



Crime Victims Fact Sheet

Federal Offenses Involving Official Victims

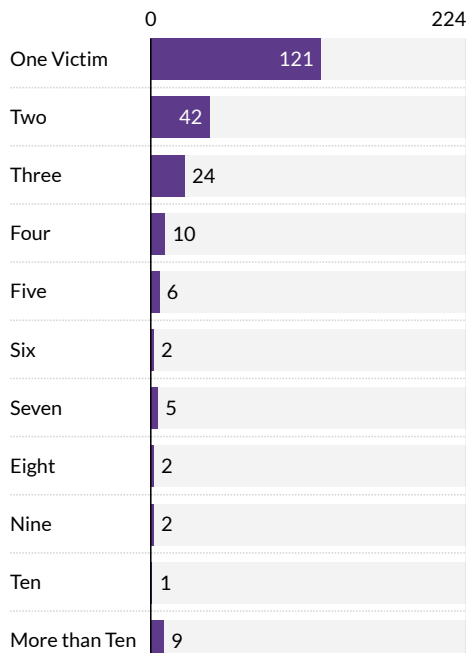
Federal Offenses Involving Official Victims

Chapter Three, Part A of the federal sentencing guidelines covers offenses involving victim-related adjustments. Section 3A1.2 covers an adjustment for an offense involving an official victim.¹ In fiscal year 2023, 321 cases involved these guidelines, and 316 had an identifiable victim. In 227 of the 316 cases, at least one victim was a person.² Victim information was available for a total of 224 of these cases based on court documents submitted to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.³

Number of Victims

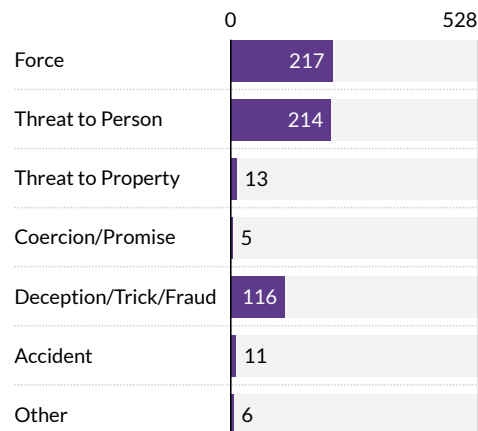
In fiscal year 2023, 224 cases had information about persons victimized in offenses where an official victim adjustment was applied. The Commission identified 10,856 persons as victims in these offenses, and information about 528 persons was collected.⁴

Multiple victims were identified in 46% of these cases. The number of victims ranged from one to 3,159 in a single case.



Means of the Offense

In cases involving an official victim adjustment, use of force and threat of force were each used against 41% of the 528 victims. These were followed by deception, trick, or fraud against 22% of victims. Some cases involved multiple means of committing the offense.

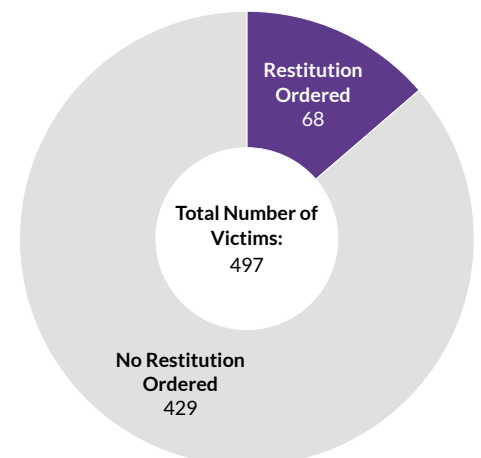
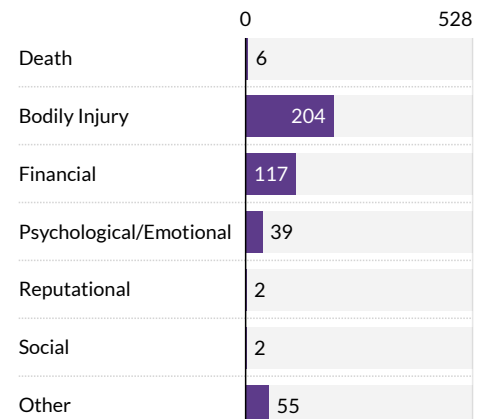


Restitution

In fiscal year 2023, restitution was ordered to be paid to 14% of victims in cases involving an official victim adjustment.

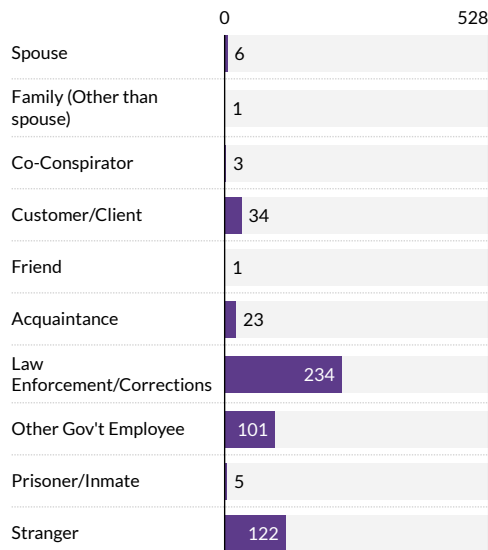
Type of Harm

Bodily injury was the most common type of harm sustained by victims in cases involving an official victim adjustment (39%), followed by financial harm (22%). Some cases involved multiple types of harm.

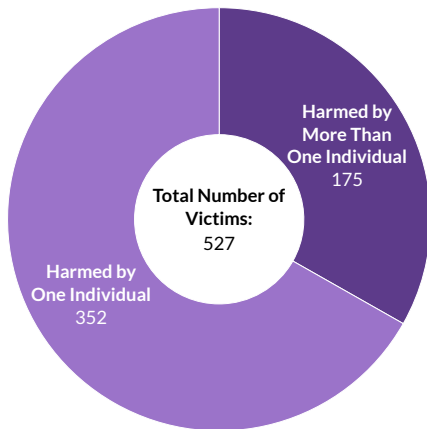


Relationships Between Victims and Individuals Who Caused Harm

In cases involving an official victim adjustment, the most common association between victims and the individuals who caused them harm was as a law enforcement or corrections officer (44%). The next most common was as a stranger (23%). Some cases involved multiple relationship types.



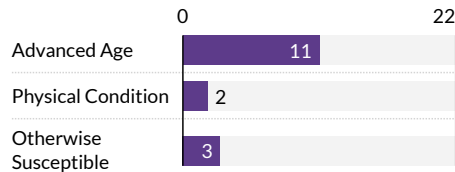
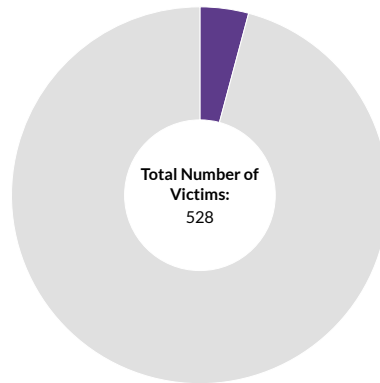
33% of victims in cases involving an official victim adjustment were harmed by more than one individual.



Vulnerability

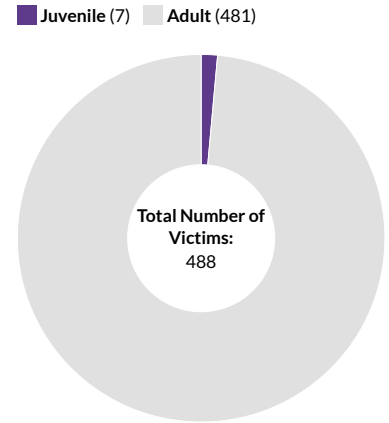
Some cases involving an official victim adjustment involved victims who were unusually vulnerable due to age, physical or mental condition, or other factors.⁵ The Commission identified 4% of victims in these cases as unusually vulnerable for one of these reasons. Some cases involved multiple vulnerabilities.

Unusually Vulnerable (22)
Not Unusually Vulnerable (506)

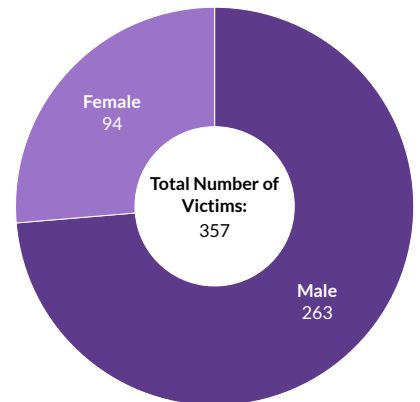


Victim Characteristics

Less than 2% of victims in cases involving an official victim adjustment were juveniles.



More than one-quarter (26%) of victims in cases involving an official victim adjustment were female.



Endnotes

¹ *Federal Offenses Involving Official Victims* include individuals sentenced in fiscal year 2023 in cases involving an adjustment under USSG §3A1.2 (Official Victim). The most common sentencing guideline for an offense involving an official victim adjustment was USSG §2A2.2 (Aggravated Assault) at 40%.

² An identifiable victim can be a person, business, government, or other type. This series provides victim information on persons.

³ The Commission's Crime Victims Fact Sheets series relies on information collected and analyzed through a special coding project undertaken by the Commission to gather information beyond what is regularly collected and reported on by the Commission.

⁴ The sentencing documents received from the courts by the Commission are often focused on the sentencing event; therefore, some information regarding the victims of the offense was not provided in the documents available for staff review. For this reason, the total number of cases with complete information, and the corresponding number of victims in those cases, will vary by analysis. Victim information was collected for the first ten persons documented in the records.

⁵ In some, but not all, of these cases the court applied the adjustment at USSG §3A1.1. Vulnerability due to advanced age or youthfulness was determined by the offense conduct stated in the presentence investigation report adopted by the court, and not based on any minimum or maximum age.

SOURCE: U.S. Sentencing Commission, 2023 Victim Datafile, VICFY23.



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