

## **Executive Summary**

The District of Columbia Sentencing and Criminal Code Revision Commission's 2009 Annual Report is organized into six chapters. Chapter One provides an overview of the Commission including a brief history, statutory mandate, and membership of the Commission. In addition, there is a discussion of the District of Columbia Sentencing Guideline System (SGS) web application which was designed to enable electronic transfer of sentencing data from the Superior court for analysis and guideline compliance monitoring. The second chapter outlines the data source and limitations for the analysis of felony sentences contained in this report.

Chapter Three examines the types of sentences imposed, as well as, as the demographics of offenders by sentence type. In calendar year 2009, 3,410 felony cases were sentenced in the District of Columbia. Approximately half (48.4%) of those case resulted in the imposition of a prison sentence. Probation sentences accounted for 34.3% of all sentences, with short-split sentences representing 17.3% of sentences. Chapter Three also includes an analysis of sentence imposed by offense categories broken down as follows: sex, violent, weapons, drug, property, and other offenses.

Compliance with the Sentencing Guidelines is discussed in Chapter Four. A description of the structure of the Master and Drug sentencing grids is presented. In addition, the definition of compliance and how guideline compliance is measured is explained. Since the implementation of the voluntary sentencing guidelines, compliance rates have been approximately 90% each year. Because the Commission has only recently acquired a new data source with which to measure compliance, this report does not include a discussion of the 2009 guideline compliance

results. The Commission has decided to issue a separate more detailed Compliance Report later this year that will present an analysis of compliance and departure rates over the past five years.

The Commission's progress and accomplishments to date regarding the Criminal Code Revision Project are discussed in Chapter Five. The chapter outlines various approaches to undertaking the criminal code revision from implementation of the Model Penal Code to completing discrete parts of the overall project and the projected resources required.

The final chapter of the report, Chapter Six contains the 2008-2010 amendments to the sentencing guidelines and describes the first comprehensive revisions to the Sentencing Guideline Manual since 2004, which is being issued simultaneously with this report and will be available online at the Commission's website.