**Quick Facts**

**Women in the Federal Offender Population**

**Fiscal Year 2020**

- In FY 2020, 64,565 cases were reported to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.
- 7,897 of these involved female offenders.¹
- Female offenders accounted for 12.3% of all federal offenders sentenced in FY 2020.

**Number of Female Federal Offenders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2016</td>
<td>9,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2017</td>
<td>8,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2018</td>
<td>8,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2019</td>
<td>9,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2020</td>
<td>7,897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Most Common Guidelines for Female Offenders**

- Drug Trafficking: 2,792
- Immigration: 1,690
- Fraud: 1,368
- All Other Offenses: 1,354

**Male and Female Offenders Sentenced to Prison by Guideline**

- Drug Trafficking: Male 94.3%, Female 79.6%
- Immigration: Male 97.4%, Female 92.6%
- Fraud: Male 80.7%, Female 77.6%
- All Offenses: Male 60.8%

**Offender and Offense Characteristics**

- 44.8% of female offenders were Hispanic; 33.1% were White, 15.8% were Black, and 6.3% were Other races.²
  - Among female drug trafficking offenders, 41.0% were White followed by Hispanic (40.4%), Black (13.5%), and Other races (5.1%).
  - Among female immigration offenders, 89.2% were Hispanic followed by White (6.0%), Other races (3.2%), and Black (1.6%).
  - Among female fraud offenders, 44.3% were White, followed by Black (29.3%), Hispanic (19.9%), and Other races (6.5%).
- Their average age was 37 years.
- 79.2% were United States citizens.
- 65.7% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I):
  - 11.1% were CHC II
  - 11.1% were CHC III
  - 5.2% were CHC IV
  - 2.6% were CHC V
  - 4.1% were CHC VI
- 7.2% of female offenders were sentenced for an offense involving weapons, compared to 10.3% of male offenders.
- The top five districts for female offenders were:
  - Western District of Texas (795);
  - Southern District of Texas (766);
  - Southern District of California (535);
  - District of Arizona (393);
  - District of New Mexico (310).
- The top five districts where female offenders comprised the highest proportion of the overall caseload were:
  - District of Northern Mariana Islands (57.1%);
  - District of Virgin Islands (28.0%);
  - District of Vermont (24.8%);
  - Western District of Virginia (24.7%);
  - Eastern District of Tennessee (22.3%).

**Punishment**

- The average sentence for female offenders was 30 months, compared to 44 months for male offenders.
- 79.6% were sentenced to prison, compared to 94.3% of male offenders.
- 29.6% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty, compared to 24.0% of male offenders.

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Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

- Of the 67.3% of female offenders sentenced under the Guidelines Manual:
  - 53.2% were sentenced within the guideline range.
  - 23.6% received a substantial assistance departure.
    - Their average sentence reduction was 61.4%.
  - 16.5% received an Early Disposition Program (EDP) departure.  
    - Their average sentence reduction was 59.8%.
  - 6.2% received some other downward departure.
    - Their average sentence reduction was 55.9%.
  - 32.7% received a variance; of those offenders:
    - 96.9% received a downward variance.
      - Their average sentence reduction was 57.9%.
    - 3.1% received an upward variance.
      - Their average sentence increase was 96.1%.
- The average guideline minimum and sentence imposed slightly increased over the past five years.
  - The average guideline minimum increased from 41 months in fiscal year 2016 to 48 months in fiscal year 2020.
  - The average sentence imposed increased from 26 months in fiscal year 2016 to 30 months in fiscal year 2020.

Sentence Imposed Relative to the Guideline Range FY 2020

- Within Range: 35.8%
- Substantial Assistance: 15.9%
- EDP: 11.1%
- Other Downward: 4.2%
- Upward Departure: 0.3%
- Variances: 32.7%
- Under Guidelines Manual: 67.3%