



## District of Columbia Sentencing and Criminal Code Revision Commission DCSC (FZ)

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### MISSION

The mission of the District of Columbia Sentencing Commission is to implement, monitor, and support the District's voluntary sentencing guidelines, to promote fair and consistent sentencing policies, to increase public understanding of sentencing policies and practices, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines system in order to recommend changes based on actual sentencing and corrections practice and research.

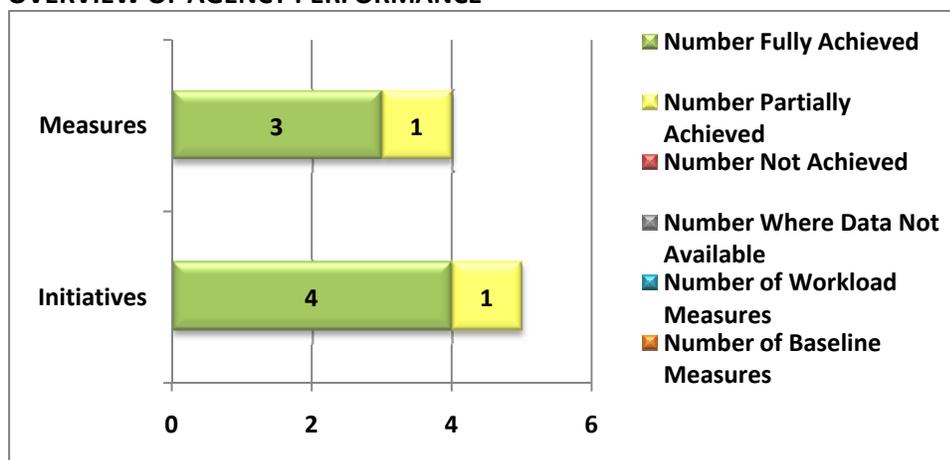
### SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The commission advises the District of Columbia on policy matters related to criminal law, sentencing and corrections policy. The Sentencing and Criminal Code Revision Commission Amendment Act of 2007 established a permanent voluntary felony sentencing guidelines and requires the Commission to monitor and make adjustments as needed to promote sentencing policies that limit unwarranted disparity while allowing adequate judicial discretion and proportionality. The sentencing guidelines provide recommended sentences that enhance fairness so that offenders, victims, the community, and all parties will understand the sentence, and sentences will be both more predictable and consistent. The commission provides analysis of sentencing trends and guideline compliance to the public and its representatives to assist in identifying sentencing patterns for felony convictions. In addition, the Advisory Commission on Sentencing Amendment Act of 2006 requires the Commission to conduct a multi-year study of the DC Criminal Code reform, including analysis of current criminal statutes and developing recommendations for the reorganization and reformulation of the District's Criminal Code.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Completed the first comprehensive revision of the Sentencing Guideline Manual since the implementation of the Sentencing Guidelines in 2006.
- ✓ Expanded the Commission's Data and Policy Reports by developing quarterly, Issue Papers that focus on specific sentencing policy concerns.
- ✓ The Commission received 221 guideline inquires from judges and criminal justice practitioners; 88% of those inquires were answered within a 24 hour time frame.

### OVERVIEW OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE





## Performance Initiatives – Assessment Details

### Performance Assessment Key:

 Fully achieved     Partially achieved     Not achieved     Data not reported

**OBJECTIVE 1: Promulgate the accurate, timely, and effective use of the sentencing guidelines in every felony case.**

● **INITIATIVE 1.1: Revise and Update the Sentencing Guideline Manual**

The Sentencing Guideline Manual is used by judges, prosecutors, defense attorney and other criminal justice professions to both interpret and apply the Sentencing Guidelines. The Manual has been updated annually with new guideline related information; however, there has not been a comprehensive revision since 2004. The Commission completed a comprehensive revision in March of 2010 that included rankings of new offenses, corrections of errors, additional clarifications required and revising of Appendix C which lists all felony offenses.

**OBJECTIVE 2: PROMULGATE COMPLIANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES IN AT LEAST 85 PERCENT OF ALL FELONY CASES, IN RECOGNITION THAT A SMALL NUMBER OF EXCEPTIONAL CASES WILL MERIT A JUDICIAL DEPARTURE FROM THE GUIDELINES.**

● **INITIATIVE 2.1: Analyze Felony Departure Rates**

Due to an insufficient number of departure reasons provided to conduct an statistically significant analysis, the agency focused its attention on revising the process to collect departure reasons. A new collection tool was developed that was more concise and required less time to complete. With the implementation of the new collection tools, it is anticipated response rates will increase to enable a detailed analysis in 2011.

**OBJECTIVE 3: ANALYZE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S CURRENT CRIMINAL CODE AND ADMINISTRATION OF EXISTING CRIMINAL LAWS, AND PROPOSE REFORMS IN THE CRIMINAL CODE TO CREATE A UNIFORM AND COHERENT BODY OF CRIMINAL LAW IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.**

● **INITIATIVE 3.1: Catalogue and Analyze the D.C. Code.**

The agency's custom built database to catalogue the DC Criminal code was completed in February, 2010. This database contains all criminal statutes within DC and enabled the Commission to analyze and compare discrepancies among the various statutes.

● **INITIATIVE 3.2: Apply for Grant Funding.**

The agency received notification from the Department of Justice that our grant application was not funded. The agency continues to monitor the DOJ and Bureau of Justice Assistance grant websites to identify potential solicitations that would be appropriate for the Criminal Code Revision Project.



● **INITIATIVE 3.3: Propose Reforms in the Criminal Code.**

The Criminal Code Revision Committee of the SCCRC met throughout the year, reviewing, analyzing and prioritizing the various approaches to the criminal code in DC. It was decided to focus on developing a "Fine Proportionality Act" that proposes a systematic approach to identifying fine amounts that is proportional and consistent throughout the code. This Act will be submitted to the Council for consideration in early 2011

## Key Performance Indicators – Details

**Performance Assessment Key:**

● Fully achieved      ● Partially achieved      ● Not achieved      ● Data not reported

	Measure Name	FY2009 YE Actual	FY2010 YE Target	FY2010 YE Actual	FY2010 YE Rating	Budget Program
●	1.1 Percent of Guideline Questions Answered within 24 hours	0	75	87.39%	116.52%	
●	1.2 Issue Papers Released	0	2	2	100%	POLICY REPORTS AND PROPOSALS
●	2.1 Percentage of Guideline Compliance	87	88	88.08%	100.09%	SENTENCING GUIDELINES MONITORING
●	2.2 Percentage of Data uploaded into the SGS Web-Application	0	100	99.93%	99.93%	DATA COLLECTION (AIP)