



QuickFacts

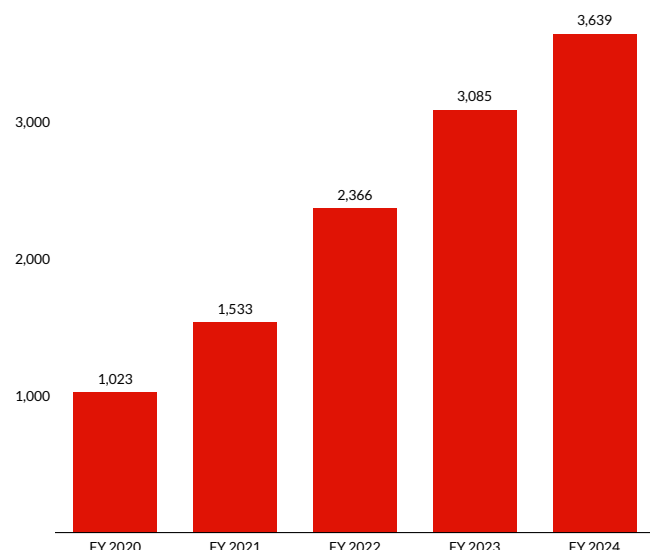
Fentanyl Trafficking

Population Snapshot

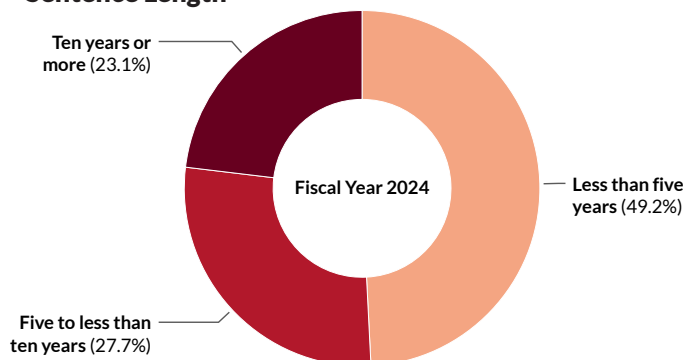
61,678 cases were reported in FY24;
 18,150 involved drugs,¹
 18,029 involved drug trafficking.²

20.2% of such cases involved
 fentanyl,³ up 255.7%
 since FY20.

Number of Fentanyl Trafficking Offenses



Sentence Length⁴



Individual and Offense Characteristics

83.1% of individuals sentenced for fentanyl trafficking were men.

41.3% were Hispanic, 35.5% were Black, 20.9% were White, and 2.3% were Other races.

Their average age was 35 years.

83.5% were United States citizens.

43.7% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I); 5.8% were individuals sentenced under the career offender guideline (§4B1.1).

The median base offense level in these cases was 30, corresponding to between 400 grams and 1.2 kilograms of fentanyl.

Sentences were increased for:

- possessing a weapon (32.0%);
- a leadership or supervisory role in the offense (5.2%).

Sentences were decreased for:

- minor or minimal participation in the offense (20.1%);
- meeting the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines (32.5%).

The top five districts for fentanyl trafficking offenses were:

- District of Arizona (220);
- Southern District of California (199);
- District of Oregon (118);
- Northern District of Texas (117);
- Western District of Texas (114).

Punishment

The average sentence for individuals trafficking fentanyl was 74 months.

97.4% were sentenced to prison.

44.2% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; 43.9% of those individuals were relieved of that penalty.

Means of Relief from Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Fentanyl Trafficking

Means of Relief	Percent
Safety Valve	18.2%
Substantial Assistance	17.9%
Both	7.8%



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Fentanyl Trafficking

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

59.4% of sentences for fentanyl trafficking were under the *Guidelines Manual*.

- 29.1% were within the guideline range.
- 18.5% were substantial assistance departures.
 - The average sentence reduction was 52.0%.
- 7.5% were Early Disposition Program (EDP) departures.⁵
 - The average sentence reduction was 63.9%.
- 3.2% were some other downward departure.
 - The average sentence reduction was 43.9%.
- 1.1% were upward departures.
 - The average sentence increase was 209.6%.

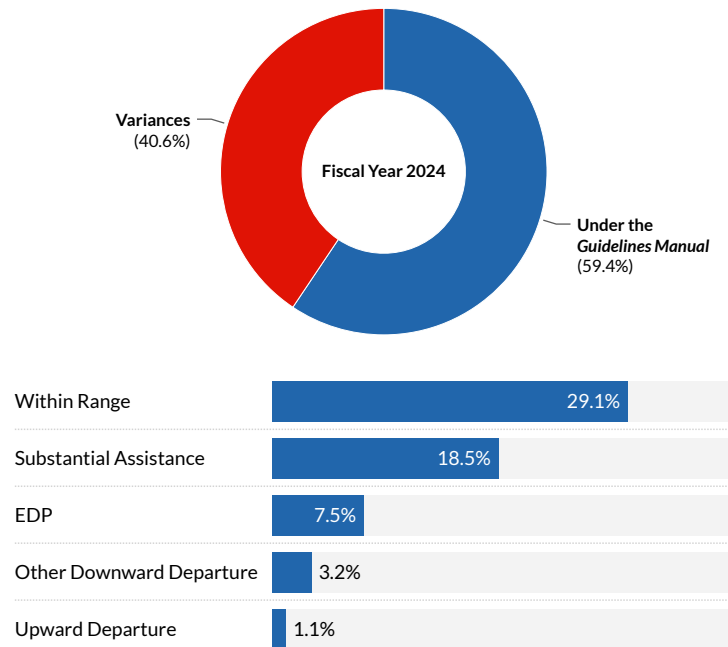
40.6% of sentences for fentanyl trafficking were variances.

- 37.9% were downward variances.
 - The average sentence reduction was 38.5%.
- 2.7% were upward variances.
 - The average sentence increase was 93.7%.

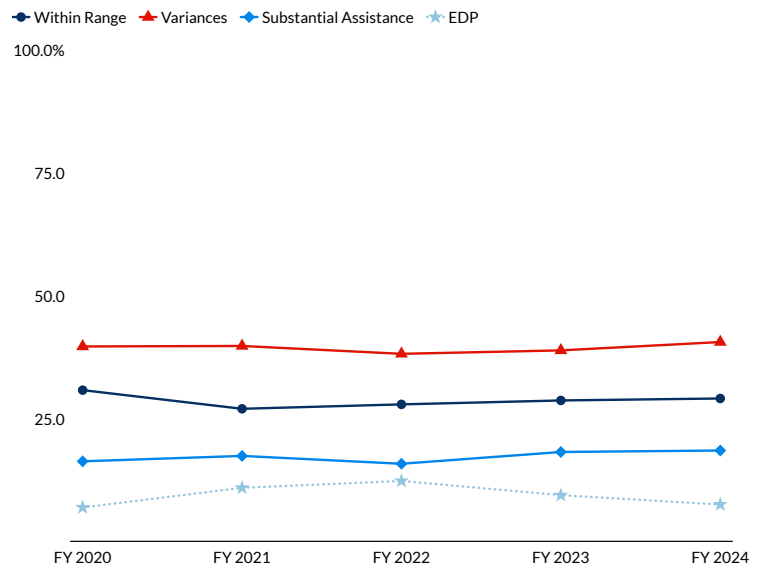
The average guideline minimum and the average sentence imposed have increased over the past five years.

- The average guideline minimum increased from 82 months in fiscal year 2020 to 100 months in fiscal year 2024.
- The average sentence imposed increased from 61 months in fiscal year 2020 to 74 months in fiscal year 2024.

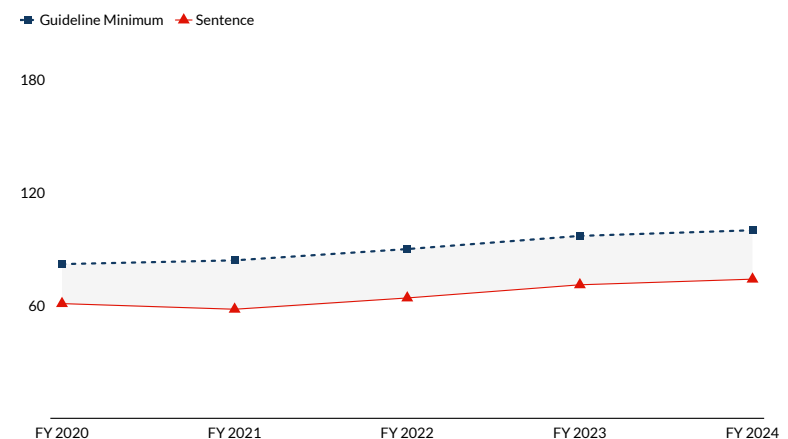
Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range by Fiscal Year



Average Guideline Minimum and Average Sentence (months)



¹ Drug offenses include cases where individuals were sentenced under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs). There were 3,652 individuals sentenced for fentanyl offenses under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs) in FY 2024.

² 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).

³ Fentanyl includes Fentanyl (N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] Propanamide). Offenses involving fentanyl analogues are discussed in a separate Quick Facts publication.

⁴ Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.

⁵ "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.