

Spring/Summer 2024, Issue 9

THE COMMISSION CHRONICLE

D.C. Sentencing Commission Biannual Newsletter

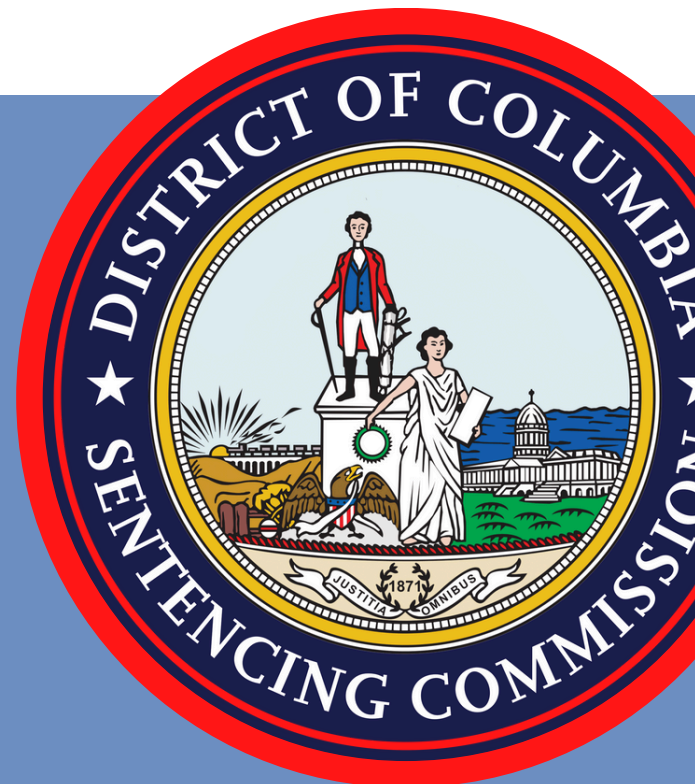


This newsletter highlights recent updates, including new Commission members, Guidelines updates, new educational tools for practitioners, and more.

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Explore the new "Commission Member Highlight."

[LEARN MORE](#)




2023 Annual Report Recap

The agency published its 2023 Annual Report for community members and practitioners. Below are some 2023 DC adult felony sentencing key facts from the report:

- A total of **1,007** individuals were sentenced in D.C. Superior Court.
- **62%** of felony cases received prison sentences.
- **19%** of felony cases received a probation sentences.
- In D.C. in 2023, **87%** of all defendants sentenced to prison were under the age of 41.
- Collectively, Carrying a Pistol without a License (CPWL) and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm Prior Conviction (UPF-PF) represent **76%** of weapon offenses sentenced.
- Combined, Assault with a Dangerous Weapon (ADW) and Robbery represent **67%** of violent offenses sentenced.

To view more 2023 adult felony sentencing facts view the Commission's 2023 Annual Report on its website.



ANNUAL REPORT OVERVIEW PRESENTATION
2023 ADULT FELONY SENTENCING TRENDS

Learn more about District adult felony sentencing data and trends as reported in the 2023 Sentencing Commission Annual Report. Attendees will also have the opportunity to ask Commission staff questions about the data in the Annual Report.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024
6 PM - 7PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL SCDC@DC.GOV

The agency hosted its first Annual Report Overview Presentation in May, where the agency's Statistician provided an overview of the adult felony sentencing trends detailed in the report.

The recording of the Annual Report Overview Presentation can be found on the agency YouTube Channel "D.C. Sentencing Commission"



The Commission Welcomes 4 New Members



The D.C. Sentencing Commission extends a warm welcome to its newest members:

- Deputy Mayor of Public Safety Lindsey Appiah
- Joel Caston
- Sean Holihan

The Commission is pleased to welcome back Assistant Chief Leslie Parsons.

This year, the Commission's membership has grown. Under the Secure DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2024, membership increased from 17 to 20 members.



Three new membership positions were added, including:

- A Second Mayoral Resident Appointment (voting)
- A DC Council Resident Appointment for a Crime Victim/Victims' Rights Advocate (voting)
- Deputy Mayor of Public Safety Appointment (non-voting)

As part of this change, the Metropolitan Police Department's membership on the Commission was upgraded to a voting position.

There are currently two vacancies on the Commission, one must be appointed by the District's Mayor and the other by the D.C. Council.



Visit the Commission's website to view its current member appointments.

New Tools to Assist Practitioners

Decision Trees

What is the purpose of Decision Trees?



The purpose of the D.C. Sentencing Commission's new Decision Trees is to provide practitioners with a valuable resource for understanding and applying the Sentencing Guidelines. Each Decision Tree focuses on a different aspect of the Guidelines, offering structured support for legal professionals. New Decision Trees will be periodically introduced to enhance clarity and consistency in applying the Guidelines.

The agency's first Decision Tree focuses on prior conviction Lapse and Revival rules.

Visit the agency's "Guidelines Resource" page on its website.

Commission Member Highlight

Assistant Chief Leslie Parsons

What led to your decision to pursue law enforcement as a career?

The ability to make a difference in the community by helping others. There is no greater career than one that affords you the ability to make a difference in your community and help others.

What do you like to do in your free time?

When I can find some free time, I am usually spending it with family.

How long have you served on the Commission?

I have been a permanent member of the Commission since January of 2021. Prior to that, I filled in periodically when Judge Weisburg was the chair.

What is one of the most difficult criminal justice issues you have faced in your career?

One of the most difficult issues has been the perception of criminal investigations versus the reality of them. For example, in television and movies, a case can be wrapped up and a suspect arrested by the end of the show. In real life, criminal investigations can be very complex and time consuming.

What is your favorite part about being on the Commission?

Working as a team to solve complex issues and hearing the unique perspectives of all the members on the Commission.

If you could wave a magic wand, what change (if any) would you like to see in the criminal justice community?

I would wave the magic wand and eliminate all crime in our communities.

Overview of Recent Commission Monthly Meetings

During the Commission's recent meetings, the following topics were discussed:

- The approval of the "2023 D.C. Sentencing Commission Annual Report;"
 - Non-substantive modifications to Chapter 6 of the 2023 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Manual;
 - For more information, view the "Guidelines Alerts" section of the Commission's website.
 - The ranking of the felony offenses contained in the "Secure DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2024;" and
 - For more information, view the "Guidelines Alerts" section of the Commission's website.
- The agency's recent publications and methods of social media outreach to District residents.

The Commission's next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 5 PM. To view previous meeting agendas, minutes, and recordings, visit the Commission's website. To view previous meeting agendas, minutes, and recordings, visit the Commission's website.

Outreach to Community Members & Practitioners

The Commission is here to support the community and criminal justice practitioners.

If you would like the Commission to host a training or participate in an upcoming community event, email scdc@dc.gov.

Guidelines Feedback Is Always Welcomed!

The D.C. Sentencing Commission welcomes feedback regarding the D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines and their application. Visit our website and leave your feedback on our anonymous digital feedback form.

Recent Publications

- ISSUE PAPER: Variance in Criminal History Scores and Sentencing Decisions
- PAST DATA RESPONSE: Arrest-to-Sentencing Analysis: Carjacking and Murder Offenses;
- BROCHURE: Data Capabilities
- RULE 11(c)(1)(C) Report: FY2024 Quarter 1 Rule 11(c)(1)(C) Report
- 2023 D.C. Sentencing Commission Annual Report
- PAST DATA RESPONSE: Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle – Arrest to Sentencing Trends
- PAST DATA RESPONSE: D.C. Gun Registry Eligibility – Sentences Imposed between 2020 and 2022

To view these reports, visit the Commission's website and click "Publications" under the "Information" tab.