



QuickFacts

Alien Smuggling Offenses

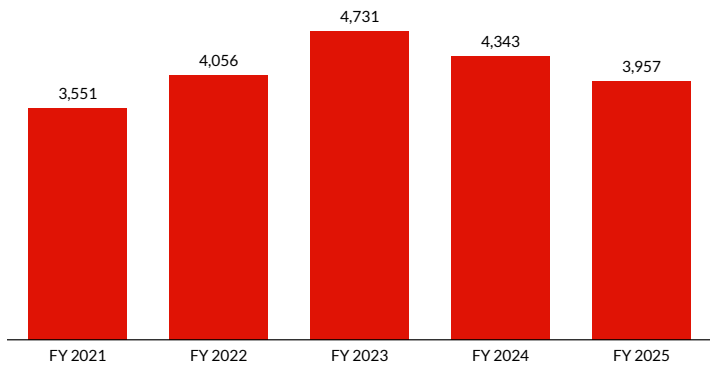
Population Snapshot

66,662 cases were reported in FY25;

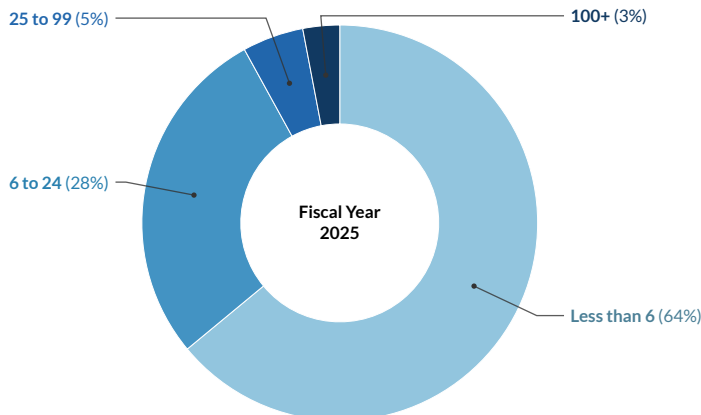
22,743 involved immigration offenses.¹
17% involved alien smuggling.²

Alien smuggling offenses increased by 11% since FY21.

Number of Alien Smuggling Offenses



Number of Aliens Smuggled in an Offense³



Individual and Offense Characteristics

80% of individuals sentenced for alien smuggling were men.

82% were Hispanic, 8% were White, 7% were Black, and 2% were Other races.

Their average age was 33 years.

64% were United States citizens.

71% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I);

- 11% were CHC II;
- 9% were CHC III;
- 4% were CHC IV;
- 3% were CHC V;
- 2% were CHC VI.

53% received the adjustment at USSG §4C1.1 for zero criminal history points.

14% of alien smuggling offenses involved an unaccompanied minor.

64% of alien smuggling offenses involved smuggling, transporting, or harboring fewer than six people.

1% of alien smuggling offenses involved an alien who was involuntarily detained through coercion, threat, or in demand for payment.

93% of alien smuggling offenses did not involve the use of a weapon.

97% of alien smuggling offenses did not involve physical injury, but 37% involved the risk of injury.

A death occurred in 1% of alien smuggling offenses.

The top five districts for alien smuggling offenses were:

- Western District of Texas (1,196);
- Southern District of Texas (1,127);
- District of Arizona (740);
- Southern District of California (366);
- District of New Mexico (248).



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Alien Smuggling Offenses

Punishment

The average sentence for alien smuggling was 15 months.

90% of individuals sentenced for alien smuggling were sentenced to prison.

2% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty.

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

82% of sentences for alien smuggling were under the *Guidelines Manual*.

- 53% were within the guideline range.
- 24% were Early Disposition Program (EDP) departures.⁴
 - *The average sentence reduction was 53%.*
- 4% were substantial assistance departures.
 - *The average sentence reduction was 48%.*
- 1% were some other downward departure.
 - *The average sentence reduction was 48%.*

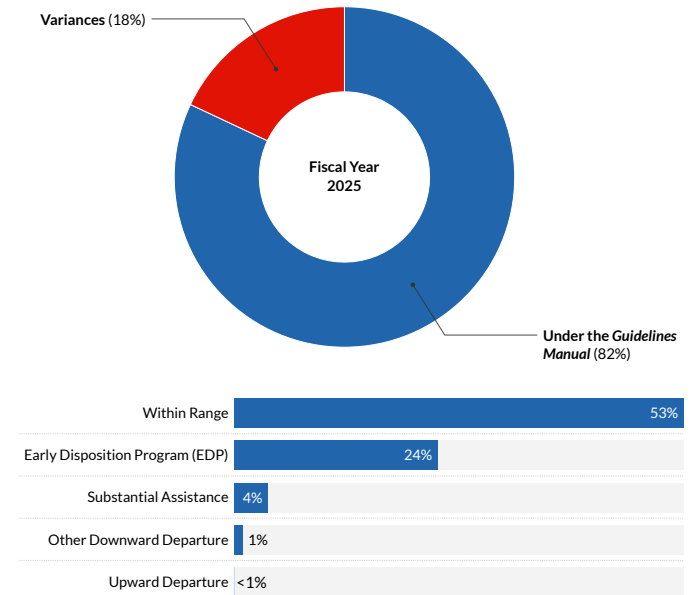
18% of sentences for alien smuggling were variances.

- 13% were downward variances.
 - *The average sentence reduction was 46%.*
- 5% were upward variances.
 - *The average sentence increase was 53%.*

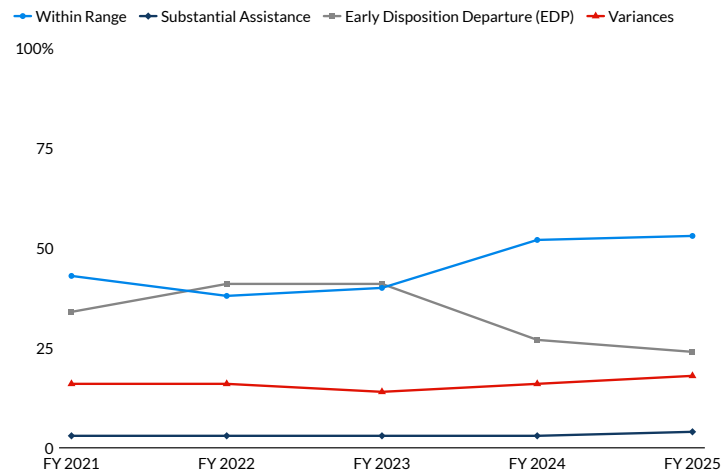
The average guideline minimum and average sentence imposed remained steady over the past five years.

- The average guideline minimum was 19 months in fiscal year 2021 and 17 months in fiscal year 2025.
- The average sentence imposed was 15 months in fiscal year 2021 and 15 months in fiscal year 2025.

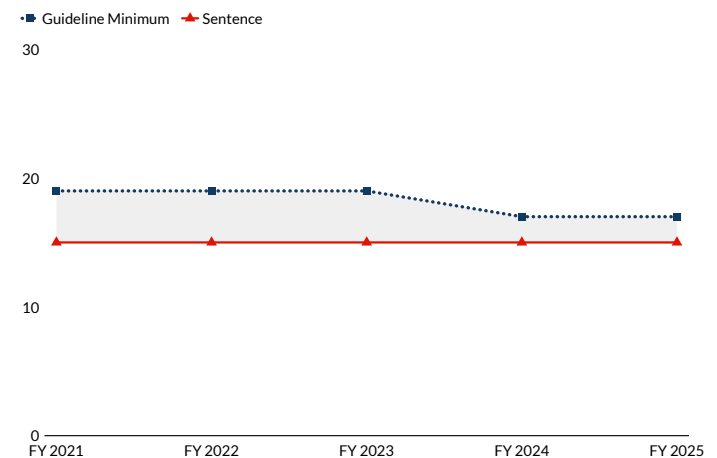
Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range by Fiscal Year



Average Guideline Minimum and Average Sentence (months)



¹ Immigration offenses include cases where individuals were sentenced under USSG §§2L1.1 (Smuggling, Transporting, or Harboring an Unlawful Alien), 2L1.2 (Illegal Reentry), 2L2.1 (Trafficking in Documents Relating to Citizenship), 2L2.2 (Fraudulently Acquiring Documents Relating to Citizenship), and 2L2.5 (Failure to Surrender Canceled Naturalization Certificate).

² Alien smuggling involves cases in which the court applied USSG §2L1.1 as the primary sentencing guideline.

³ Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.

⁴ "Early Disposition Program" (or EDP) departures are departures where the government sought a sentence below the guideline range because the defendant participated in the government's Early Disposition Program, through which cases are resolved in an expedited manner. See USSG §5K3.1.