



# QuickFacts

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

### What is Section 924(c)?

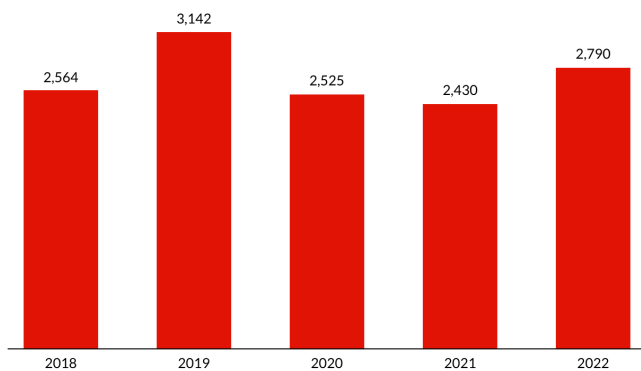
Offenses under 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) involve the use or carrying of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence or drug trafficking crime, or the possession of a firearm in furtherance of those crimes.

### Population Snapshot

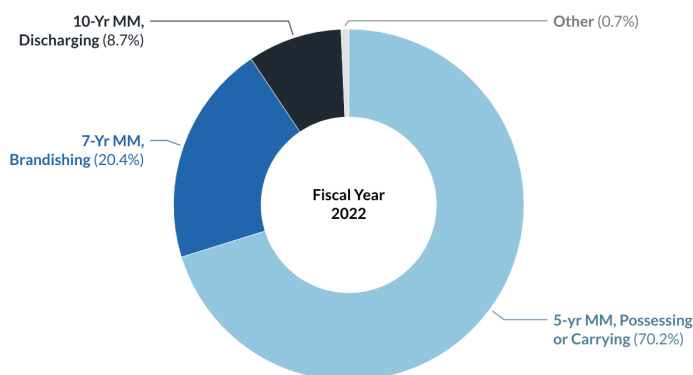
64,142 cases were reported in FY22.

2,790 involved convictions under 18 U.S.C. § 924(c).<sup>1</sup>

### Numbers Over Time



### Mandatory Minimum Penalties<sup>2,3</sup>



### Offender and Offense Characteristics

- 96.1% of section 924(c) offenders were men.
- 55.6% were Black, 20.9% were White, 20.7% were Hispanic, and 2.8% were Other races.
- Their average age was 33 years.
- 95.1% were United States citizens.
- 23.4% had little or no prior criminal history (Category I);
  - 12.2% were CHC II;
  - 19.9% were CHC III;
  - 13.2% were CHC IV;
  - 10.3% were CHC V;
  - 21.0% were CHC VI.

- The top five districts for section 924(c) offenders were:
  - District of Puerto Rico (139);
  - Eastern District of North Carolina (109);
  - Western District of Missouri (103);
  - Southern District of New York (99);
  - Northern District of Ohio (82).

- 6.7% were career offenders (§4B1.1).
- 6.8% were convicted of multiple counts of section 924(c).

### Punishment

- 99.9% were sentenced to prison.<sup>4</sup>
- The average sentence for all section 924(c) offenders was 142 months.
  - 80 months for offenders convicted only under section 924(c).
  - 136 months for offenders also convicted of an offense not carrying a mandatory minimum.
  - 192 months for offenders determined to be career offenders.
- 86.9% of section 924(c) offenders were also convicted of another offense; of those offenders:
  - 56.7% were convicted of drug trafficking, 24.5% of robbery, and 8.1% of another firearms offense.

34.9% 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.



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### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

#### Section 924(c) Only Offenders

87.5% of offenders with a conviction only under section 924(c) were sentenced under the *Guidelines Manual*; five of those offenders:

- 7.9% received a substantial assistance departure.
  - Their average sentence reduction was 48.9%.

#### Section 924(c) Cases Involving Career Offender

37.7% of section 924(c) offenders determined to be career offenders were sentenced under the *Guidelines Manual*;<sup>5</sup> of those offenders:

- 42.0% received a substantial assistance departure.
  - Their average sentence reduction was 51.2%.

62.3% received a variance.

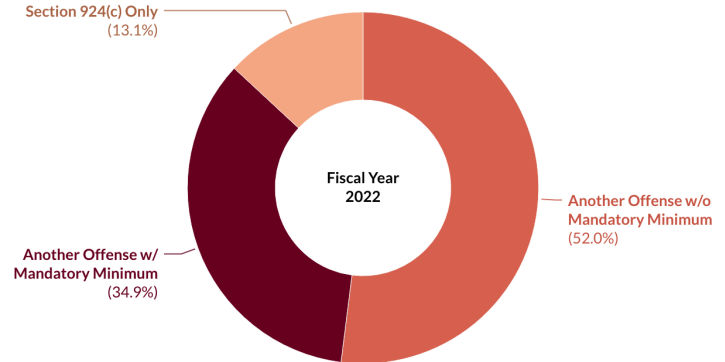
- 99.1% received a downward variance.
  - Their average sentence reduction was 39.6%.

#### All Section 924(c) Cases

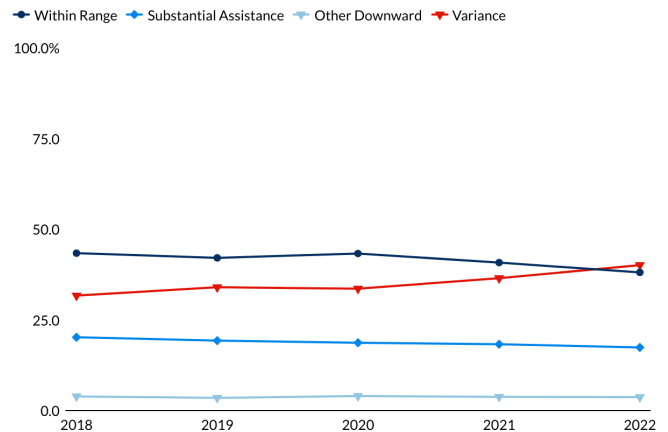
The average guideline minimum slightly decreased and the average sentence imposed fluctuated for all section 924(c) offenders over the past five years.

- The average guideline minimum decreased from 194 months in fiscal year 2018 to 177 months in fiscal year 2022.
- The average sentence imposed increased and decreased throughout the fiscal years. The average sentence was 146 months in fiscal year 2018 and 142 months in fiscal year 2022.

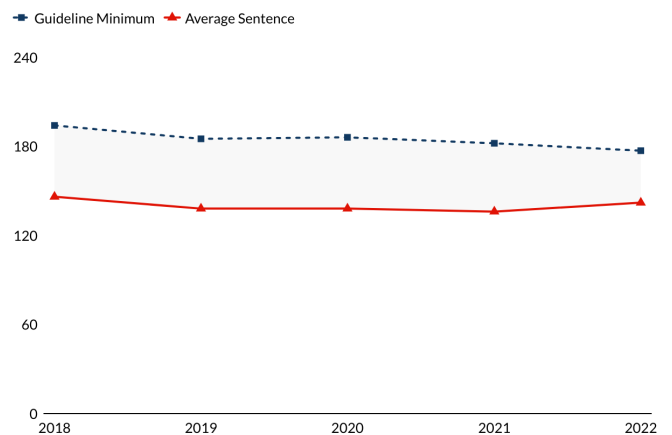
### Section 924(c) Distribution With Other Offenses



### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range



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



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

<sup>2</sup> These values represent the highest mandatory minimum an offender was subject to under section 924(c).

<sup>3</sup> The "Other" category includes offenders with a mandatory minimum of 25 years (0.5%), 30 years (0.1%), and life (0.1%).

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

<sup>5</sup> 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).