There were 66,873 cases reported to the United States Sentencing Commission in Fiscal Year 2017.¹

Of these cases, 1,057 involved money laundering.²

These offenders were sentenced under section 2S1.1 of the U.S. Sentencing Commission’s Guidelines Manual.

### Money Laundering Offenses

In fiscal year 2017, there were 1,057 money laundering offenders, who accounted for 1.7% of all offenders sentenced under the guidelines. The number of money laundering offenders has decreased slightly during the last five years.

### Offender and Offense Characteristics

- In fiscal year 2017, more than three-quarters of money laundering offenders were men (76.1%).
- More than one-third each were Hispanic (39.9%) or White (35.6%) followed by Black (18.5%), and Other Races (6.0%).
- The average age of these offenders at sentencing was 42 years.
- The majority of money laundering offenders were United States citizens (74.0%).
- The majority of money laundering offenders had little or no prior criminal history (71.0% of these offenders were assigned to Criminal History Category I).
- The Guideline Base Offense Level for:
  - 68.7% of money laundering offenders was based on the underlying offense from which the laundered funds were derived. Nearly two-thirds of the underlying offenses were Drug Trafficking (61.0%, §2D1.1), followed by Theft, Property Destruction, and Fraud (31.0%, §2B1.1), and all other offenses (8.0%).
  - 31.3% of money laundering offenders was based on the value of the laundered funds. The median value of laundered funds was $200,000.
- Sentences for money laundering offenders were increased for:
  - 21.1% of offenders for knowing the laundered funds were proceeds of an offense involving a controlled substance, violence, weapons, national security, or the sexual exploitation of a minor;
  - 14.1% of offenders for a conviction under 18 U.S.C. § 1957 (Engaging in monetary transactions in property derived from specified unlawful activity);
  - 81.0% of offenders for a conviction under 18 U.S.C. § 1956 (Laundering of monetary instruments);
  - 7.5% of offenders for sophisticated laundering;
  - 21.7% of offenders for having a leadership or supervisory role in the offense; and
  - 4.2% of offenders for obstructing or impeding the administration of justice.
- Sentences for money laundering offenders were decreased for:
  - 10.0% of offenders because they were a minor or minimal participant in the offense.

### Median Value of Laundered Funds for Money Laundering Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Median Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2013</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2014</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2015</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2016</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2017</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Of the 66,873 offenders sentenced in fiscal year 2017, 4,956 were excluded from this analysis due to incomplete guideline application information.

² Money Laundering cases include those with complete guideline application information in which the offender was sentenced under §2S1.1 (Laundering of Monetary Instruments; Engaging in Monetary Transactions in Property Derived from Unlawful Activity) using a Guidelines Manual in effect on November 1, 2001 or later.
Punishment

- The majority of money laundering offenders were sentenced to imprisonment only (84.7%).
- The average sentence length for money laundering offenders was 67 months.

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

- During the past five years, the rate of within range sentences for money laundering offenders has decreased (from 28.2% in fiscal year 2013 to 25.1% in fiscal year 2017).
- In each of the past five years, slightly less than half of money laundering offenders received a sentence below the guideline range because the government sponsored the below range sentence.
  - Substantial assistance departures were granted in approximately one-third of money laundering cases in each of the past five years.
    - These offenders received an average reduction of 57.5% in their sentence during the five-year time period (which corresponds to an average reduction of 58 months).
  - Other government sponsored departures were granted in approximately ten to 17 percent of money laundering cases in each of the past five years.
    - These offenders received an average reduction of 50.4% in their sentence during the five-year time period (which corresponds to an average reduction of 51 months).
- In each of the past five years, approximately one-fourth of money laundering offenders received a non-government sponsored below range sentence.
  - Reductions for non-government sponsored below range sentences were smaller than in cases in which the government sponsored a below range sentence, with an average reduction of 43.1% during the five-year time period (which corresponds to an average reduction of 31 months).
- Both the average guideline minimum and the average sentence for money laundering offenders varied slightly during the past five years.
  - The average guideline minimum ranged from 100 months to 108 months during that time period;
  - The average sentence imposed ranged from 67 months to 70 months during that time period.