Fiscal Year 2018

- In FY 2018, 69,425 cases were reported to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.
- 18,964 of these involved drug trafficking.\(^1,2\)
- 7.5% of drug trafficking cases involved crack cocaine.
- Crack cocaine trafficking offenders have decreased by 41.4% since FY 2014.

Offender and Offense Characteristics

- 92.4% of crack cocaine trafficking offenders were men.
- 80.0% of crack cocaine trafficking offenders were Black, 13.0% were Hispanic, 6.3% were White, and 0.7% were Other races.
- Their average age was 35 years.
- 97.9% were United States citizens.
- 18.7% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I); 15.9% were Career Offenders (§4B1.1).
- The median Base Offense Level in these cases was 24, corresponding to between 28 and 112 grams of crack cocaine.
- Sentences were increased for:
  - possessing a weapon (38.2%);
  - having a leadership/supervisory role in the offense (5.9%).
- Sentences were decreased for:
  - having minor or minimal participation in the offense (4.2%);
  - meeting the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines (5.5%).
- The top five districts for crack cocaine trafficking offenders were:
  - Southern District of New York (167);
  - District of South Carolina (68);
  - Eastern District of North Carolina (66);
  - District of Maryland (46);
  - District of Connecticut (43).

Punishment

- The average sentence for crack cocaine trafficking offenders was 78 months.
- 97.4% were sentenced to prison.
- 44.0% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; 23.7% were relieved of that penalty.

Means of Relief from Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Crack Cocaine Traffickers

For more Quick Facts, visit https://www.ussc.gov/research/quick-facts.
Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

• Of the 61.3% of crack cocaine trafficking offenders sentenced under the Guidelines Manual:
  ◦ 63.5% were sentenced within the guideline range;
  ◦ 25.9% received a substantial assistance departure. Their average sentence reduction was 52.5%.
  ◦ 9.2% received some other downward departure. Their average sentence reduction was 40.6%.
  ◦ 38.7% received a variance; of those offenders:
    ◦ 93.5% received a below range variance. Their average sentence reduction was 35.0%.
    ◦ 6.5% received an above range variance. Their average sentence increase was 41.9%.

• The average guideline minimum and the sentence imposed decreased from fiscal year 2014 to fiscal year 2015, but has remained steady over the past three years.
  ◦ The average guideline minimum decreased from 123 months in fiscal year 2014 to 102 months in fiscal year 2018.
  ◦ The average sentence imposed decreased from 87 months in fiscal year 2014 to 78 months in fiscal year 2018.


1 Drug trafficking offenses include cases where offenders were sentenced under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs).
2 Offenders were sentenced under USSG §§2D1.1 (Drug Trafficking), 2D1.2 (Protected Locations), 2D1.5 (Continuing Criminal Enterprise), 2D1.6 (Use of a Communication Facility), 2D1.8 (Rent/Manage Drug Establishment), 2D1.10 (Endangering Human Life), or 2D1.14 (Narco-Terrorism). Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.