Fiscal Year 2018

- In FY 2018, 69,425 cases were reported to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.
- 18,964 of these involved drug trafficking.
- 19.3% of drug trafficking cases involved powder cocaine.
- Powder cocaine trafficking offenders have decreased by 26.3% since FY 2014.

Offender and Offense Characteristics

- 89.8% of powder cocaine trafficking offenders were men.
- 66.3% of powder cocaine trafficking offenders were Hispanic, 27.3% were Black, 5.7% were White, and 0.7% were Other races.
- Their average age was 37 years.
- 60.0% were United States citizens.
- 64.5% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I); 5.1% were Career Offenders (§4B1.1).
- The median Base Offense Level in these cases was 30, corresponding to between five and 15 kilograms of powder cocaine.
- Sentences were increased for:
  - possessing a weapon (16.7%);
  - having a leadership/supervisory role in the offense (8.6%).
- Sentences were decreased for:
  - having minor or minimal participation in the offense (19.0%);
  - meeting the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines (45.0%).
- The top five districts for powder cocaine trafficking offenders were:
  - Southern District of Texas (348);
  - Middle District of Florida (329);
  - Southern District of Florida (317);
  - Southern District of California (233);
  - Western District of Texas (215).

Punishment

- The average sentence for powder cocaine trafficking offenders was 74 months.
- 97.7% were sentenced to prison.
- 69.8% were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; of those offenders, 65.1% were relieved of that penalty.

Means of Relief from Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Powder Cocaine Traffickers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means of Relief</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substantial Assistance</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Valve</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more Quick Facts, visit https://www.ussc.gov/research/quick-facts.
Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

- Of the 71.8% of powder cocaine trafficking offenders sentenced under the Guidelines Manual:
  - 57.4% were sentenced within the guideline range.
  - 30.1% received a substantial assistance departure. Their average sentence reduction was 46.5%.
  - 5.9% received an Early Disposition Program (EDP) departure. Their average sentence reduction was 50.2%.
  - 28.2% received a variance; of those offenders:
    - 96.5% received a below range variance. Their average sentence reduction was 34.8%.
    - 3.5% received an above range variance. Their average sentence increase was 56.9%.

- The average guideline minimum decreased while the sentence imposed has remained steady over the past five years.
  - The average guideline minimum decreased from 101 months in fiscal year 2014 to 94 months in fiscal year 2018.
  - The average sentence imposed increased from 73 months in fiscal year 2014 to 74 months in fiscal year 2018.