not require the defendant, in fact, to have been convicted of multiple counts. For example, where the defendant engaged in three drug sales of 10, 15, and 20 grams of cocaine, as part of the same course of conduct or

common scheme or plan, subsection (a)(2) provides that the total quantity of cocaine involved (45 grams) is to be used to determine the offense level even if the defendant is convicted of a single count charging only one of the sales.

As noted in subsection (d), subsection (a)(2) applies to offenses where the offense level is determined largely on the basis of the total amount of harm or loss, the quantity of a substance involved, or some other measure of aggregate harm, or where the offense behavior is ongoing or continuous in nature and the offense guideline is written to cover such behavior. For example, the defendant sells 30 grams of cocaine (a violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841) on one occasion and, as part of the same course of conduct or common scheme or plan, attempts to sell an additional 15 grams of cocaine (a violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846) on another occasion. The defendant is convicted of one count charging the completed sale of 30 grams of cocaine. The two offenses (sale of cocaine and attempted sale of cocaine), although violating different statutory provisions, are covered by a guideline to which subsection (a)(2) is applicable pursuant to subsection (d). Therefore, subsection (a)(2) applies and the total amount of cocaine (45 grams) involved is used to determine the offense level.

(B) **"Same Course of Conduct or Common Scheme or Plan".**—"Common scheme or plan" and "same course of conduct" are two closely related concepts.

(i) **Common scheme or plan.** For two or more offenses to constitute part of a common scheme or plan, they must be substantially connected to each other by at least one common factor, such as common victims, common accomplices, common purpose, or similar *modus operandi*. For example, the conduct of five defendants who together defrauded a group of investors by computer manipulations that unlawfully transferred funds over an eighteen-month period would qualify as a common scheme or plan on the basis of any of the above listed factors; *i.e.*, the commonality of victims (the same investors were defrauded on an ongoing basis), commonality of offenders (the conduct constituted an ongoing conspiracy), commonality of purpose (to defraud the group of investors), or similarity of *modus operandi* (the same or similar computer manipulations were used to execute the scheme).

(ii) **Same course of conduct**. Offenses that do not qualify as part of a common scheme or plan may nonetheless qualify as part of the same course of conduct if they are sufficiently connected or related to each other as to warrant the conclusion that they are part of a single episode, spree, or ongoing series of offenses. Factors that are appropriate to the determination of whether offenses are sufficiently connected or related to each other to be considered as part of the same course of conduct include the degree of similarity of the offenses, the regularity (repetitions) of the offenses, and the time interval between the offenses. When one of the above factors is absent, a stronger presence of at least one of the other factors is required. For example, where the conduct alleged to be relevant is relatively remote to the offense of conviction, a stronger showing of similarity or regularity is necessary to compensate for the absence of temporal proximity. The nature of the offenses may also be a relevant consideration (*e.g.*, a defendant's failure to file tax returns in three consecutive years appropriately would be considered as part of the same course of conduct because such returns are only required at yearly intervals).

(C) **Conduct Associated with a Prior Sentence.**—For the purposes of subsection (a)(2), offense conduct associated with a sentence that was imposed prior to the acts or omissions constituting the instant federal offense (the offense of conviction) is not considered as part of the same course of conduct or common scheme or plan as the offense of conviction.

Examples: (1) The defendant was convicted for the sale of cocaine and sentenced to state prison. Immediately upon release from prison, he again sold cocaine to the same person, using the same accomplices and *modus operandi*. The instant federal offense (the offense of conviction) charges this latter sale. In this example, the offense conduct relevant to the state prison sentence is considered as prior criminal history, not as part of the same course of conduct or common scheme or plan as the offense of conviction. The prior state prison sentence is counted under Chapter Four (Criminal History and Criminal Livelihood). (2) The defendant engaged in two cocaine sales constituting part of the same course of conduct or common scheme or plan. Subsequently, he is arrested by state authorities for the first sale and by federal authorities for the second sale. He is convicted in state court for the first sale and sentenced to imprisonment; he is then convicted in federal court for the second sale. In this case, the cocaine sales are not separated by an intervening sentence. Therefore, under subsection (a)(2), the cocaine sale associated with the state conviction is considered as relevant conduct to the instant federal offense. The state prison sentence for that sale is not counted as a prior sentence; *see* §4A1.2(a)(1).

Note, however, in certain cases, offense conduct associated with a previously imposed sentence may be expressly charged in the offense of conviction. Unless otherwise provided, such conduct will be considered relevant conduct under subsection (a)(1), not (a)(2).

6. **Application of Subsection (a)(3).—**

(A) **Definition of "Harm".—**"***Harm***" includes bodily injury, monetary loss, property damage and any resulting harm.

(B) **Risk or Danger of Harm.—**If the offense guideline includes creating a risk or danger of harm as a specific offense characteristic, whether that risk or danger was created is to be considered in determining the offense level. *See, e.g.*, §2K1.4 (Arson; Property Damage by Use of Explosives); §2Q1.2 (Mishandling of Hazardous or Toxic Substances or Pesticides). If, however, the guideline refers only to harm sustained (*e.g.*, §2A2.2 (Aggravated Assault); §2B3.1 (Robbery)) or to actual, attempted or intended harm (*e.g.*, §2B1.1 (Theft, Property Destruction, and Fraud); §2X1.1 (Attempt, Solicitation, or Conspiracy)), the risk created enters into the determination of the offense level only insofar as it is incorporated into the base offense level. Unless clearly indicated by the guidelines, harm that is merely risked is not to be treated as the equivalent of harm that occurred. The extent to which harm that was attempted or intended enters into the determination of the offense level should be determined in accordance with §2X1.1 (Attempt, Solicitation, or Conspiracy) and the applicable offense guideline.

7. **Factors Requiring Conviction under a Specific Statute.—**A particular guideline (in the base offense level or in a specific offense characteristic) may expressly direct that a particular factor be applied only if the defendant was convicted of a particular statute. For example, in §2S1.1 (Laundering of Monetary Instruments; Engaging in Monetary Transactions in Property Derived from Unlawful Activity), subsection (b)(2)(B) applies if the defendant "was convicted under 18 U.S.C. § 1956". Unless such an express direction is included, conviction under the statute is not required. Thus, use of a statutory reference to describe a particular set of circumstances does not require a conviction under the referenced statute. An example of this usage is found in §2A3.4(a)(2) ("if the offense involved conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2242").

Unless otherwise specified, an express direction to apply a particular factor only if the defendant was convicted of a particular statute includes the determination of the offense level where the defendant was convicted of conspiracy, attempt, solicitation, aiding or abetting, accessory after the fact, or misprision of felony in respect to that particular statute. For example, §2S1.1(b)(2)(B) (which is applicable only if the defendant is convicted under 18 U.S.C. § 1956) would be applied

in determining the offense level under §2X3.1 (Accessory After the Fact) in a case in which the defendant was convicted of accessory after the fact to a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1956 but would not be applied in a case in which the defendant is convicted of a conspiracy under 18 U.S.C. § 1956(h) and the sole object of that conspiracy was to commit an offense set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 1957. *See* Application Note 3(C) of §2S1.1.

8. **Partially Completed Offense.**—In the case of a partially completed offense (*e.g.*, an offense involving an attempted theft of $800,000 and a completed theft of $30,000), the offense level is to be determined in accordance with §2X1.1 (Attempt, Solicitation, or Conspiracy) whether the conviction is for the substantive offense, the inchoate offense (attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy), or both. *See* Application Note 4 in the Commentary to §2X1.1. Note, however, that Application Note 4 is not applicable where the offense level is determined under §2X1.1(c)(1).

9. **Solicitation, Misprision, or Accessory After the Fact.**—In the case of solicitation, misprision, or accessory after the fact, the conduct for which the defendant is accountable includes all conduct relevant to determining the offense level for the underlying offense that was known, or reasonably should have been known, by the defendant.

10. **Acquitted Conduct.**—Subsection (c) provides that relevant conduct does not include conduct for which the defendant was criminally charged and acquitted in federal court, unless such conduct establishes, in whole or in part, the instant offense of conviction. There may be cases in which certain conduct underlies both an acquitted charge and the instant offense of conviction. In those cases, the court is in the best position to determine whether such overlapping conduct establishes, in whole or in part, the instant offense of conviction and therefore qualifies as relevant conduct.

11. **Application of Subsection (d).**—Subsection (d) provides that subsection (a)(2) covers most property crimes (except robbery, burglary, extortion, and the like), drug offenses, firearms offenses, and other crimes where the guidelines are based primarily on quantity or contemplate continuing behavior. The list of instances in which subsection (a)(2) should be applied is not exhaustive. Note, however, that certain guidelines are specifically excluded from the operation of subsection (a)(2).

    Subsection (a)(2) applies to a conspiracy, attempt, or solicitation to commit an offense if the offense that is the object of the conspiracy, attempt, or solicitation is covered under subsection (d).

Background: This section prescribes rules for determining the applicable guideline sentencing range, whereas §1B1.4 (Information to be Used in Imposing Sentence) governs the range of information that the court may consider in adjudging sentence once the guideline sentencing range has been determined. Conduct that is not formally charged or is not an element of the offense of conviction may enter into the determination of the applicable guideline sentencing range. The range of information that may be considered at sentencing is broader than the range of information upon which the applicable sentencing range is determined.

Subsection (a) establishes a rule of construction by specifying, in the absence of more explicit instructions in the context of a specific guideline, the range of conduct that is relevant to determining the applicable offense level (except for the determination of the applicable offense guideline, which is governed by §1B1.2(a)). No such rule of construction is necessary with respect to Chapters Four and Five because the guidelines in those chapters are explicit as to the specific factors to be considered.

Subsection (a)(2) provides for consideration of a broader range of conduct with respect to one class of offenses, primarily certain property, tax, fraud and drug offenses for which the guidelines depend substantially on quantity, than with respect to other offenses such as assault, robbery and burglary. The distinction is made on the basis of subsection (d). Thus, in an embezzlement case, for

example, embezzled funds that may not be specified in any count of conviction are nonetheless included in determining the offense level if they were part of the same course of conduct or part of the same scheme or plan as the count of conviction. Similarly, in a drug distribution case, quantities and types of drugs not specified in the count of conviction are to be included in determining the offense level if they were part of the same course of conduct or part of a common scheme or plan as the count of conviction. On the other hand, in a robbery case in which the defendant robbed two banks, the amount of money taken in one robbery would *not* be taken into account in determining the guideline range for the other robbery, even if both robberies were part of a single course of conduct or the same scheme or plan. (This is true whether the defendant is convicted of one or both robberies.)

Subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) adopt different rules because offenses of the character dealt with in subsection (a)(2) often involve a pattern of misconduct that cannot readily be broken into discrete, identifiable units that are meaningful for purposes of sentencing. For example, a pattern of embezzlement may consist of several acts of taking that cannot separately be identified, even though the overall conduct is clear. In addition, the distinctions that the law makes as to what constitutes separate counts or offenses often turn on technical elements that are not especially meaningful for purposes of sentencing. Thus, in a mail fraud case, the scheme is an element of the offense and each mailing may be the basis for a separate count; in an embezzlement case, each taking may provide a basis for a separate count. Another consideration is that in a pattern of small thefts, for example, it is important to take into account the full range of related conduct. Relying on the entire range of conduct, regardless of the number of counts that are alleged or on which a conviction is obtained, appears to be the most reasonable approach to writing workable guidelines for these offenses.

Subsection (a)(4) requires consideration of any other information specified in the applicable guideline. For example, §2A1.4 (Involuntary Manslaughter) specifies consideration of the defendant's state of mind; §2K1.4 (Arson; Property Damage By Use of Explosives) specifies consideration of the risk of harm created.

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective January 15, 1988 (amendment 3); November 1, 1989 (amendments 76, 77, 78 and 303); November 1, 1990 (amendment 309); November 1, 1991 (amendment 389); November 1, 1992 (amendment 439); November 1, 1994 (amendment 503); November 1, 2001 (amendments 617 and 634); November 1, 2004 (amendment 674); November 1, 2010 (amendment 746); November 1, 2015 (amendments 790 and 797); November 1, 2023 (amendment 824); November 1, 2024 (amendment 826); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836); November 1, 2026 (amendment 840).

§1B1.4. Information to be Used in Imposing Sentence

In determining the sentence to impose, the court may consider, without limitation, any information concerning the background, character and conduct of the defendant, unless otherwise prohibited by law. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3661.

Commentary

Background: This section distinguishes between factors that determine the applicable guideline sentencing range (§1B1.3) and information that a court may consider in imposing a sentence. The section is based on 18 U.S.C. § 3661, which recodifies 18 U.S.C. § 3577. The recodification of this 1970 statute in 1984 with an effective date of 1987 (99 Stat. 1728), makes it clear that Congress intended that no limitation would be placed on the information that a court may consider in imposing an appropriate sentence under the future guideline sentencing system. A court is not precluded from considering information that the guidelines do not take into account. For example, if the defendant committed two robberies, but as part of a plea negotiation entered a guilty plea to only one, the robbery that was not

taken into account by the guidelines may provide a reason for sentencing at the top of, or above, the guideline range.

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective January 15, 1988 (amendment 4); November 1, 1989 (amendment 303); November 1, 2000 (amendment 604); November 1, 2004 (amendment 674); November 1, 2023 (amendment 824); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836).

§1B1.5. Interpretation of References to Other Offense Guidelines

(a) A cross reference (an instruction to apply another offense guideline) refers to the entire offense guideline (*i.e.*, the base offense level, specific offense characteristics, cross references, and special instructions).

(b) (1) An instruction to use the offense level from another offense guideline refers to the offense level from the entire offense guideline (*i.e.*, the base offense level, specific offense characteristics, cross references, and special instructions), except as provided in subdivision (2) below.

(2) An instruction to use a particular subsection or table from another offense guideline refers only to the particular subsection or table referenced, and not to the entire offense guideline.

(c) If the offense level is determined by a reference to another guideline under subsection (a) or (b)(1) above, the adjustments in Chapter Three, Parts A through D, also are determined in respect to the referenced offense guideline, except as otherwise expressly provided.

(d) A reference to another guideline under subsection (a) or (b)(1) above may direct that it be applied only if it results in the greater offense level. In such case, the greater offense level means the greater Chapter Two offense level, except as otherwise expressly provided.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. References to other offense guidelines are most frequently designated "Cross References," but may also appear in the portion of the guideline entitled "Base Offense Level" (*e.g.*, §2D1.2(a)(1) and (2)), or "Specific Offense Characteristics" (*e.g.*, §2A4.1(b)(7)). These references may be to a specific guideline, or may be more general (*e.g.*, to the guideline for the "underlying offense"). Such references incorporate the specific offense characteristics, cross references, and special instructions as well as the base offense level. For example, if the guideline reads "2 plus the offense level from §2A2.2 (Aggravated Assault)," the user would determine the offense level from §2A2.2, including any applicable adjustments for planning, weapon use, degree of injury and motive, and then increase by 2 levels.

A reference may also be to a specific subsection of another guideline; *e.g.*, the reference in §2D1.10(a)(1) to "3 plus the offense level from the Drug Quantity Table in §2D1.1". In such case, only the specific subsection of that other guideline is used.

2. A reference to another guideline may direct that such reference is to be used only if it results in a greater offense level. In such cases, the greater offense level means the offense level taking into account only the Chapter Two offense level, unless the offense guideline expressly provides for consideration of both the Chapter Two offense level and applicable Chapter Three adjustments. For situations in which a comparison involving both Chapters Two and Three is necessary, *see* the Commentary to §§2C1.1 (Offering, Giving, Soliciting, or Receiving a Bribe; Extortion Under Color of Official Right; Fraud Involving the Deprivation of the Intangible Right to Honest Services of Public Officials; Conspiracy to Defraud by Interference with Governmental Functions); 2E1.1 (Unlawful Conduct Relating to Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations); and 2E1.2 (Interstate or Foreign Travel or Transportation in Aid of a Racketeering Enterprise).

3. A reference may direct that, if the conduct involved another offense, the offense guideline for such other offense is to be applied. Consistent with the provisions of §1B1.3 (Relevant Conduct), such other offense includes conduct that may be a state or local offense and conduct that occurred under circumstances that would constitute a federal offense had the conduct taken place within the territorial or maritime jurisdiction of the United States. Where there is more than one such other offense, the most serious such offense (or group of offenses to which §3D1.1(a) applies) is to be used. For example, if a defendant convicted of possession of a firearm by a felon, to which §2K2.1 (Unlawful Receipt, Possession, or Transportation of Firearms or Ammunition; Prohibited Transactions Involving Firearms or Ammunition) applies, is found to have possessed that firearm during commission of a series of offenses, the cross reference at §2K2.1(c) is applied to the offense resulting in the greatest offense level.

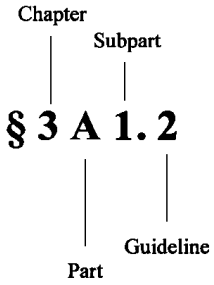
Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective November 1, 1989 (amendments 79 and 80); November 1, 1991 (amendment 429); November 1, 1992 (amendment 440); November 1, 1995 (amendment 534); November 1, 1997 (amendment 547); November 1, 2001 (amendment 616); November 1, 2004 (amendment 666); November 1, 2026 (amendment 840).

§1B1.6. Structure of the Guidelines

The guidelines are presented in numbered chapters divided into alphabetical parts. The parts are divided into subparts and individual guidelines. Each guideline is identified by three numbers and a letter corresponding to the chapter, part, subpart and individual guideline.

The first number is the chapter, the letter represents the part of the chapter, the second number is the subpart, and the final number is the guideline. Section 2B1.1, for example, is the first guideline in the first subpart in Part B of Chapter Two. Or, §3A1.2 is the second guideline in the first subpart in Part A of Chapter Three. Policy statements are similarly identified.

To illustrate:



Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987.

§1B1.7. Significance of Commentary

The Commentary that accompanies the guideline sections may serve a number of purposes. It may interpret the guideline or explain how it is to be applied. Failure to follow such commentary could constitute an incorrect application of the guidelines, subjecting the sentence to possible reversal on appeal. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3742. In addition, the commentary may provide background information, including factors considered in promulgating the guideline or reasons underlying promulgation of the guideline.

Commentary

Portions of this document not labeled as guidelines or commentary also express the policy of the Commission or provide guidance as to the interpretation and application of the guidelines. These are to be construed as commentary and thus have the force of policy statements.

"[C]ommentary in the *Guidelines Manual* that interprets or explains a guideline is authoritative unless it violates the Constitution or a federal statute, or is inconsistent with, or a plainly erroneous reading of, that guideline." *Stinson v. United States*, 508 U.S. 36, 38 (1993).

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1987. Amended effective November 1, 1993 (amendment 498); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836).

§1B1.8. Use of Certain Information

(a) Where a defendant agrees to cooperate with the government by providing information concerning unlawful activities of others, and as part of that cooperation agreement the government agrees that self-incriminating information provided pursuant to the agreement will not be used against the defendant, then such information shall not be used in determining the applicable guideline range, except to the extent provided in the agreement.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) shall not be applied to restrict the use of information:

(1) known to the government prior to entering into the cooperation agreement;

(2) concerning the existence of prior convictions and sentences in determining §4A1.1 (Criminal History Category) and §4B1.1 (Career Offender);

(3) in a prosecution for perjury or giving a false statement;

(4) in the event there is a breach of the cooperation agreement by the defendant; or

(5) in determining whether, or to what extent, to impose a sentence that is below the otherwise applicable guideline range pursuant to a government motion under §5K1.1 (Substantial Assistance to Authorities).

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. This provision does not authorize the government to withhold information from the court but provides that self-incriminating information obtained under a cooperation agreement is not to be used to determine the defendant's guideline range. Under this provision, for example, if a defendant is arrested in possession of a kilogram of cocaine and, pursuant to an agreement to provide information concerning the unlawful activities of co-conspirators, admits that he assisted in the importation of an additional three kilograms of cocaine, a fact not previously known to the government, this admission would not be used to increase his applicable guideline range, except to the extent provided in the agreement. In contrast, subsection (b)(5) provides that consideration of such information is appropriate in determining whether, or to what extent, to impose a sentence that is below the otherwise applicable guideline range pursuant to a government motion under §5K1.1 (Substantial Assistance to Authorities). For example, a court may refuse to impose a sentence that is below the otherwise applicable guideline range on the basis of such information.

2. Subsection (b)(2) prohibits any cooperation agreement from restricting the use of information as to the existence of prior convictions and sentences in determining adjustments under §4A1.1 (Criminal History Category) and §4B1.1 (Career Offender). The probation office generally will secure information relevant to the defendant's criminal history independent of information the defendant provides as part of his cooperation agreement.

3. On occasion the defendant will provide incriminating information to the government during plea negotiation sessions before a cooperation agreement has been reached. In the event no agreement is reached, use of such information in a sentencing proceeding is restricted by Rule 11(f) (Admissibility or Inadmissibility of a Plea, Plea Discussions, and Related Statements) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure and Rule 410 (Pleas, Plea Discussions, and Related Statements) of the Rules of Evidence.

4. As with the statutory provisions governing use immunity, 18 U.S.C. § 6002, this guideline does not apply to information used against the defendant in a prosecution for perjury, giving a false statement, or in the event the defendant otherwise fails to comply with the cooperation agreement.

5. This guideline limits the use of certain incriminating information furnished by a defendant in the context of a defendant-government agreement for the defendant to provide information concerning the unlawful activities of other persons. The guideline operates as a limitation on the use of such incriminating information in determining the applicable guideline range, and not merely as a restriction of the government's presentation of such information (*e.g.*, where the defendant, subsequent to having entered into a cooperation agreement, provides such information to the probation officer preparing the presentence report, the use of such information remains protected by this section).

6. Unless the cooperation agreement relates to the provision of information concerning the unlawful activities of others, this guideline does not apply (*i.e.*, an agreement by the defendant simply to detail the extent of his own unlawful activities, not involving an agreement to provide information concerning the unlawful activity of another person, is not covered by this guideline).

Historical Note	Effective June 15, 1988 (amendment 5). Amended effective November 1, 1990 (amendment 308); November 1, 1991 (amendment 390); November 1, 1992 (amendment 441); November 1, 2004 (amendment 674); November 1, 2009 (amendment 736); November 1, 2010 (amendment 746); November 1, 2013 (amendment 778); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836).

§1B1.9. Class B or C Misdemeanors and Infractions

The sentencing guidelines do not apply to any count of conviction that is a Class B or C misdemeanor or an infraction.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. Notwithstanding any other provision of the guidelines, the court may impose any sentence authorized by statute for each count that is a Class B or C misdemeanor or an infraction. A Class B misdemeanor is any offense for which the maximum authorized term of imprisonment is more than thirty days but not more than six months; a Class C misdemeanor is any offense for which the maximum authorized term of imprisonment is more than five days but not more than thirty days; an infraction is any offense for which the maximum authorized term of imprisonment is not more than five days or for which no imprisonment is authorized. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3559.

2. The guidelines for sentencing on multiple counts do not apply to counts that are Class B or C misdemeanors or infractions. Sentences for such offenses may be consecutive to or concurrent with sentences imposed on other counts. In imposing sentence, the court should, however, consider the relationship between the Class B or C misdemeanor or infraction and any other offenses of which the defendant is convicted. For example, in a case where the defendant wore or displayed an official, or counterfeit official, insignia or uniform received in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 716 while committing an offense covered by the guidelines, it would be appropriate for the court to consider this fact as an aggravating factor in determining the appropriate sentence even though section 716 is a Class B misdemeanor not covered by the guidelines. *See* Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, Pub. L. 109–162, § 1191(c).

Background: For the sake of judicial economy, the Commission has exempted all Class B and C misdemeanors and infractions from the coverage of the guidelines.

Historical Note	Effective June 15, 1988 (amendment 6). Amended effective November 1, 1989 (amendment 81); November 1, 2010 (amendment 746); November 1, 2025 (amendment 836).

§1B1.10. Reduction in Term of Imprisonment as a Result of Amended Guideline Range (Policy Statement)

(a) AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In a case in which a defendant is serving a term of imprisonment, and the guideline range applicable to that defendant has subsequently been lowered as a result of an amendment to the Guidelines Manual listed in subsection (d) below, the court may reduce the defendant's term of imprisonment as provided by 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2). As required by 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2), any such reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment shall be consistent with this policy statement.

(2) EXCLUSIONS.—A reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment is not consistent with this policy statement and therefore is not authorized under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) if—

(A) none of the amendments listed in subsection (d) is applicable to the defendant; or

(B) an amendment listed in subsection (d) does not have the effect of lowering the defendant's applicable guideline range.

(3) LIMITATION.—Consistent with subsection (b), proceedings under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and this policy statement do not constitute a full resentencing of the defendant.

(b) DETERMINATION OF REDUCTION IN TERM OF IMPRISONMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In determining whether, and to what extent, a reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and this policy statement is warranted, the court shall determine the amended guideline range that would have been applicable to the defendant if the amendment(s) to the guidelines listed in subsection (d) had been in effect at the time the defendant was sentenced. In making such determination, the court shall substitute only

the amendments listed in subsection (d) for the corresponding guideline provisions that were applied when the defendant was sentenced and shall leave all other guideline application decisions unaffected.

(2) LIMITATION AND PROHIBITION ON EXTENT OF REDUCTION.—

(A) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in subdivision (B), the court shall not reduce the defendant's term of imprisonment under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and this policy statement to a term that is less than the minimum of the amended guideline range determined under subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(B) EXCEPTION FOR SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE.—If the term of imprisonment imposed was less than the term of imprisonment provided by the guideline range applicable to the defendant at the time of sentencing pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities, a reduction comparably less than the amended guideline range determined under subdivision (1) of this subsection may be appropriate.

(C) PROHIBITION.—In no event may the reduced term of imprisonment be less than the term of imprisonment the defendant has already served.

(c) CASES INVOLVING MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES AND SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE.—If the case involves a statutorily required minimum sentence and the court had the authority to impose a sentence below the statutorily required minimum sentence pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities, then for purposes of this policy statement the amended guideline range shall be determined without regard to the operation of §5G1.1 (Sentencing on a Single Count of Conviction) and §5G1.2 (Sentencing on Multiple Counts of Conviction).

(d) COVERED AMENDMENTS.—Amendments covered by this policy statement are listed in Appendix C as follows: 126, 130, 156, 176, 269, 329, 341, 371, 379, 380, 433, 454, 461, 484, 488, 490, 499, 505, 506, 516, 591, 599, 606, 657, 702, 706 as amended by 711, 715, 750 (parts A and C only), 782 (subject to subsection (e)(1)), and 821 (parts A and B, subpart 1 only and subject to subsection (e)(2)).

(e) SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.—

(1) The court shall not order a reduced term of imprisonment based on Amendment 782 unless the effective date of the court's order is November 1, 2015, or later.

(2) The court shall not order a reduced term of imprisonment based on Part A or Part B, Subpart 1 of Amendment 821 unless the effective date of the court's order is February 1, 2024, or later.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. **Application of Subsection (a).—**

(A) **Eligibility.—**Eligibility for consideration under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) is triggered only by an amendment listed in subsection (d) that lowers the applicable guideline range (*i.e.*, the guideline range that corresponds to the offense level and criminal history category determined pursuant to §1B1.1(a)(1)–(7), which is determined before consideration of Part K of Chapter Five and §1B1.1(b)). Accordingly, a reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment is not authorized under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and is not consistent with this policy statement if: (i) none of the amendments listed in subsection (d) is applicable to the defendant; or (ii) an amendment listed in subsection (d) is applicable to the defendant but the amendment does not have the effect of lowering the defendant's applicable guideline range because of the operation of another guideline or statutory provision (*e.g.*, a statutory mandatory minimum term of imprisonment).

(B) **Factors for Consideration.—**

(i) **In General.—**Consistent with 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2), the court shall consider the factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a) in determining: (I) whether a reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment is warranted; and (II) the extent of such reduction, but only within the limits described in subsection (b).

(ii) **Public Safety Consideration.—**The court shall consider the nature and seriousness of the danger to any person or the community that may be posed by a reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment in determining: (I) whether such a reduction is warranted; and (II) the extent of such reduction, but only within the limits described in subsection (b).

(iii) **Post-Sentencing Conduct.—**The court may consider post-sentencing conduct of the defendant that occurred after imposition of the term of imprisonment in determining: (I) whether a reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment is warranted; and (II) the extent of such reduction, but only within the limits described in subsection (b).

2. **Application of Subsection (b)(1).—**In determining the amended guideline range under subsection (b)(1), the court shall substitute only the amendments listed in subsection (d) for the corresponding guideline provisions that were applied when the defendant was sentenced. All other guideline application decisions remain unaffected.

3. **Application of Subsection (b)(2).—**Under subsection (b)(2), the amended guideline range determined under subsection (b)(1) and the term of imprisonment already served by the defendant limit the extent to which the court may reduce the defendant's term of imprisonment under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and this policy statement. Specifically, as provided in subsection (b)(2)(A), if the term of imprisonment imposed was within the guideline range applicable to the defendant at the time of sentencing, the court may reduce the defendant's term of imprisonment to a term that is no less than the minimum term of imprisonment provided by the amended guideline range determined under subsection (b)(1). For example, in a case in which: (A) the guideline range

applicable to the defendant at the time of sentencing was 70 to 87 months; (B) the term of imprisonment imposed was 70 months; and (C) the amended guideline range determined under subsection (b)(1) is 51 to 63 months, the court may reduce the defendant's term of imprisonment, but shall not reduce it to a term less than 51 months.

If the term of imprisonment imposed was outside the guideline range applicable to the defendant at the time of sentencing, the limitation in subsection (b)(2)(A) also applies. Thus, if the term of imprisonment imposed in the example provided above was not a sentence of 70 months (within the guidelines range) but instead was a sentence of 56 months (constituting a sentence that is below the otherwise applicable guideline range), the court likewise may reduce the defendant's term of imprisonment, but shall not reduce it to a term less than 51 months.

Subsection (b)(2)(B) provides an exception to this limitation, which applies if the term of imprisonment imposed was less than the term of imprisonment provided by the guideline range applicable to the defendant at the time of sentencing pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities. In such a case, the court may reduce the defendant's term, but the reduction is not limited by subsection (b)(2)(A) to the minimum of the amended guideline range. Instead, as provided in subsection (b)(2)(B), the court may, if appropriate, provide a reduction comparably less than the amended guideline range. Thus, if the term of imprisonment imposed in the example provided above was 56 months pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities (representing a reduction of 20 percent below the minimum term of imprisonment provided by the guideline range applicable to the defendant at the time of sentencing), a reduction to a term of imprisonment of 41 months (representing a reduction of approximately 20 percent below the minimum term of imprisonment provided by the amended guideline range) would amount to a comparable reduction and may be appropriate.

The provisions authorizing such a government motion are §5K1.1 (Substantial Assistance to Authorities) (authorizing the court, upon government motion, to impose a sentence that is below the otherwise applicable guideline range based on the defendant's substantial assistance); 18 U.S.C. § 3553(e) (authorizing the court, upon government motion, to impose a sentence below a statutory minimum to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance); and Fed. R. Crim. P. 35(b) (authorizing the court, upon government motion, to reduce a sentence to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance).

In no case, however, shall the term of imprisonment be reduced below time served. *See* subsection (b)(2)(C). Subject to these limitations, the sentencing court has the discretion to determine whether, and to what extent, to reduce a term of imprisonment under this section.

4. **Application of Subsection (c).**—As stated in subsection (c), if the case involves a statutorily required minimum sentence and the court had the authority to impose a sentence below the statutorily required minimum sentence pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities, then for purposes of this policy statement the amended guideline range shall be determined without regard to the operation of §5G1.1 (Sentencing on a Single Count of Conviction) and §5G1.2 (Sentencing on Multiple Counts of Conviction). For example:

   (A) Defendant A is subject to a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of 120 months. The original guideline range at the time of sentencing was 135 to 168 months, which is entirely above the mandatory minimum, and the court imposed a sentence of 101 months pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities. The court determines that the amended guideline range as calculated on the Sentencing Table is 108 to 135 months. Ordinarily, §5G1.1 would operate to restrict the amended guideline range to 120 to 135 months, to reflect the mandatory minimum term of imprisonment. For

purposes of this policy statement, however, the amended guideline range remains 108 to 135 months.

To the extent the court considers it appropriate to provide a reduction comparably less than the amended guideline range pursuant to subsection (b)(2)(B), Defendant A's original sentence of 101 months amounted to a reduction of approximately 25 percent below the minimum of the original guideline range of 135 months. Therefore, an amended sentence of 81 months (representing a reduction of approximately 25 percent below the minimum of the amended guideline range of 108 months) would amount to a comparable reduction and may be appropriate.

(B) Defendant B is subject to a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of 120 months. The original guideline range at the time of sentencing (as calculated on the Sentencing Table) was 108 to 135 months, which was restricted by operation of §5G1.1 to a range of 120 to 135 months. *See* §5G1.1(c)(2). The court imposed a sentence of 90 months pursuant to a government motion to reflect the defendant's substantial assistance to authorities. The court determines that the amended guideline range as calculated on the Sentencing Table is 87 to 108 months. Ordinarily, §5G1.1 would operate to restrict the amended guideline range to precisely 120 months, to reflect the mandatory minimum term of imprisonment. *See* §5G1.1(b). For purposes of this policy statement, however, the amended guideline range is considered to be 87 to 108 months (*i.e.*, unrestricted by operation of §5G1.1 and the statutory minimum of 120 months).

To the extent the court considers it appropriate to provide a reduction comparably less than the amended guideline range pursuant to subsection (b)(2)(B), Defendant B's original sentence of 90 months amounted to a reduction of approximately 25 percent below the original guideline range of 120 months. Therefore, an amended sentence of 65 months (representing a reduction of approximately 25 percent below the minimum of the amended guideline range of 87 months) would amount to a comparable reduction and may be appropriate.

5. **Application to Amendment 750 (Parts A and C Only).**—As specified in subsection (d), the parts of Amendment 750 that are covered by this policy statement are Parts A and C only. Part A amended the Drug Quantity Table in §2D1.1 for crack cocaine and made related revisions to the Drug Equivalency Tables (currently called Drug Conversion Tables) in the Commentary to §2D1.1 (*see* §2D1.1, comment. (n.8)). Part C deleted the cross reference in §2D2.1(b) under which an offender who possessed more than 5 grams of crack cocaine was sentenced under §2D1.1.

6. **Application to Amendment 782.**—As specified in subsection (d) and (e)(1), Amendment 782 (generally revising the Drug Quantity Table and chemical quantity tables across drug and chemical types) is covered by this policy statement only in cases in which the order reducing the defendant's term of imprisonment has an effective date of November 1, 2015, or later.

A reduction based on retroactive application of Amendment 782 that does not comply with the requirement that the order take effect on November 1, 2015, or later is not consistent with this policy statement and therefore is not authorized under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2).

Subsection (e)(1) does not preclude the court from conducting sentence reduction proceedings and entering orders under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and this policy statement before November 1, 2015, provided that any order reducing the defendant's term of imprisonment has an effective date of November 1, 2015, or later.

7. **Application to Amendment 821 (Parts A and B, Subpart 1 Only).**—As specified in subsection (d), the parts of Amendment 821 that are covered by this policy statement are Parts A and B, Subpart 1 only, subject to the special instruction at subsection (e)(2). Part A amended §4A1.1

(Criminal History Category) to limit the overall criminal history impact of "status points" (*i.e.*, the additional criminal history points given to defendants for the fact of having committed the instant offense while under a criminal justice sentence, including probation, parole, supervised release, imprisonment, work release, or escape status). Part B, Subpart 1 created a new Chapter Four guideline at §4C1.1 (Adjustment for Certain Zero-Point Offenders) to provide a decrease of two levels from the offense level determined under Chapters Two and Three for defendants who did not receive any criminal history points under Chapter Four, Part A and whose instant offense did not involve specified aggravating factors.

The special instruction at subsection (e)(2) delays the effective date of orders reducing a defendant's term of imprisonment to a date no earlier than February 1, 2024. A reduction based on the retroactive application of Part A or Part B, Subpart 1 of Amendment 821 that does not comply with the requirement that the order take effect no earlier than February 1, 2024, is not consistent with this policy statement and therefore is not authorized under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2). Subsection (e)(2), however, does not preclude the court from conducting sentence reduction proceedings and entering orders under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and this policy statement before February 1, 2024, provided that any order reducing the defendant's term of imprisonment has an effective date of February 1, 2024, or later.

8. **Supervised Release.—**

   (A) **Exclusion Relating to Revocation.**—Only a term of imprisonment imposed as part of the original sentence is authorized to be reduced under this section. This section does not authorize a reduction in the term of imprisonment imposed upon revocation of supervised release.

   (B) **Modification Relating to Early Termination.**—If the prohibition in subsection (b)(2)(C) relating to time already served precludes a reduction in the term of imprisonment to the extent the court determines otherwise would have been appropriate as a result of the amended guideline range determined under subsection (b)(1), the court may consider any such reduction that it was unable to grant in connection with any motion for early termination of a term of supervised release under 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(1). *See* §5D1.4 (Modification, Early Termination, and Extension of Supervised Release (Policy Statement)). However, the fact that a defendant may have served a longer term of imprisonment than the court determines would have been appropriate in view of the amended guideline range determined under subsection (b)(1) shall not, without more, provide a basis for early termination of supervised release. Rather, the court should take into account the totality of circumstances relevant to a decision to terminate supervised release, including the term of supervised release that would have been appropriate in connection with a sentence under the amended guideline range determined under subsection (b)(1).

9. **Use of Policy Statement in Effect on Date of Reduction.**—Consistent with subsection (a) of §1B1.11 (Use of Guidelines Manual in Effect on Date of Sentencing), the court shall use the version of this policy statement that is in effect on the date on which the court reduces the defendant's term of imprisonment as provided by 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2).

Background: Section 3582(c)(2) of title 18, United States Code, provides: "[I]n the case of a defendant who has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment based on a sentencing range that has subsequently been lowered by the Sentencing Commission pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 994(o), upon motion of the defendant or the Director of the Bureau of Prisons, or on its own motion, the court may reduce the term of imprisonment, after considering the factors set forth in section 3553(a) to the extent that they are applicable, if such a reduction is consistent with applicable policy statements issued by the Sentencing Commission."

This policy statement provides guidance and limitations for a court when considering a motion under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(2) and implements 28 U.S.C. § 994(u), which provides: "If the Commission reduces the term of imprisonment recommended in the guidelines applicable to a particular offense or category of offenses, it shall specify in what circumstances and by what amount the sentences of prisoners serving terms of imprisonment for the offense may be reduced." The Supreme Court has concluded that proceedings under section 3582(c)(2) are not governed by *United States v. Booker*, 543 U.S. 220 (2005), and this policy statement remains binding on courts in such proceedings. *See Dillon v. United States*, 560 U.S. 817 (2010).

Among the factors considered by the Commission in selecting the amendments included in subsection (d) were the purpose of the amendment, the magnitude of the change in the guideline range made by the amendment, and the difficulty of applying the amendment retroactively to determine an amended guideline range under subsection (b)(1).

The listing of an amendment in subsection (d) reflects policy determinations by the Commission that a reduced guideline range is sufficient to achieve the purposes of sentencing and that, in the sound discretion of the court, a reduction in the term of imprisonment may be appropriate for previously sentenced, qualified defendants. The authorization of such a discretionary reduction does not otherwise affect the lawfulness of a previously imposed sentence, does not authorize a reduction in any other component of the sentence, and does not entitle a defendant to a reduced term of imprisonment as a matter of right.

The Commission has not included in this policy statement amendments that generally reduce the maximum of the guideline range by less than six months. This criterion is in accord with the legislative history of 28 U.S.C. § 994(u) (formerly § 994(t)), which states: "It should be noted that the Committee does not expect that the Commission will recommend adjusting existing sentences under the provision when guidelines are simply refined in a way that might cause isolated instances of existing sentences falling above the old guidelines* or when there is only a minor downward adjustment in the guidelines. The Committee does not believe the courts should be burdened with adjustments in these cases." S. Rep. 225, 98th Cong., 1st Sess. 180 (1983).

**So* in original. Probably should be "to fall above the amended guidelines".

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1989 (amendment 306). Amended effective November 1, 1990 (amendment 360); November 1, 1991 (amendment 423); November 1, 1992 (amendment 469); November 1, 1993 (amendment 502); November 1, 1994 (amendment 504); November 1, 1995 (amendment 536); November 1, 1997 (amendment 548); November 1, 2000 (amendment 607); November 5, 2003 (amendment 662); November 1, 2007 (amendment 710); March 3, 2008 (amendments 712 and 713); May 1, 2008 (amendment 716); November 1, 2011 (amendment 759); November 1, 2012 (amendment 770); November 1, 2014 (amendments 780, 788, and 789); November 1, 2018 (amendment 808); November 1, 2023 (amendments 824 and 825); November 1, 2025 (amendments 835 and 836).

§1B1.11. Use of Guidelines Manual in Effect on Date of Sentencing (Policy Statement)

(a) The court shall use the Guidelines Manual in effect on the date that the defendant is sentenced.

(b) (1) If the court determines that use of the Guidelines Manual in effect on the date that the defendant is sentenced would violate the *ex post facto* clause of the United States Constitution, the court shall use the

Guidelines Manual in effect on the date that the offense of conviction was committed.

(2) The Guidelines Manual in effect on a particular date shall be applied in its entirety. The court shall not apply, for example, one guideline section from one edition of the Guidelines Manual and another guideline section from a different edition of the Guidelines Manual. However, if a court applies an earlier edition of the Guidelines Manual, the court shall consider subsequent amendments, to the extent that such amendments are clarifying rather than substantive changes.

(3) If the defendant is convicted of two offenses, the first committed before, and the second after, a revised edition of the Guidelines Manual became effective, the revised edition of the Guidelines Manual is to be applied to both offenses.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. Subsection (b)(2) provides that if an earlier edition of the Guidelines Manual is used, it is to be used in its entirety, except that subsequent clarifying amendments are to be considered.

   Example: A defendant is convicted of an antitrust offense committed in November 1989. He is to be sentenced in December 1992. Effective November 1, 1991, the Commission raised the base offense level for antitrust offenses. Effective November 1, 1992, the Commission lowered the guideline range in the Sentencing Table for cases with an offense level of 8 and criminal history category of I from 2–8 months to 0–6 months. Under the 1992 edition of the Guidelines Manual (effective November 1, 1992), the defendant has a guideline range of 4–10 months (final offense level of 9, criminal history category of I). Under the 1989 edition of the Guidelines Manual (effective November 1, 1989), the defendant has a guideline range of 2–8 months (final offense level of 8, criminal history category of I). If the court determines that application of the 1992 edition of the Guidelines Manual would violate the *ex post facto* clause of the United States Constitution, it shall apply the 1989 edition of the Guidelines Manual in its entirety. It shall not apply, for example, the offense level of 8 and criminal history category of I from the 1989 edition of the Guidelines Manual in conjunction with the amended guideline range of 0–6 months for this offense level and criminal history category from the 1992 edition of the Guidelines Manual.

2. Under subsection (b)(1), the last date of the offense of conviction is the controlling date for *ex post facto* purposes. For example, if the offense of conviction (*i.e.*, the conduct charged in the count of the indictment or information of which the defendant was convicted) was determined by the court to have been committed between October 15, 1991 and October 28, 1991, the date of October 28, 1991 is the controlling date for *ex post facto* purposes. This is true even if the defendant's conduct relevant to the determination of the guideline range under §1B1.3 (Relevant Conduct) included an act that occurred on November 2, 1991 (after a revised Guidelines Manual took effect).

Background: Subsections (a) and (b)(1) provide that the court should apply the Guidelines Manual in effect on the date the defendant is sentenced unless the court determines that doing so would violate the *ex post facto* clause in Article I, § 9 of the United States Constitution. Under 18 U.S.C. § 3553, the court is to apply the guidelines and policy statements in effect at the time of sentencing. However, the Supreme Court has held that the *ex post facto* clause applies to sentencing guideline amendments that subject the defendant to increased punishment. *See Peugh v. United States*, 569 U.S. 530, 533 (2013)

(holding that "there is an *ex post facto* violation when a defendant is sentenced under Guidelines promulgated after he committed his criminal acts and the new version provides a higher applicable Guidelines sentencing range than the version in place at the time of the offense").

Subsection (b)(2) provides that the Guidelines Manual in effect on a particular date shall be applied in its entirety.

Subsection (b)(3) provides that where the defendant is convicted of two offenses, the first committed before, and the second after, a revised edition of the Guidelines Manual became effective, the revised edition of the Guidelines Manual is to be applied to both offenses, even if the revised edition results in an increased penalty for the first offense. Because the defendant completed the second offense after the amendment to the guidelines took effect, the *ex post facto* clause does not prevent determining the sentence for that count based on the amended guidelines. For example, if a defendant pleads guilty to a single count of embezzlement that occurred after the most recent edition of the Guidelines Manual became effective, the guideline range applicable in sentencing will encompass any relevant conduct (*e.g.*, related embezzlement offenses that may have occurred prior to the effective date of the guideline amendments) for the offense of conviction. The same would be true for a defendant convicted of two counts of embezzlement, one committed before the amendments were enacted, and the second after. In this example, the *ex post facto* clause would not bar application of the amended guideline to the first conviction; a contrary conclusion would mean that such defendant was subject to a lower guideline range than if convicted only of the second offense. Decisions from several appellate courts addressing the analogous situation of the constitutionality of counting pre-guidelines criminal activity as relevant conduct for a guidelines sentence support this approach. *See United States v. Ykema*, 887 F.2d 697 (6th Cir. 1989) (upholding inclusion of pre-November 1, 1987, drug quantities as relevant conduct for the count of conviction, noting that habitual offender statutes routinely augment punishment for an offense of conviction based on acts committed before a law is passed); *United States v. Allen*, 886 F.2d 143 (8th Cir. 1989) (similar); *see also United States v. Cusack*, 901 F.2d 29 (4th Cir. 1990) (similar).

Moreover, the approach set forth in subsection (b)(3) should be followed regardless of whether the offenses of conviction are the type to which §3D1.1(a) applies. The *ex post facto* clause does not distinguish between groupable and nongroupable offenses, and unless that clause would be violated, Congress's directive to apply the sentencing guidelines in effect at the time of sentencing must be followed. Under the guideline sentencing system, a single sentencing range is determined based on the defendant's overall conduct, even if there are multiple counts of conviction (*see* §§3D1.1, 5G1.2). Thus, if a defendant is sentenced in January 1992 for a bank robbery committed in October 1988 and one committed in November 1991, the November 1991 Guidelines Manual should be used to determine a combined guideline range for both counts. *See generally United States v. Stephenson*, 921 F.2d 438 (2d Cir. 1990) (holding that the Sentencing Commission and Congress intended that the applicable version of the guidelines be applied as a "cohesive and integrated whole" rather than in a piecemeal fashion).

Consequently, even in a complex case involving multiple counts that occurred under several different versions of the Guidelines Manual, it will not be necessary to compare more than two manuals to determine the applicable guideline range — the manual in effect at the time the last offense of conviction was completed and the manual in effect at the time of sentencing.

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1992 (amendment 442). Amended effective November 1, 1993 (amendment 474); November 1, 2010 (amendment 746); November 1, 2013 (amendment 779); November 1, 2015 (amendment 796); November 1, 2023 (amendment 824); November 1, 2026 (amendment 840).

§1B1.12. Persons Sentenced Under the Federal Juvenile Delinquency Act (Policy Statement)

The sentencing guidelines do not apply to a defendant sentenced under the Federal Juvenile Delinquency Act (18 U.S.C. §§ 5031–5042). However, the sentence imposed upon a juvenile delinquent may not exceed the maximum of the guideline range applicable to an otherwise similarly situated adult defendant unless the court finds an aggravating factor sufficient to warrant imposing a sentence greater than that guideline range in determining the appropriate sentence to impose pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). *See* 18 U.S.C. § 5037(c); *United States v. R.L.C.*, 503 U.S. 291 (1992). Therefore, a necessary step in ascertaining the maximum sentence that may be imposed upon a juvenile delinquent is the determination of the guideline range that would be applicable to a similarly situated adult defendant.

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 1993 (amendment 475). Amended effective November 1, 2025 (amendment 836).

§1B1.13. Reduction in Term of Imprisonment Under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A) (Policy Statement)

(a) IN GENERAL.—Upon motion of the Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons or the defendant pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A), the court may reduce a term of imprisonment (and may impose a term of supervised release with or without conditions that does not exceed the unserved portion of the original term of imprisonment) if, after considering the factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), to the extent that they are applicable, the court determines that—

(1) (A) extraordinary and compelling reasons warrant the reduction; or

(B) the defendant (i) is at least 70 years old; and (ii) has served at least 30 years in prison pursuant to a sentence imposed under 18 U.S.C. § 3559(c) for the offense or offenses for which the defendant is imprisoned;

(2) the defendant is not a danger to the safety of any other person or to the community, as provided in 18 U.S.C. § 3142(g); and

(3) the reduction is consistent with this policy statement.

(b) EXTRAORDINARY AND COMPELLING REASONS.—Extraordinary and compelling reasons exist under any of the following circumstances or a combination thereof:

(1) MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEFENDANT.—

(A) The defendant is suffering from a terminal illness (*i.e.*, a serious and advanced illness with an end-of-life trajectory). A specific prognosis of life expectancy (*i.e.*, a probability of death within a specific time period) is not required. Examples include metastatic solid-tumor cancer, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), end-stage organ disease, and advanced dementia.

(B) The defendant is—

(i) suffering from a serious physical or medical condition,

(ii) suffering from a serious functional or cognitive impairment, or

(iii) experiencing deteriorating physical or mental health because of the aging process,

that substantially diminishes the ability of the defendant to provide self-care within the environment of a correctional facility and from which he or she is not expected to recover.

(C) The defendant is suffering from a medical condition that requires long-term or specialized medical care that is not being provided and without which the defendant is at risk of serious deterioration in health or death.

(D) The defendant presents the following circumstances—

(i) the defendant is housed at a correctional facility affected or at imminent risk of being affected by (I) an ongoing outbreak of infectious disease, or (II) an ongoing public health emergency declared by the appropriate federal, state, or local authority;

(ii) due to personal health risk factors and custodial status, the defendant is at increased risk of suffering severe medical complications or death as a result of exposure to the ongoing outbreak of infectious disease or the ongoing public health emergency described in clause (i); and

(iii) such risk cannot be adequately mitigated in a timely manner.

(2) AGE OF THE DEFENDANT.—The defendant (A) is at least 65 years old; (B) is experiencing a serious deterioration in physical or mental health because of the aging process; and (C) has served at least 10 years or 75 percent of his or her term of imprisonment, whichever is less.

(3) FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEFENDANT.—

(A) The death or incapacitation of the caregiver of the defendant's minor child or the defendant's child who is 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability or a medical condition.

(B) The incapacitation of the defendant's spouse or registered partner when the defendant would be the only available caregiver for the spouse or registered partner.

(C) The incapacitation of the defendant's parent when the defendant would be the only available caregiver for the parent.

(D) The defendant establishes that circumstances similar to those listed in paragraphs (3)(A) through (3)(C) exist involving any other immediate family member or an individual whose relationship with the defendant is similar in kind to that of an immediate family member, when the defendant would be the only available caregiver for such family member or individual. For purposes of this provision, "***immediate family member***" refers to any of the individuals listed in paragraphs (3)(A) through (3)(C) as well as a grandchild, grandparent, or sibling of the defendant.

(4) VICTIM OF ABUSE.—The defendant, while in custody serving the term of imprisonment sought to be reduced, was a victim of:

(A) sexual abuse involving a "sexual act," as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2246(2) (including the conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2246(2)(D) regardless of the age of the victim); or

(B) physical abuse resulting in "serious bodily injury," as defined in the Commentary to §1B1.1 (Application Instructions);

that was committed by, or at the direction of, a correctional officer, an employee or contractor of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, or any other individual who had custody or control over the defendant.

For purposes of this provision, the misconduct must be established by a conviction in a criminal case, a finding or admission of liability in a civil case, or a finding in an administrative proceeding, unless such proceedings are unduly delayed or the defendant is in imminent danger.

(5) OTHER REASONS.—The defendant presents any other circumstance or combination of circumstances that, when considered by themselves or together with any of the reasons described in paragraphs (1) through (4), are similar in gravity to those described in paragraphs (1) through (4).

(6) UNUSUALLY LONG SENTENCE.—If a defendant received an unusually long sentence and has served at least 10 years of the term of imprisonment, a change in the law (other than an amendment to the Guidelines Manual that has not been made retroactive) may be considered in determining whether the defendant presents an extraordinary and compelling reason, but only where such change would produce a gross disparity between the sentence being served and the sentence likely to be imposed at the time the motion is filed, and after full consideration of the defendant's individualized circumstances.

(c) LIMITATION ON CHANGES IN LAW.—Except as provided in subsection (b)(6), a change in the law (including an amendment to the Guidelines Manual that has not been made retroactive) shall not be considered for purposes of determining whether an extraordinary and compelling reason exists under this policy statement. However, if a defendant otherwise establishes that extraordinary and compelling reasons warrant a sentence reduction under this policy statement, a change in the law (including an amendment to the Guidelines Manual that has not been made retroactive) may be considered for purposes of determining the extent of any such reduction.

(d) REHABILITATION OF THE DEFENDANT.—Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 994(t), rehabilitation of the defendant is not, by itself, an extraordinary and compelling reason for purposes of this policy statement. However, rehabilitation of the defendant while serving the sentence may be considered in combination with other circumstances in determining whether and to what extent a reduction in the defendant's term of imprisonment is warranted.

(e) FORESEEABILITY OF EXTRAORDINARY AND COMPELLING REASONS.—For purposes of this policy statement, an extraordinary and compelling reason need not have been unforeseen at the time of sentencing in order to warrant a reduction in the term of imprisonment. Therefore, the fact that an extraordinary and compelling reason reasonably could have been known or anticipated by the sentencing court does not preclude consideration for a reduction under this policy statement.

Commentary

Application Notes:

1. **Interaction with Temporary Release from Custody Under 18 U.S.C. § 3622 ("Furlough")**.—A reduction of a defendant's term of imprisonment under this policy statement is not appropriate when releasing the defendant under 18 U.S.C. § 3622 for a limited time adequately addresses the defendant's circumstances.

2. **Notification of Victims**.—Before granting a motion pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A), the Commission encourages the court to make its best effort to ensure that any victim of the offense is reasonably, accurately, and timely notified, and provided, to the extent practicable, with an opportunity to be reasonably heard, unless any such victim previously requested not to be notified.

Background: The Commission is required by 28 U.S.C. § 994(a)(2) to develop general policy statements regarding application of the guidelines or other aspects of sentencing that in the view of the Commission would further the purposes of sentencing (18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(2)), including, among other things, the appropriate use of the sentence modification provisions set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c). In doing so, the Commission is required by 28 U.S.C. § 994(t) to "describe what should be considered extraordinary and compelling reasons for sentence reduction, including the criteria to be applied and a list of specific examples." This policy statement implements 28 U.S.C. § 994(a)(2) and (t).

Historical Note	Effective November 1, 2006 (amendment 683). Amended effective November 1, 2007 (amendment 698); November 1, 2010 (amendment 746); November 1, 2016 (amendment 799); November 1, 2018 (amendment 813); November 1, 2023 (amendment 814); November 1, 2026 (amendment 843).