



# QuickFacts

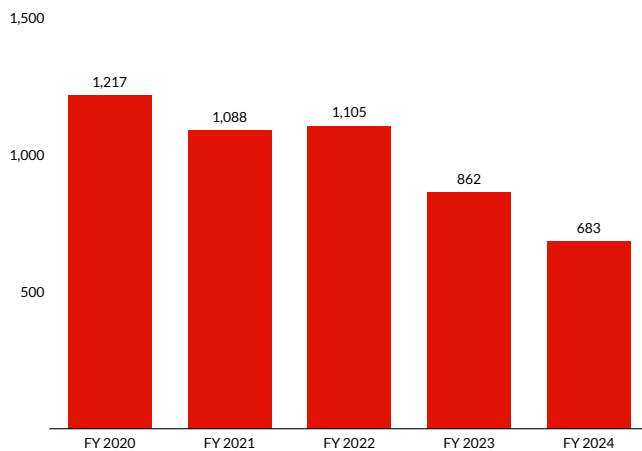
## Crack Cocaine Trafficking

### Population Snapshot

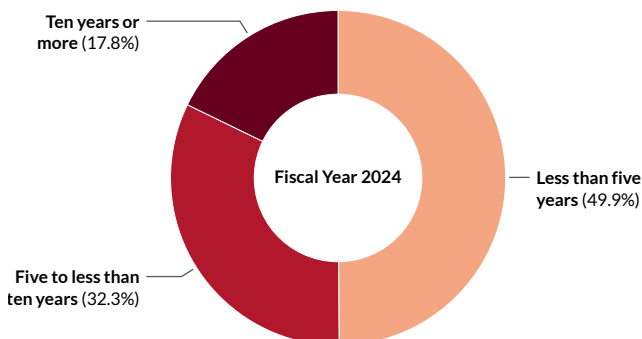
61,678 cases were reported in FY24;  
18,150 involved drugs,<sup>1</sup>  
18,029 involved drug trafficking.<sup>2</sup>

3.8% of such cases involved  
crack cocaine, down  
43.9% since FY20.

### Number of Crack Cocaine Trafficking Offenses



### Sentence Length<sup>3</sup>



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### Individual and Offense Characteristics

91.8% of individuals sentenced for crack cocaine trafficking were men.

77.1% were Black, 14.9% were Hispanic, 7.3% were White, and 0.7% were Other races.

Their average age was 39 years.

98.1% were United States citizens.

22.6% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I); 15.6% were individuals sentenced under the career offender guideline (§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 (48.7%);
- a leadership or supervisory role in the offense (9.2%).

Sentences were decreased for:

- minor or minimal participation in the offense (3.7%);
- meeting the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines (7.9%).

The top five districts for crack cocaine trafficking offenses were:

- Southern District of New York (50);
- District of New Jersey (36);
- Western District of Pennsylvania (35);
- Eastern District of North Carolina (34);
- Eastern District of New York (33).

### Punishment

The average sentence for individuals trafficking crack cocaine was 68 months.

95.7% were sentenced to prison.

23.4% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; 34.2% of those individuals were relieved of that penalty.

### Means of Relief from Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Crack Cocaine Trafficking

Means of Relief	Percent
Safety Valve	2.5%
Substantial Assistance	27.8%
Both	3.8%



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### Crack Cocaine Trafficking

#### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

39.5% of sentences for crack cocaine trafficking were under the *Guidelines Manual*.

- 20.8% were within the guideline range.
- 13.2% were substantial assistance departures.
  - *The average sentence reduction was 66.6%.*
- 0.3% were Early Disposition Program (EDP) departures.<sup>4,5</sup>
- 4.5% were some other downward departure.
  - *The average sentence reduction was 43.0%.*
- 0.7% were upward departures.
  - *The average sentence increase was 70.3%.*

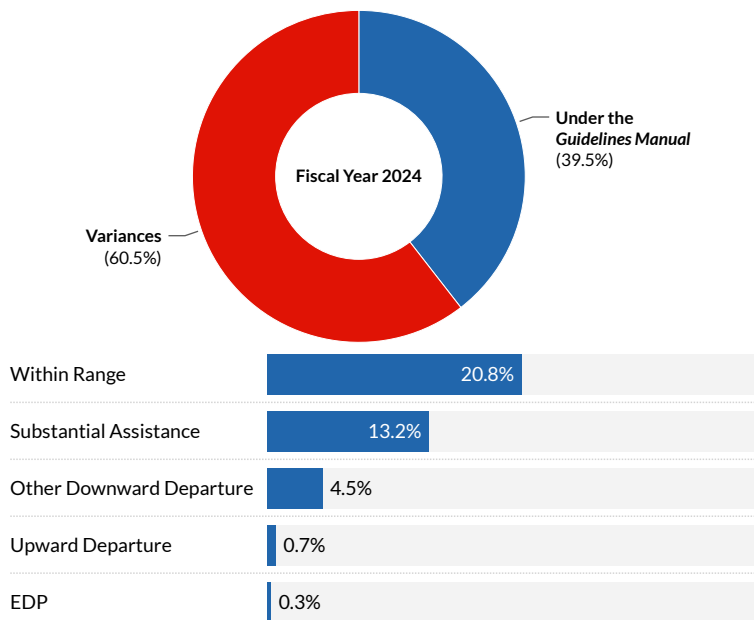
60.5% of sentences for crack cocaine trafficking were variances.

- 58.8% were downward variances.
  - *The average sentence reduction was 46.8%.*
- 1.8% were upward variances.
  - *The average sentence increase was 73.2%.*

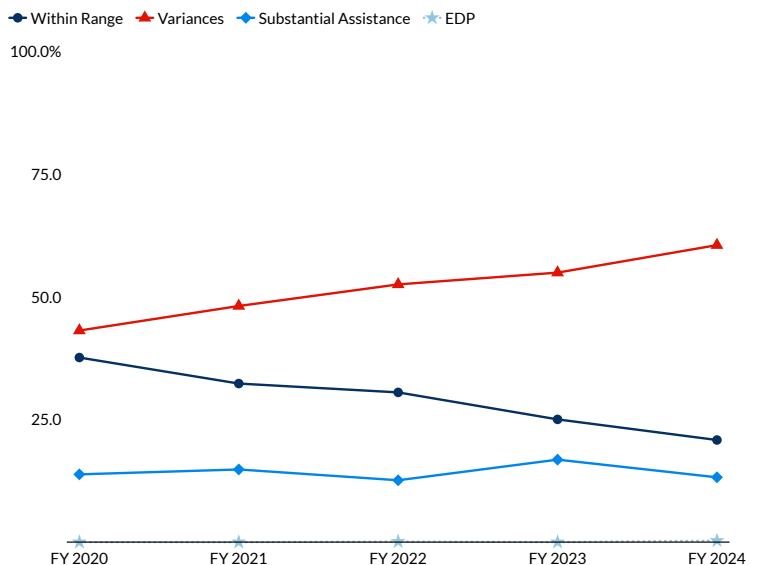
The average guideline minimum and the average sentence imposed have fluctuated over the past five years.

- The average guideline minimum was 98 months in fiscal year 2020 and 106 months in fiscal year 2024.
- The average sentence imposed was 74 months in fiscal year 2020 and 68 months in fiscal year 2024.

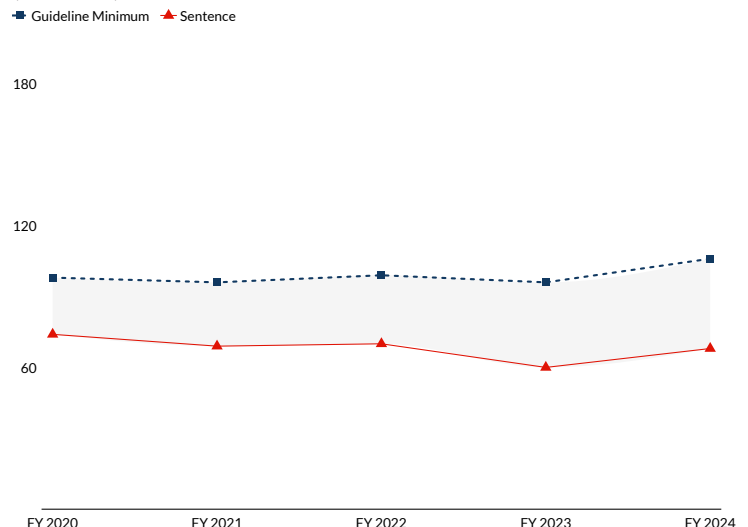
#### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



#### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range by Fiscal Year



#### Average Guideline Minimum and Average Sentence (months)



<sup>1</sup> Drug offenses include cases where individuals were sentenced under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs). There were 689 individuals sentenced for crack cocaine offenses under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs) in FY 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals sentenced for drug trafficking 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).

<sup>3</sup> Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.

<sup>4</sup> "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.

<sup>5</sup> The Commission does not report the average for categories with fewer than three cases.