



# QuickFacts

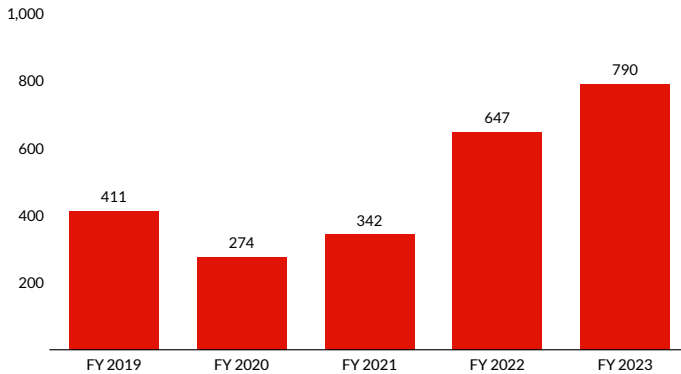
## Government Benefits Fraud

### Population Snapshot

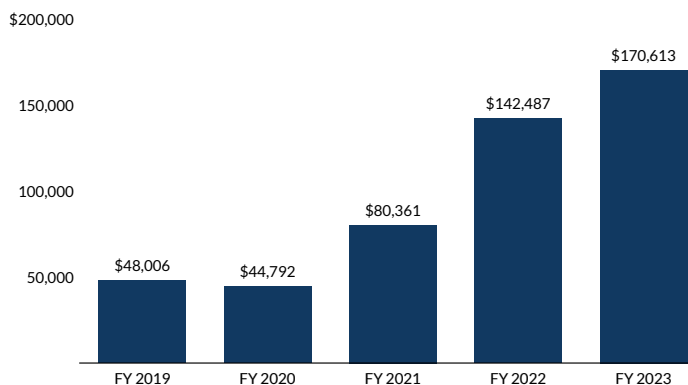
**64,124 cases were reported in FY23;**  
**4,855 involved Theft, Property Destruction,**  
**and Fraud.<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

**16.3% of such cases involved**  
**government benefits fraud,**  
**up 92.2% since FY 2019.**

### Number of Government Benefits Fraud Offenses



### Median Loss Amounts



### Individual and Offense Characteristics

63.4% of individuals sentenced for government benefits fraud were men.

54.2% were Black, 27.0% were White, 14.1% were Hispanic, and 4.8% were Other races.

Their average age was 42 years.

90.7% were United States citizens.

67.7% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I).

The median loss for these offenses was \$170,613;<sup>4</sup>

- 2.0% involved loss amounts of zero;
- 13.7% involved loss amounts greater than \$550,000.

Sentences were increased for:

- the number of victims or the extent of harm to victims (10.5%);<sup>5</sup>
- using sophisticated means to execute or conceal the offense (9.0%);
- using an unauthorized means of identification (13.3%);
- fraud or theft in connection with a major disaster or emergency (12.2%);
- a leadership or supervisory role in the offense (9.3%);
- abusing a public position of trust or using a special skill (3.7%);
- obstructing or impeding the administration of justice (3.0%).

Sentences were decreased for:

- Minor or minimal participation in the offense (3.9%).

The top five districts for government benefits fraud were:

- Southern District of Florida (57);
- Southern District of Alabama (37);
- Central District of California (36);
- Northern District of Georgia (36);
- Eastern District of Virginia (32).

### Punishment

The average sentence for individuals sentenced for government benefits fraud offenses was 19 months.

75.1% were sentenced to prison.

5.3% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; of those individuals, 19.0% were relieved of that penalty.



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## Government Benefits Fraud

### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

50.1% of individuals sentenced for government benefits fraud were sentenced under the *Guidelines Manual*; of those individuals:

- 63.4% were sentenced within the guideline range.
- 27.8% received a substantial assistance departure.
  - Their average sentence reduction was 67.8%.
- 7.6% received some other downward departure.
  - Their average sentence reduction was 60.9%.

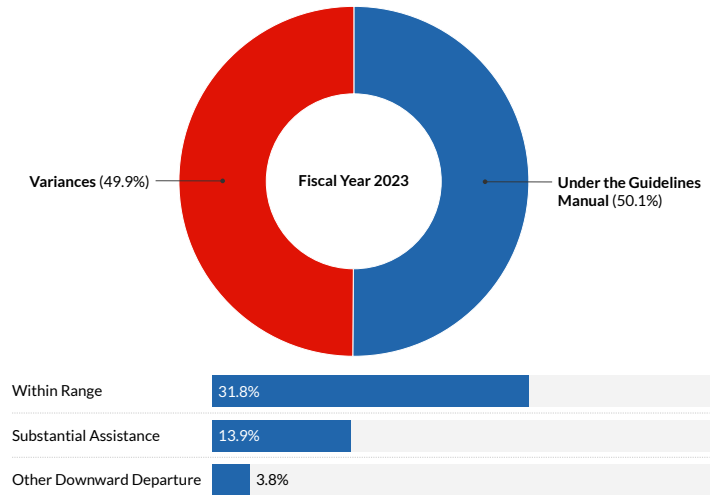
49.9% received a variance; of those individuals:

- 98.0% received a downward variance.
  - Their average sentence reduction was 59.3%.
- 2.0% received an upward variance.
  - Their average sentence increase was 43.0%.

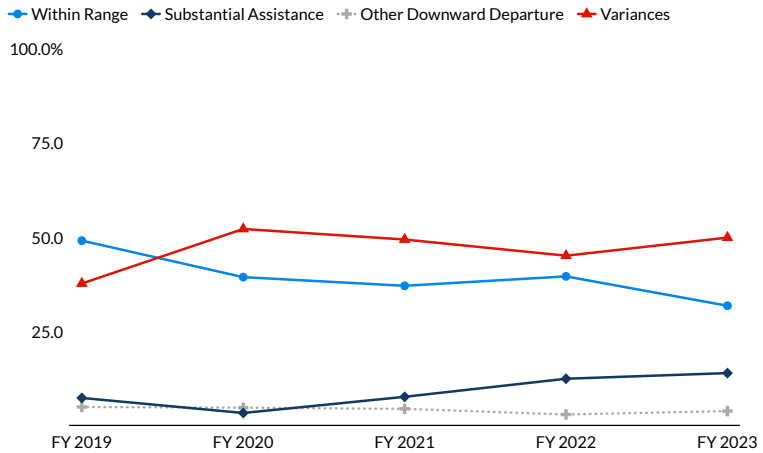
The average guideline minimum and average sentence imposed increased over the past five years.

- The average guideline minimum increased from 14 months in fiscal year 2019 to 26 months in fiscal year 2023.
- The average sentence imposed increased from 10 months in fiscal year 2019 to 19 months fiscal year 2023.

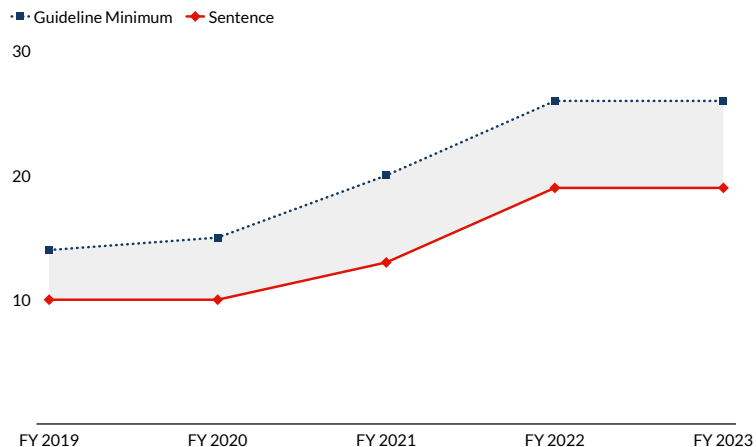
### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



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



<sup>1</sup> Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Theft, property destruction, and fraud offenses include cases with complete guideline application information in which the individual was sentenced under §2B1.1 (Larceny, Embezzlement, and Other Forms of Theft; Offenses Involving Stolen Property; Property Damage or Destruction; Fraud and Deceit; Forgery; Offenses Involving Altered or Counterfeit Instruments Other than Counterfeit Bearer Obligations of the United States) using a *Guidelines Manual* in effect on November 1, 2001 or later. See [www.ussc.gov/research/quick-facts](http://www.ussc.gov/research/quick-facts) for the Quick Facts on §2B1.1 individuals.

<sup>3</sup> Government benefits fraud includes cases where the offense conduct as described in the Presentence Report involved a false claim to the federal or state government involving assistance programs from federal agencies.

<sup>4</sup> The Loss Table was amended effective November 1, 2001 and November 1, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> The Victims Table and Sophisticated Means adjustment were amended effective November 1, 2015.