



Quick Facts

— 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) Firearms Offenses —

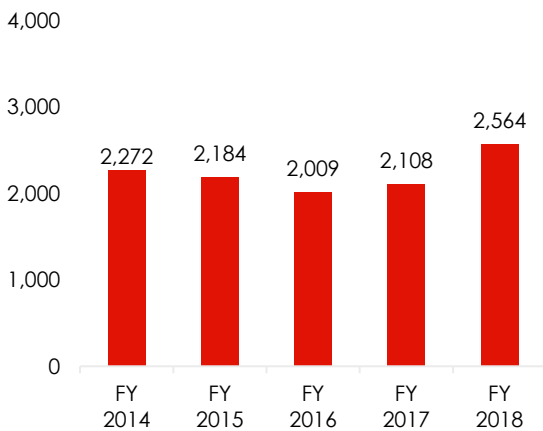
Fiscal Year 2018

▶ In FY 2018, 69,425 cases were reported to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

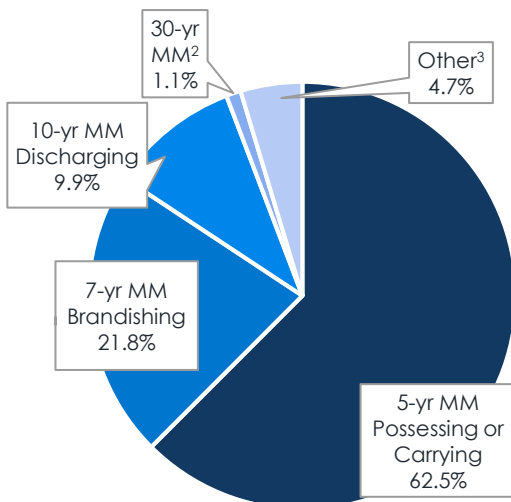
▶ 2,564 of these involved convictions under 18 U.S.C. § 924(c).¹

▶ Offenses under 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) involve the use or carrying of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence or drug trafficking crime, or the possession of a firearm in furtherance of those crimes.

Number of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) Offenders



Mandatory Minimum Penalties for 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) Offenders



Offenders and Sentencing

- 96.3% of section 924(c) offenders were men.
- 56.2% were Black, 19.6% were White, 22.0% were Hispanic, and 2.3% were Other races.
- Their average age was 32 years.
- 94.5% were United States citizens.
- 23.4% had little or no prior criminal history (Criminal History Category I).
 - ◆ 14.0% were CHC II;
 - ◆ 20.3% were CHC III;
 - ◆ 13.0% were CHC IV;
 - ◆ 9.4% were CHC V;
 - ◆ 19.9% were CHC VI.
- The top five districts for 924(c) firearms offenders were:
 - ◆ Southern District of New York (150);
 - ◆ District of Puerto Rico (126);
 - ◆ District of South Carolina (100);
 - ◆ Eastern District of Virginia (92);
 - ◆ Eastern District of North Carolina (89).
- 10.2% were career offenders (§4B1.1).
- 5.3% were convicted of multiple counts of section 924(c) in fiscal year 2018, a decrease from 8.0% in fiscal year 2014.

Punishment

- 100% of section 924(c) offenders were sentenced to prison;⁴ the average sentence was 146 months.
 - ◆ 73 months for offenders convicted only under section 924(c).
 - ◆ 132 months for offenders also convicted of an offense not carrying a mandatory minimum.
 - ◆ 207 months for offenders determined to be career offenders.
 - ◆ 330 months for offenders convicted under multiple counts of section 924(c).

¹ Cases with incomplete sentencing information were excluded from analysis.

² The “30-year” mandatory category includes offenders with a single conviction (14.3%) or multiple convictions (85.7%).

³ The “Other” category includes offenders with a single conviction (7.6%) or with multiple convictions (92.4%).

⁴ Offenses under section 924(c) carry one of several mandatory minimum penalties depending on the circumstances of the offense.



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Punishment (continued)

- 86.0% of section 924(c) offenders were also convicted of another offense:
 - ◆ 51.2% for drug trafficking, 30.1% for robbery, and 8.0% for another firearms offense.
- 29.8% of all section 924(c) offenders were convicted of another offense carrying a mandatory minimum. In most cases, the other offense was a drug trafficking crime.

Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

Section 924(c) Only Offenders

- 90.3% of offenders with a conviction only under section 924(c) were sentenced under the *Guidelines Manual*; of those offenders:
 - ◆ 8.1% received a substantial assistance departure.
 - ◆ Their average sentence reduction was 51.0%.

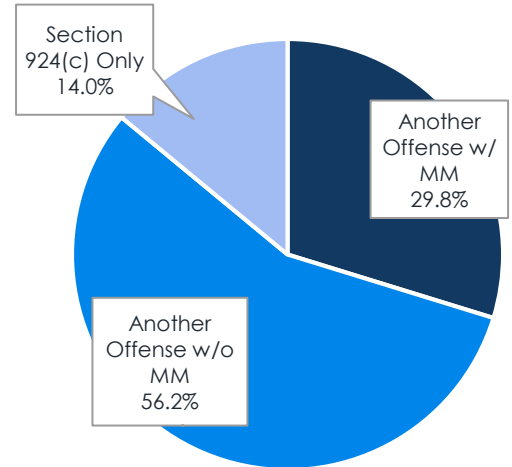
Section 924(c) Cases Involving Career Offender

- 53.8% of section 924(c) offenders determined to be career offenders were sentenced under the *Guidelines Manual*; of those offenders:
 - ◆ 47.5% received a substantial assistance departure.
 - ◆ Their average sentence reduction was 53.3%.
- 46.2% received a variance.
 - ◆ 99.0% received a below range variance.
 - ◆ Their average sentence reduction was 35.8%.

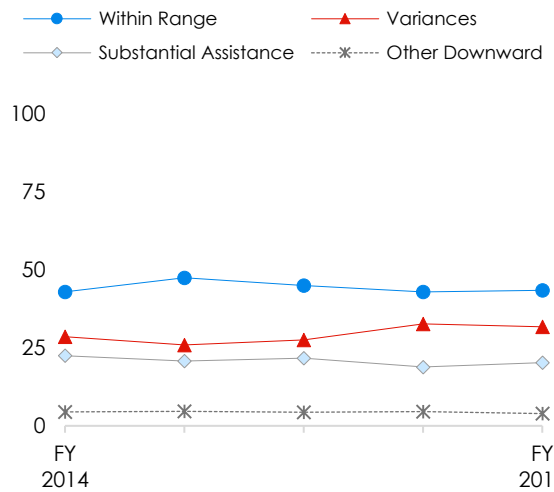
All Section 924(c) Cases

- The average guideline minimum and sentence for all section 924(c) offenders has declined over the past five years.
 - ◆ The average guideline minimum decreased from 212 months in fiscal year 2014 to 194 months in fiscal year 2018.
 - ◆ The average sentence decreased from 157 months in fiscal year 2014 to 146 months in fiscal year 2018.

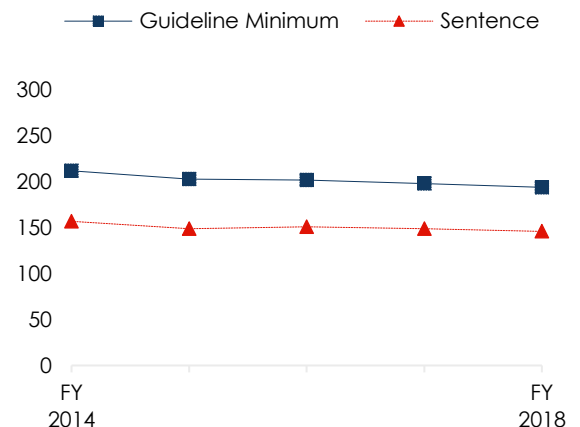
Distribution of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) Offenders With and Without Additional Offenses



Sentence Relative to the Guideline Range (%)



Average Guideline Minimum and Average Sentence (months)



⁵ The guideline sentence for a section 924(c) offense is the minimum term of imprisonment required by statute. USSG §2K2.4. Punishments under section 924(c) run consecutive to any other term of imprisonment. 18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1)(D)(ii).

SOURCE: United States Sentencing Commission, FY 2014 through FY 2018 Datafiles, USSCFY14-USSCFY18.