



QuickFacts

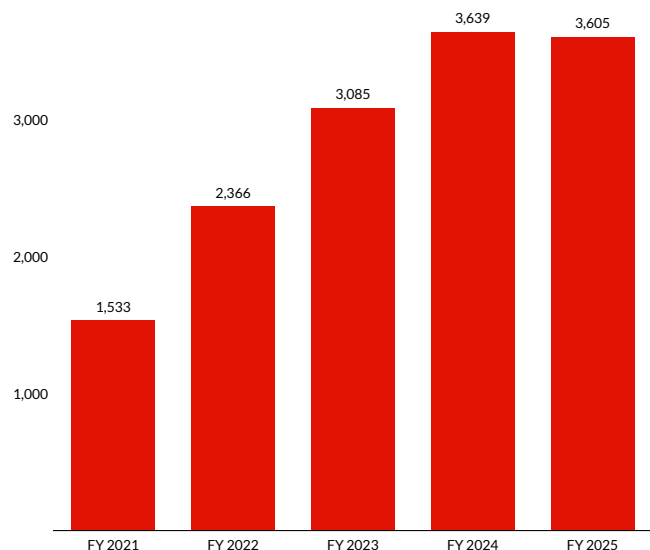
Fentanyl Trafficking

Population Snapshot

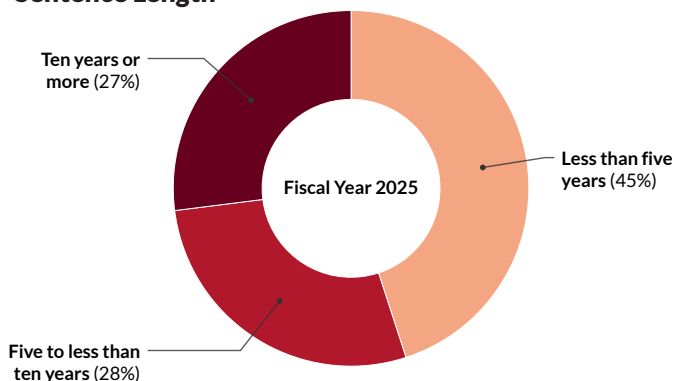
66,662 cases were reported in FY25;
 16,234 involved drugs,¹
 16,144 involved drug trafficking.²

22% of such cases involved fentanyl,³ up 135% since FY21.

Number of Fentanyl Trafficking Offenses



Sentence Length⁴



Individual and Offense Characteristics

83% of individuals sentenced for fentanyl trafficking were men.

38% were Hispanic, 38% were Black, 20% were White, and 3% were Other races.

Their average age was 35 years.

84% were United States citizens.

43% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I); 5% 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 (33%);
- a leadership or supervisory role in the offense (6%).

Sentences were decreased for:

- minor or minimal participation in the offense (16%);
- meeting the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines (29%).

The top five districts for fentanyl trafficking offenses were:

- District of Arizona (208);
- Southern District of California (150);
- District of Oregon (132);
- District of New Jersey (106);
- District of Massachusetts (103).

Punishment

The average sentence for individuals trafficking fentanyl was 79 months.

96% were sentenced to prison.

48% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; 38% of those individuals were relieved of that penalty.

Means of Relief from Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Fentanyl Trafficking

Means of Relief	Percent
Safety Valve	15%
Substantial Assistance	17%
Both	6%



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Fentanyl Trafficking

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

57% of sentences for fentanyl trafficking were under the *Guidelines Manual*.

- 30% were within the guideline range.
- 18% were substantial assistance departures.
 - *The average sentence reduction was 52%.*
- 5% were Early Disposition Program (EDP) departures.⁵
 - *The average sentence reduction was 63%.*
- 3% were some other downward departure.
 - *The average sentence reduction was 42%.*
- 1% were upward departures.
 - *The average sentence increase was 179%.*

43% of sentences for fentanyl trafficking were variances.

- 40% were downward variances.
 - *The average sentence reduction was 39%.*
- 3% were upward variances.
 - *The average sentence increase was 120%.*

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

- The average guideline minimum increased from 84 months in fiscal year 2021 to 105 months in fiscal year 2025.
- The average sentence imposed increased from 58 months in fiscal year 2021 to 79 months in fiscal year 2025.

¹ Drug offenses include cases where individuals were sentenced under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs). There were 3,627 individuals sentenced for fentanyl offenses under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs) in FY 2025.

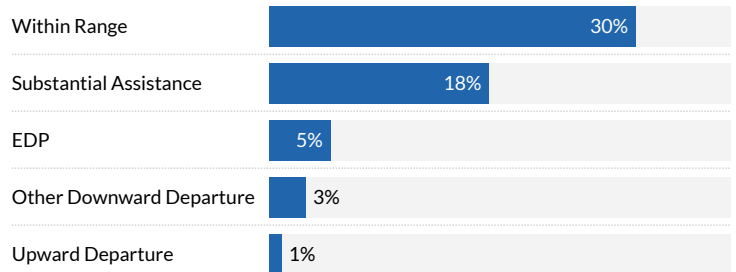
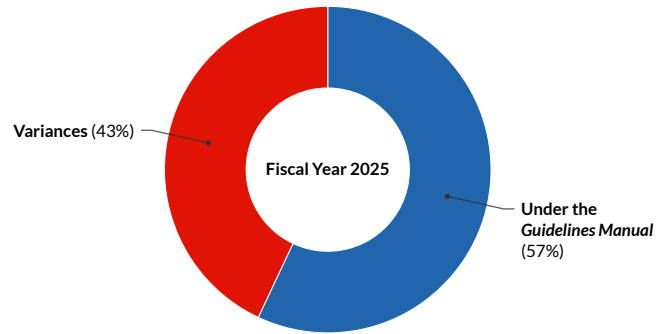
² Individuals sentenced for drug trafficking were sentenced under USSG §§2D1.1 (Drug Trafficking), 2D1.2 (Protected Locations), 2D1.5 (Continuing Criminal Enterprise), 2D1.6 (Use of a Communication Facility), 2D1.8 (Rent/Manage Drug Establishment), 2D1.10 (Endangering Human Life), or 2D1.14 (Narco-Terrorism).

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.

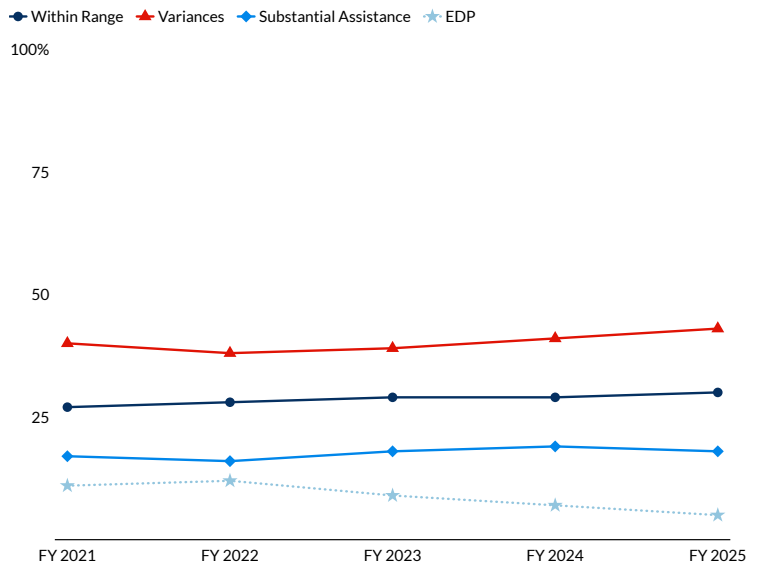
⁴ Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.

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.

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range by Fiscal Year



Average Guideline Minimum and Average Sentence (months)

