



District of Columbia Sentencing Commission

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Hon. Milton C. Lee
Chairperson

Linden Fry
Executive Director

DATE: Response provided in July 2024

SUBJECT: Robbery Offenses – Sentencing Trends

This data response includes a high-level evaluation of sentencing trends using data sourced from the D.C. Superior Court (DCSC). The data contains information on all initial felony convictions for Robbery charges (counts) sentenced in the following years: 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2023. The data used in this response is live data, meaning that it is continuously updated and therefore may not exactly match what has been presented in prior Commission publications. It is also important to note that this data is based upon sentenced convictions, therefore it does not include Robbery arrests and/or charges that did not result in a Robbery conviction.

This response includes all felony offenses under D.C. Codes § 22–2801¹ (Robbery) and § 22–2802² (Attempt to Commit Robbery) along with the while armed (w/a) version of each offense. During the analyzed timeframe, a total of 930 Robbery counts were sentenced in D.C. Superior Court. Attempted Robbery counts represented a little under half (47%, n=437) of the 930 counts sentenced. A breakdown of the number of counts by convicted offense is presented in the table below.

Offense	Total Counts Sentenced	Proportion of all Robbery Counts Sentenced
Attempted Robbery	437	47.0%
Robbery	342	36.8%
Robbery w/a	146	15.7%
Attempted Robbery w/a	5	0.5%

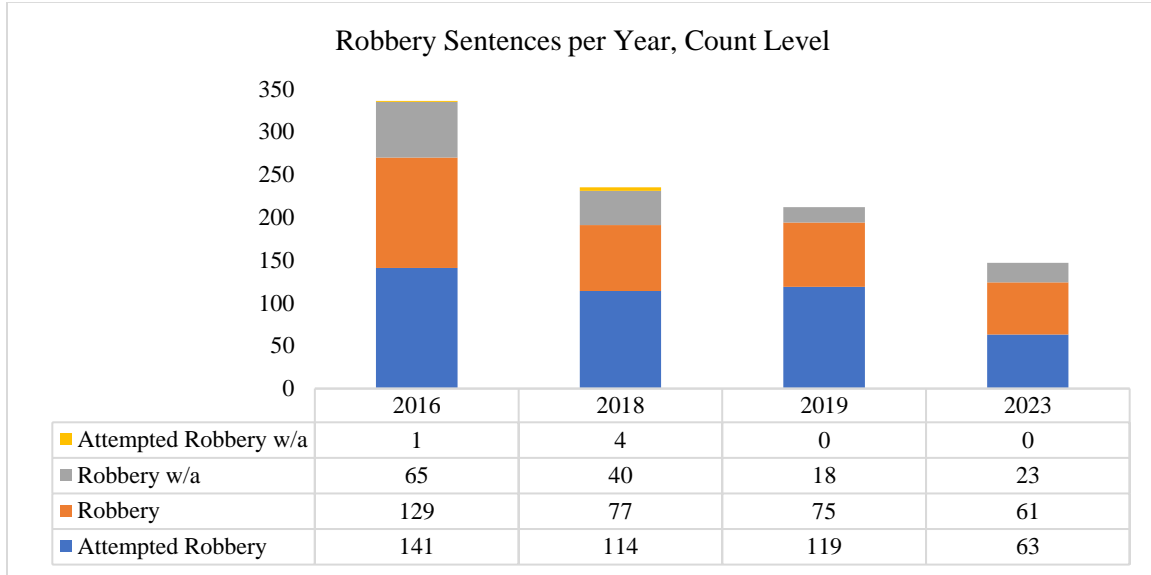
¹ § 22–2801. Robbery. Whoever by force or violence, whether against resistance or by sudden or stealthy seizure or snatching, or by putting in fear, shall take from the person or immediate actual possession of another anything of value, is guilty of robbery, and any person convicted thereof shall suffer imprisonment for not less than 2 years nor more than 15 years. In addition to any other penalty provided under this section, a person may be fined an amount not more than the amount set forth in § 22–3571.01.

² § 22–2802. Attempt to commit robbery. Whoever attempts to commit robbery, as defined in § 22–2801, by an overt act, shall be imprisoned for not more than 3 years or be fined not more than the amount set forth in § 22–3571.01, or both.

Sentencing Trends

A) Counts Sentenced per Year

The chart below shows the number of Robbery charges that were sentenced in 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2023. Overall, the greatest number of Robbery counts were sentenced in 2016.

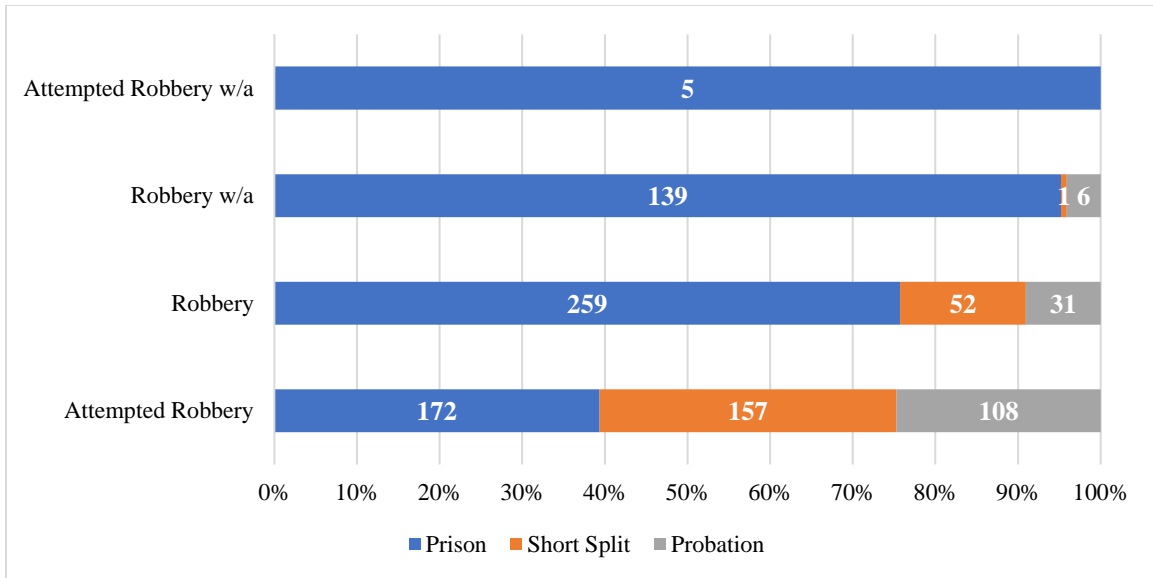


B) Sentence Type

The Commission classifies sentences into three categories: prison, short split, and probation.³ The bar chart below shows the distribution of sentence types for Robbery convictions. Over half (62%, n=575) of the Robbery charges resulted in a prison sentence.

³ The Commission typically categorizes long split and life sentences under prison. Sentence options are defined as:

- **Prison Sentence:** In a Compliant prison sentence, the Court sentences the defendant to a prison term within the applicable Grid box range. None of the time imposed is suspended. The prison term may be followed by a period of supervised release as governed by D.C. Code § 24-403.01(b).
- **Long Split Sentence:** A Compliant long split sentence is one where the Court imposes a sentence within the applicable prison range, suspends execution of all but a term that also falls within the applicable prison range, such that the time initially served (not suspended) is more than six months, and imposes a term of probation following release for a period up to five years.
- **Short Split Sentence:** A sentence where the Court imposes a sentence within the applicable prison range, suspends execution of all but six months or less (but not all) of it, and imposes a term of probation following release for a period up to five years.
- **Probation Sentence:** A sentence where the Court imposes a sentence within the applicable Guidelines prison range, suspends execution of the entire sentence, suspends the period of supervised release, and places the defendant on probation for up to five years.



C) Prison Sentences: Sentence Imposed, Suspended, and To Serve

The table below shows the average sentence imposed, suspended, and to serve for each Robbery offense type.⁴ The data is presented in months. Across all robbery offenses, the average sentence served (after accounting for any time that has been suspended) by the sentenced individual was approximately 37 months.

	Average Sentence Imposed	Average Sentence Suspended	Average Sentence to Serve
Attempted Robbery (n=172)	20 months	3 months	17 months
Robbery (n=259)	42 months	6 months	36 months
Robbery w/a (n=139)	66 months	4 months	62 months
Attempted Robbery w/a (n=5)	73 months	0 months	73 months

D) Criminal History Information of Sentenced Individuals

Criminal History information was available for 911 (98%) of the 930 Robbery counts sentenced. The distribution of criminal history columns and the average CH score for each offense is presented in the table below. Overall, the average CH Score for defendants convicted of Robbery was 1.5. The majority of convicted defendants had a CH score in Column A in all offense categories *except* Attempted Robbery while armed. Please note the small sample size (n=5) for defendants convicted of Attempted Robbery while armed.

⁴ The average sentence imposed, suspended, and to serve reflect the number of convictions that resulted in a prison sentence. Counts that resulted in a probation or short split sentence were excluded from the averages to not skew the results.

	CH Column A	CH Column B	CH Column C	CH Column D	CH Column E	Average CH Score
Attempted Robbery (n=430)	190	116	83	28	13	1.4
Robbery (n=338)	135	81	85	24	13	1.6
Robbery w/a (n=138)	55	42	22	11	8	1.6
Attempted Robbery w/a (n=5)	1	1	2	0	1	2.8

Demographic Information of Sentenced Individuals

There were 803 defendants convicted of Robbery offenses during the analyzed timeframe. Demographic information in this section is presented on the count level. If a defendant was convicted of multiple charges, the defendant's information will be counted for each charge.

A) Gender⁵

Gender information was available for 923 (99%) of the 930 counts. A majority of the defendants were Male (94%, n=867).

Offense	Male	Female
Attempted Robbery (437 counts)	91% (399)	9% (38)
Robbery (336 counts)	96% (322)	4% (14)
Robbery w/a (145 counts)	98% (142)	2% (3)
Attempted Robbery w/a (5 counts)	80% (4)	20% (1)

B) Race⁶

Race information was available for 911 (98%) of the 930 counts. The race categories present in the data were: Black, White, and Hispanic. A majority of the defendants were Black (96%, n=878).

Offense	Black	White	Hispanic
Attempted Robbery (433 counts)	95% (413)	4% (19)	<1% (1)
Robbery (333 counts)	96% (321)	3% (11)	<1% (1)
Robbery w/a (140 counts)	99% (139)	1% (1)	0% (0)
Attempted Robbery w/a (5 counts)	100% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)

⁵ The Commission's data on gender is a limited binary categorization (i.e., only male or female). Gender information is obtained from Superior Court records.

⁶ Race category data used by the Commission does not capture ethnicity, thus Black individuals of Hispanic origin or White individuals of Hispanic origin are not separately presented.