



Quick Facts

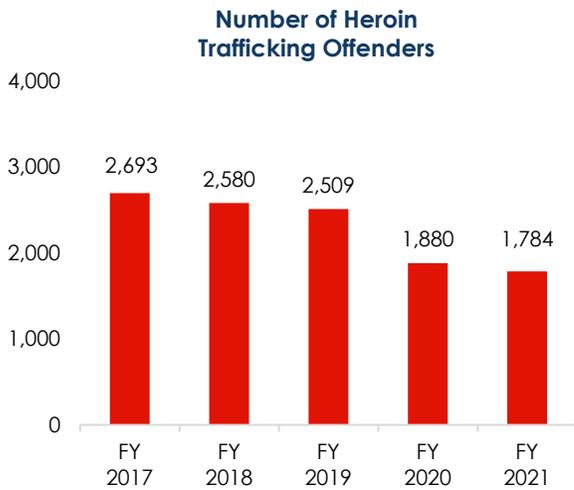
— Heroin Trafficking Offenses —

Fiscal Year 2021

- ▶ IN FY 2021, 57,287 CASES WERE REPORTED TO THE U.S. SENTENCING COMMISSION.
- ▶ 17,692 CASES INVOLVED DRUGS.¹
- ▶ 17,520 INVOLVED DRUG TRAFFICKING.²
- ▶ 10.2% OF DRUG TRAFFICKING CASES INVOLVED HEROIN.
- ▶ HEROIN TRAFFICKING OFFENDERS HAVE DECREASED BY 33.8% SINCE FY 2017.

Offender and Offense Characteristics³

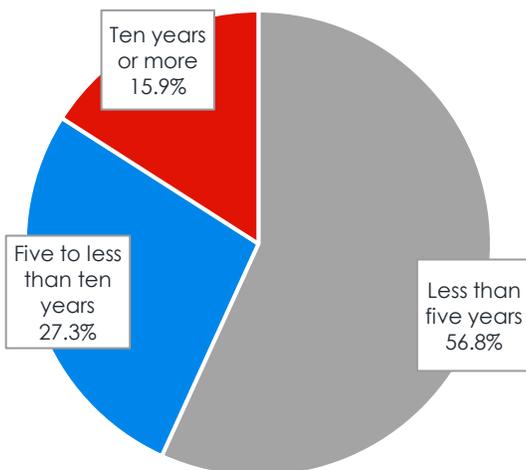
- 83.4% of heroin trafficking offenders were men.
- 42.1% were Hispanic, 37.6% were Black, 19.1% were White, and 1.2% were Other races.
- Their average age was 37 years.
- 84.1% were United States citizens.
- 38.8% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I); 5.9% were career offenders (§4B1.1).
- The median base offense level in these cases was 26, corresponding to between 400 and 700 grams of heroin.
- Sentences were increased for:
 - ◆ possessing a weapon (19.1%);
 - ◆ a leadership or supervisory role in the offense (5.4%).
- Sentences were decreased for:
 - ◆ minor or minimal participation in the offense (17.4%);
 - ◆ meeting the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines (33.2%).
- The top five districts for heroin trafficking offenders were:
 - ◆ Southern District of California (94);
 - ◆ District of New Jersey (86);
 - ◆ Northern District of Illinois (78);
 - ◆ Southern District of New York (70);
 - ◆ Western District of Texas (68).



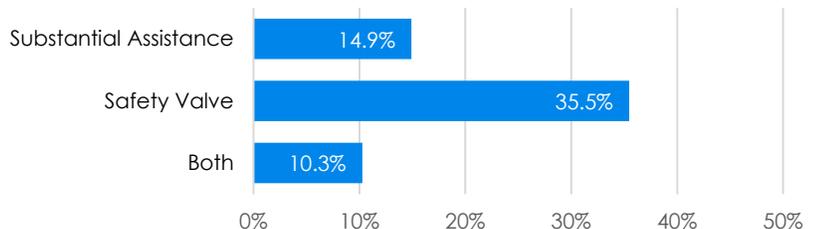
Punishment

- The average sentence for heroin trafficking offenders was 60 months.
- 95.7% were sentenced to prison.
- 58.7% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; of those offenders, 60.7% were relieved of that penalty.

Sentence Length FY 2021



Means of Relief from Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Heroin Traffickers





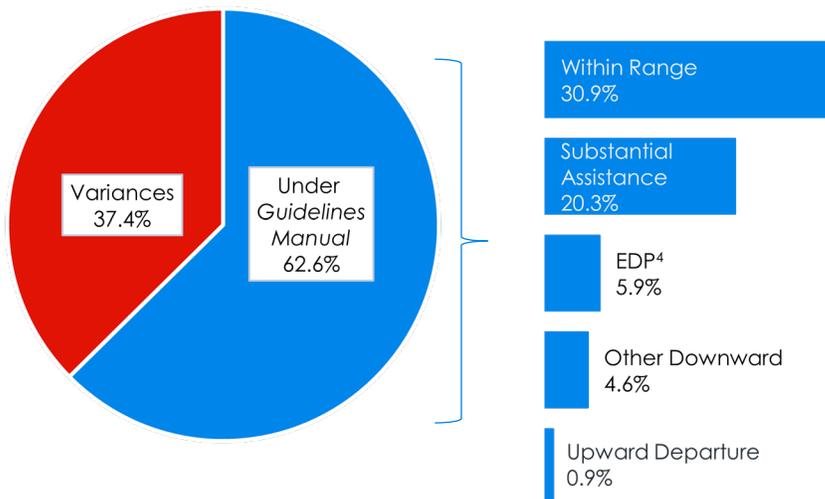
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— Heroin Trafficking Offenses —

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

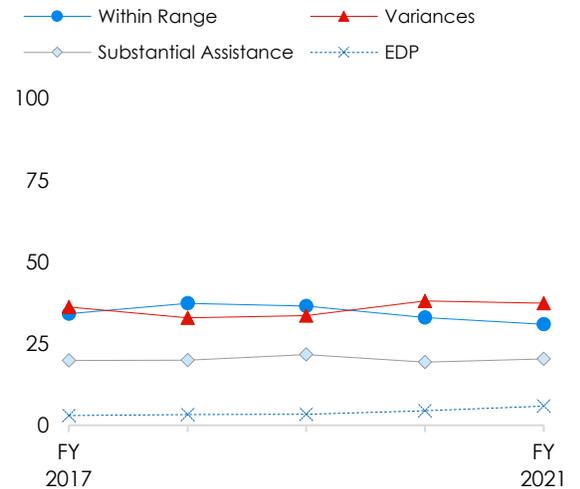
- Of the 62.6% of heroin trafficking offenders sentenced under the *Guidelines Manual*:
 - 49.4% were sentenced within the guideline range.
 - 32.5% received a substantial assistance departure.
 - Their average sentence reduction was 57.6%.
 - 9.4% received an Early Disposition Program (EDP) departure.⁴
 - Their average sentence reduction was 65.3%.
- 37.4% received a variance; of those offenders:
 - 95.9% received a downward variance.
 - Their average sentence reduction was 43.4%.
 - 4.1% received an upward variance.
 - Their average sentence increase was 144.4%.
- The average guideline minimum and average sentence imposed fluctuated over the past five years.
 - The average guideline minimum increased and decreased throughout the fiscal years. The average sentence was 88 months in fiscal year 2017 and 85 months in fiscal year 2021.
 - The average sentence imposed increased and decreased throughout the fiscal years. The average sentence was 65 months in fiscal year 2017 and 60 months in fiscal year 2021.

Sentence Imposed Relative to the Guideline Range FY 2021

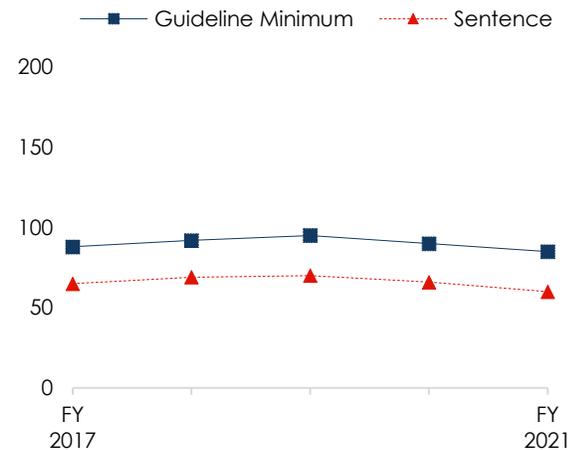


SOURCE: United States Sentencing Commission, FY 2017 through FY 2021 Datafiles, USSCFY17-USSCFY21.

Sentence Relative to the Guideline Range (%)



Average Guideline Minimum and Average Sentence (months)



¹ Drug offenses include cases where offenders were sentenced under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs). There were 1,798 heroin offenders sentenced under USSG Chapter Two, Part D (Drugs) in FY 2021.

² Drug Trafficking offenders 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 Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from the analysis.

⁴ "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.