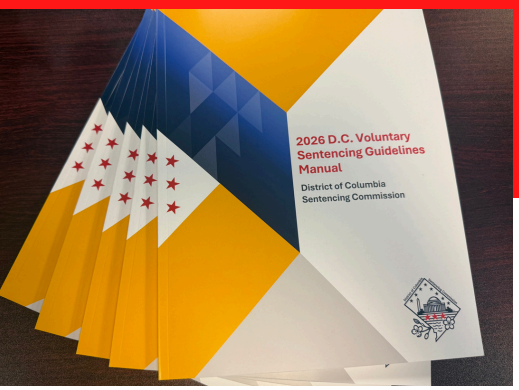
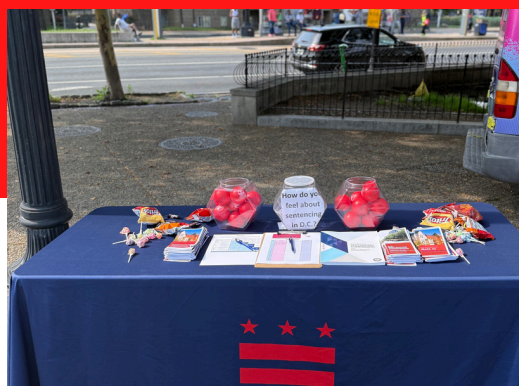
Fall/Winter 2025, Issue 12

THE COMMISSION CHRONICLE

D.C. Sentencing Commission Biannual Newsletter





This newsletter highlights the release of the 2026 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Manual, the upcoming 2026 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Training Series, the agency's updated feedback system, and more!

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Learn more about the Commission's recent activities.

LEARN MORE

Guidelines Alert

2026 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guideline Manual has been released.

Learn More www.sentencing.dc.gov

This year's edition features both substantive and non-substantive changes to the 2026 edition of the D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Manual "Manual'. The non-substantive changes to the Manual were made to further clarify and streamline it, making the Guidelines easier to understand and apply. The new Manual includes rankings for three previously unranked felony offenses. In addition, three Title 48 offenses, which were ranked on the Main Grid, were reranked and placed on the Drug Grid. The 2026 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines go into effect for all pleas and verdicts entered on or after January 1, 2026. If you have any questions or wish to request other helpful resources, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission.

Click here to view.

2026 D.C. VOLUNTARY SENTENCING GUIDELINES TRAININGS SERIES

Part 1

WEDNESDAY

FEB. 18, 2026

1 PM - 2 PM

Part 2

WEDNESDAY

MAR. 4, 2026

1 PM - 2 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

1

ADULT FELONY SENTENCING 101

- LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FULL CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
- UNDERSTAND THE FACTORS JUDGES CONSIDER IN FELONY SENTENCING
- PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION

2

GUIDELINES 101 TRAINING

- LEARN MORE ABOUT UPDATES TO THE MANUAL
- RECEIVE AN OVERVIEW OF HOW THE D.C. VOLUNTARY SENTENCING GUIDELINES WORK
- ASK THE AGENCY GENERAL COUNSEL QUESTIONS IN REAL TIME

PARTICIPANTS DO NOT HAVE TO ATTEND BOTH TRAINING SESSIONS.

HOSTED BY THE COMMISSION'S GENERAL COUNSEL MAEGHAN BUCKLEY

EMAIL SCDC@DC.GOV FOR MORE INFORMATION

Click here to register!

Refining The Agency Feedback System

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT! THE COMMISSION MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN IMPROVING OUR FEEDBACK SYSTEM.

General Public Feedback Survey

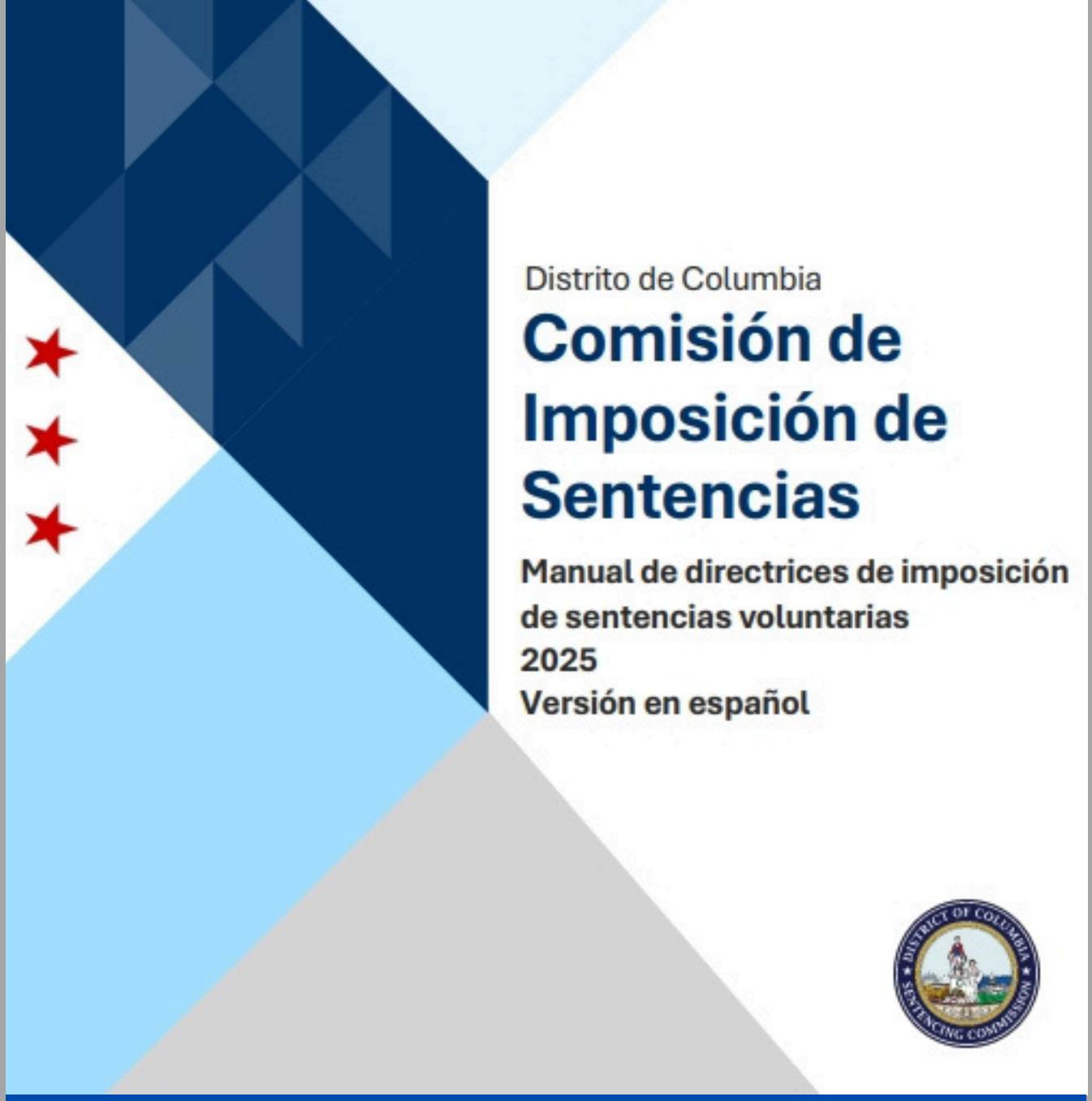
- More comprehensive questions that consider general feelings of public safety
- Questions sourcing community feedback on the public's understanding of the Guidelines and whether they believe them to be lenient or harsh.
- Survey forms to include geographic information (when available), ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of feedback sources

Publication Survey

- Sourcing feedback on the helpfulness of specific publications
- Garnering public interest in future topics that the agency should explore in upcoming Publications
- Collecting geographic information to better understand the source of feedback

Links to Give Feedback

- General Guidelines Feedback Survey
- Fast Fact Survey
- Issue Paper Survey
- Past Data Response Survey
- Sentencing Data Survey
- Rule 11(c)(1)(C) Usage Plea Report Survey
- Annual Report Survey



Spanish Translation of the Guidelines

In September 2025, the Commission released the Spanish translation of the D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Manual. Please note that the Spanish translation of the Guidelines Manual is provided as an aid to increase access to the Sentencing Guidelines. Only the English version of the Guidelines Manual contains the official Sentencing Guidelines' rules as approved by the D.C. Sentencing Commission. If there are any discrepancies between the English and Spanish versions, the English version shall control. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback regarding the translated Manual, please contact the Commission at scdc@dc.gov. To view the Spanish translation of the Manual, click here.

Recent Publications

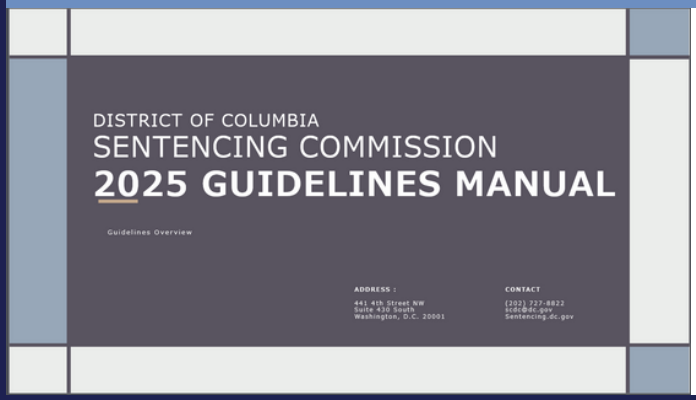
The Commission has released a variety of publications since the last newsletter.

See the full list below:

- RULE 11(c)(1)(C) PLEA QUARTERLY REPORT: FY2025 Yearly Report
- RULE 11(c)(1)(C) PLEA Report: Rule 11(c)(1)(C) Plea Quarterly Report – FY2025 Quarter Four
- RULE 11(c)(1)(C) Report: FY2025 Rule 11(c)(1)(C) Plea Quarterly Report for Quarter Three
- ISSUE PAPER: An Examination of Probation Terms in D.C. Superior Court
- ISSUE PAPER: A Comparison of Adult Felony Sentencing Trends Before and After the COVID-19 Pandemic
- FAST FACT: Homicide Offenses
- FAST FACT: Carjacking Offenses
- FAST FACT: Felony Gun Possession Offenses Arrest-to-Sentencing Trends

Recent YouTube Videos

Click the thumbnails below to view.



Recap Recent Commission Monthly Meetings

Since the previous newsletter, the Commission members have discussed a wide variety of topics specific to the progress of data system projects, recent publications, hiring a new Statistician, the agency's updated public feedback system, the youth logo competition, and the Spanish translation of the Guidelines Manual. During the October meeting, members voted to approve and release the 2026 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Manual, which includes new and adjusted offense rankings.

In the coming months, members will discuss proposed legislation that may impact the Commission, upcoming public training events, the 2025 Annual Report, and other upcoming publications.
To view previous meetings and/or attend the 2026 Monthly Commission Meetings, click here.

Give Us Your Feedback on Community Events

Help the agency improve! Give the agency your feedback on what community presentations/events you would like us to host/participate in by clicking here.