Juvenile Disposition Summary Fiscal Year 2024

The Caseload Forecast Council (CFC) received 2,998 juvenile dispositions rendered by Washington State juvenile courts in Fiscal Year 2024. This report describes those dispositions.

Washington State Juvenile Sentencing Guidelines

The Washington State juvenile code mandates a system of presumptive sentencing guidelines for juvenile offenders.

The presumptive standard range for an offense² is a function of the seriousness of the current offense (current offense category) and criminal history (prior adjudication score).

Although the level of presumptive sanction increases with offense seriousness and prior adjudication score, the increase is not linear (see Figure 1).

Generally, current offense seriousness outweighs prior adjudication score.

Courts also have the option of using several sentencing alternatives to the standard range.

Current Offense Category

While the juvenile system uses adult crime statutes, individual offenses are assigned a more differentiated juvenile "current offense category" (with + and – added to differentiate within a class) for sentencing purposes. While juvenile offense categories generally parallel adult felony classes (i.e., Class B felonies are typically B+, B, or B- category offenses), that is not universally the case.

Prior Adjudication Score

The seriousness of criminal history is summarized by the "prior adjudication score." Prior felony adjudications count as one point each, and misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors count as one-quarter point. The prior adjudication score is the sum of the points for all prior adjudicated offenses, with fractions rounded down.

Prior adjudications do not affect the standard range for any current offense that is not a felony. Any current offense that is a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor will always involve local sanctions regardless of the youth's prior adjudication score.

¹ Juvenile courts are required by statute (RCW 13.50.010(9)) to report all dispositions to the Caseload Forecast Council.

Washington's juvenile code, while paralleling the adult criminal justice system in most respects, retains traditional juvenile court terminology where juvenile offenders are "adjudicated" rather than "convicted" of "offenses" rather than "crimes." This report uses the juvenile and adult terms interchangeably, recognizing that in some cases, absolute accuracy is subordinated to readability.

Standard Range: Confinement to Juvenile Rehabilitation vs. Local Sanction

The juvenile sentencing guidelines specify two types of presumptive penalties: a standard range of confinement under the supervision of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families' Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) for more than thirty days or a local sanction administered at the county level.

Standard ranges which exceed 30 days include a minimum and a maximum term and are served in Juvenile Rehabilitation facilities. Juvenile Rehabilitation has the limited discretion to set a release date between the minimum and maximum terms. Youths do not earn a sentence reduction for good behavior.

Local sanctions are supervised by county probation departments. Courts sentencing youths to local sanctions have the discretion to select from a menu of options including confinement, home monitoring, private residence, community supervision, fines, community service and work crew.

The presumptive sanction for category "B+" or higher offenses (Class A felonies and some violent Class B felonies) is a standard range of confinement in a Juvenile Rehabilitation facility.

Less serious offenses, the equivalent of B and C felonies, carry a presumption of a standard range of confinement or a local sanction, depending on the offense categories and prior adjudication scores.

Misdemeanors or gross misdemeanors carry a presumptive local sanction.

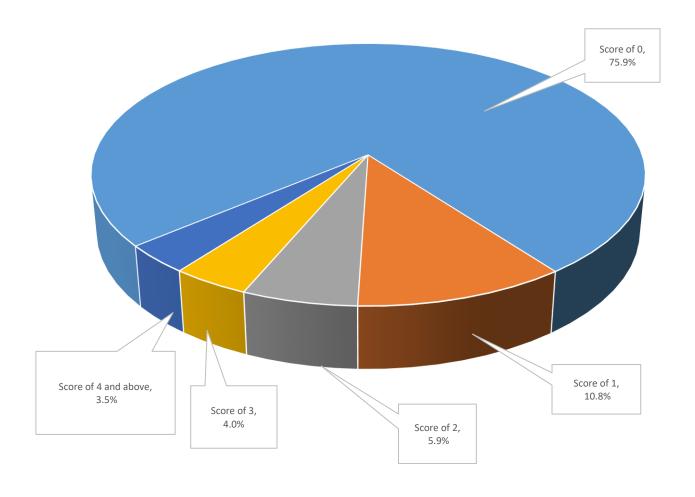
Figure 1. Option A - Juvenile Offender Sentencing Grid Standard Range (RCW 13.40.0357)

Current Offense Category	Standard Range Sanction							
A++		129 to 260 v	veeks for all cate	gory A++ offenses				
A+		180 weeks to	age 21 for all ca	tegory A+ offenses	3			
Α		103-129 v	veeks for all cate	gory A offenses				
A-	30-40 weeks	52-65 weeks	80-100 weeks	103-129 weeks	103-129 weeks			
B++	15-36 weeks	52-65 weeks	80-100 weeks	103-129 weeks	103-129 weeks			
B+	15-36 weeks	15-36 weeks	52-65 weeks	80-100 weeks	103-129 weeks			
В	LS	LS	15-36 weeks	15-36 weeks	52-65 weeks			
C+	LS	LS	LS	15-36 weeks	15-36 weeks			
С	LS	LS	LS	LS	15-36 weeks			
D+	LS	LS	LS	LS	LS			
D	LS	LS	LS	LS	LS			
E	LS	LS	LS LS					
Prior Adjudication by Score	0	1	2	3	4 or more			

Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Juvenile Court Dispositions

Most youths sentenced in FY 2024 had little or no criminal histories. About three quarters (75.9%)³ of those sentenced were youths with no prior adjudications or less than three non-felony charges. Another 10.8% had prior adjudication scores of one. The remaining 13.4% had prior adjudication scores of two or more (Figure 2).

Figure 2. FY 2024 Juvenile Dispositions by Prior Adjudication Score⁴



³ This is comprised of 1,871 dispositions with scores of zero and 403 dispositions with score of 0.25, 0.5 or 0.75.

⁴ Fractions are rounded down meaning a score 1.75 is reported as a score of 1.

Demographics

Table 1 shows the dispositions distributed by gender, race/ethnicity, and age range. Most youths sentenced in FY 2024 were male (77%), and nearly half were Caucasian (47.6%). The least common racial group was Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (3.6%).

Youths ranged in age from 11 to 17, but most were clustered at the upper end of the age range. The most common ages at disposition were from 15 to 17, comprising 66.2% of the total.

Table 1. Demographics

Gender ⁵	Number	Percentage
Male	2,307	77.0%
Female	684	22.8%
	2,998	100.0%
Race/Ethnicity ⁶		
African American	506	16.9%
Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	109	3.6%
Caucasian	1,428	47.6%
Hispanic	781	26.1%
Native American	118	3.9%
Total	2,998	100.0%
Age Range (at Disposition)		
10 years old or younger	-	0.0%
11 years old	2	0.1%
12 years old	65	2.2%
13 years old	251	8.4%
14 years old	485	16.2%
15 to 17 years old	1,985	66.2%
18 years old and older	210	7.0%
Total	2,998	100.0%

⁵ Gender was missing on 7 disposition (0.2%)

⁶ Race/Ethnicity was missing on 56 dispositions (1.9%).

Race/Ethnicity: Dispositions vs. State Population

Minorities are typically disproportionately over-represented in juvenile offender populations. One common method of measuring disproportionality is to construct a ratio of the percentage of a given race/ethnicity in a target population to the percentage in the general population. If the percentages are the same, the disproportionality ratio is 1.0. If the percentage is greater in the target population (e.g., juvenile offenders) than in the state population, the ratio will be greater than 1.0 which indicates an "over-representation." Likewise, a ratio less than 1.0 indicates an "under-representation." The magnitude of the ratio indicates the degree of disproportionality.

Table 2 presents the race/ethnicity breakdown of the FY 2024 juvenile dispositions compared to the 2023 OFM state population distribution.⁷

The last column presents the disproportionality ratio. For example, the disproportionality ratio for Native American youths is 2.9. In other words, the proportion of Native Americans sentenced (3.9%) was 2.9 times the proportion in the general population (1.4%). In contrast, the disproportionality ratio for Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander is 0.4, which means the proportion of juvenile dispositions involving Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander is 0.4 times less than the proportion of Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander in the state population. Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander are the most "under-represented" racial group in the offender population with a disproportionality ratio of 0.4.

Table 2. Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality⁸

Race/Ethnicity	% FY 2024 Juvenile Dispositions	% FY 2023 Washington State Juvenile Population	Disproportionality Ratio
African American	16.9%	4.4%	3.8
Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	3.6%	8.6%	0.4
Caucasian	47.6%	49.3%	1.0
Hispanic	26.1%	25.0%	1.0
Native American	3.9%	1.4%	2.9
Missing/Unknown ⁹	1.9%	11.3%	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	
(n)	2,998	1,244,215	

⁷ The state population data used for this analysis is the 5-to-17 year old cohort.

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⁸ In calculating the disproportionality ratio, data provided by Office of Financial Management (OFM) Forecasting and Research Division is used to compare juvenile dispositions to the general statewide population. OFM population data categorizes Hispanic as an ethnic group and not a race. Since the categorization of race as reported on the juvenile dispositions used by the CFC is not consistent with the categorization of race in the OFM population data, the CFC's disproportionality ratio calculation is likely to be different from the actual ratio.

⁹ Race/Ethnicity was missing on 56 dispositions.

County

As would be expected, most juvenile dispositions occur in the more populated counties in the state.

Table 3 shows the number of juvenile dispositions by county. Clark County (357 or 11.9%) had the highest number of dispositions, followed by Spokane County (354 or 11.8%), and King County (257 or 8.6%).

Together, these three counties (Clark, Spokane, and King) accounted for more than a quarter of all dispositions in the state. In contrast, 18 of 39 counties had less than 100 dispositions each and 8 of the smallest counties had less than 10 dispositions per county.

Table 3. Juvenile Dispositions by County

County	Number	County	Number		
Adams	14	Lewis	124		
Asotin	27	Lincoln	16		
Benton	198	Mason	30		
Chelan	54	Okanogan	23		
Clallam	100	Pacific	17		
Clark	357	Pend Oreille	N/A		
Columbia	N/A ¹⁰	Pierce	192		
Cowlitz	115	San Juan	N/A		
Douglas	42	Skagit	57		
Ferry	N/A	Skamania	N/A		
Franklin	97	Snohomish	100		
Garfield	N/A	Spokane	354		
Grant	129	Stevens	28		
Grays Harbor	54	Thurston	166		
Island	17	Wahkiakum	N/A		
Jefferson	12	Walla Walla	35		
King	257	Whatcom	80		
Kitsap	53	Whitman	10		
Kittitas	17	Yakima	203		
Klickitat	N/A				
Total all counties: 2,998					

¹⁰ (N/A): Less than 10 juvenile dispositions.

Type of Court Disposition

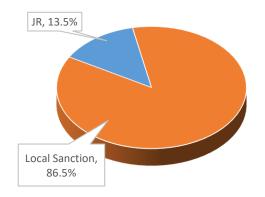
The vast majority of dispositions (2,916 or 97.3%) were the result of guilty pleas; only 27 (or 0.9%) of dispositions involved youths adjudicated guilty following a juvenile court hearing. The remaining dispositions (55 or 1.8%) were revoked deferred and "Alford" pleas.¹¹

Locus of Sanction

Most youths (86.5%) are sanctioned at the local (county) level with the remainder of FY 2024 dispositions resulting in confinement in a state operated JR facility (Figure 3). The range of confinement for JR commitments was an average minimum of 47.6 weeks and an average maximum of 73.5 weeks (Table 4).

Figure 3. Locus of Sanction

Table 4. Confinement Ordered by Placement Type



Placement Type	Average Sanction
JR	47.6 to 73.5 Weeks
County Detention	18.2 Days
Work Crew	3.8 Days
Electronic Monitoring	19.4 Days

Local Sanctions

"Local sanction" is the presumptive sentencing range for youths at the lower end of the offense seriousness/prior adjudication score continuum. Most (86.5%) of the FY 2024 dispositions resulted in sentences to local sanctions at the county level.

More than half (51.9%) of youths sentenced to local sanctions were assigned some confinement in county detention, with an average sentence of 18.2 days. Another 29.4% received community supervision without detention. The remaining 5.2% received some other sanction (work crew, electronic home monitoring, private residence, etc.). The average order of electronic home monitoring was 19.4 days. The average work crew order was 3.8 days.

¹¹ An Alford Plea is when a defendant enters a plea of guilty without making an admission of guilt.

Private Residence (Other), 2.5%

Electronic Home Monitoring (Other), 0.6%

Work Crew (Other), 2.1%

Figure 4. Local Sanction by Type

Felony and Non-felony Offenses

Of the 2,998 juvenile dispositions imposed in FY 2024, a majority of the offenses committed were non-felony (gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor) offenses. Felonies accounted for 40.9% of all offenses committed (Table 5).

Table 5. Felony and Non-felony Offenses

Offense	Number	Percent
Felony	1,815	40.9%
Gross Misdemeanor	2,305	49.7%
Misdemeanor	415	9.4%
Total	4,435	100.0%

Felony Offenses

There were 1,815 felony offenses imposed in the 2,998 juvenile dispositions. Offenses within the Homicide offense category were the most serious felony offenses committed by juveniles, with an average minimum term of 150.4 weeks and an average maximum term of 159.4-weeks. The second most serious felony offense category was Obstructing Governmental Operation, with an average minimum sentence of 23 weeks and an average maximum sentence of 35.7 weeks (Figure 5 and Table 6). On average, felony offenses included 6.4 months of community supervision in addition to any confinement.

Figure 5. Felony Offense Categories - Average Confinement by Weeks

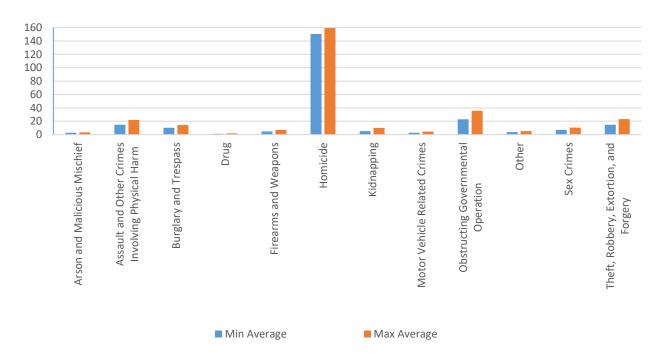


Table 6. Average Confinement Ordered by Felony Offense Categories

Folony Offenses by Catagory	Number	Average Term (Weeks)		
Felony Offenses by Category	Number	Minimum	Maximum	
Arson and Malicious Mischief	83	2.9	3.5	
Assault and Other Crimes Involving Physical Harm	360	14.7	21.9	
Burglary and Trespass	99	10.4	14.5	
Drug	37	1.3	1.9	
Firearms and Weapons	170	4.8	7.2	
Homicide	7	150.4	159.4	
Kidnapping	13	5.2	10.1	
Motor Vehicle Related Crimes	66	2.9	4.5	
Obstructing Governmental Operation	34	23.0	35.7	
Other	95	3.7	5.4	
Sex Crimes	133	7.2	10.5	
Theft, Robbery, Extortion, and Forgery	718	14.8	23.2	
Total	1,815			

Non-Felony Offenses

Within the 2,998 juvenile dispositions, 1,987 gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor offenses were imposed. The offenses within the categories of Assault and Other Involving Physical Harm were the most common non-felony offenses, with an average sentence of 8.9-day confinement. The average community supervision imposed for gross misdemeanors and misdemeanors was 6.6 months.

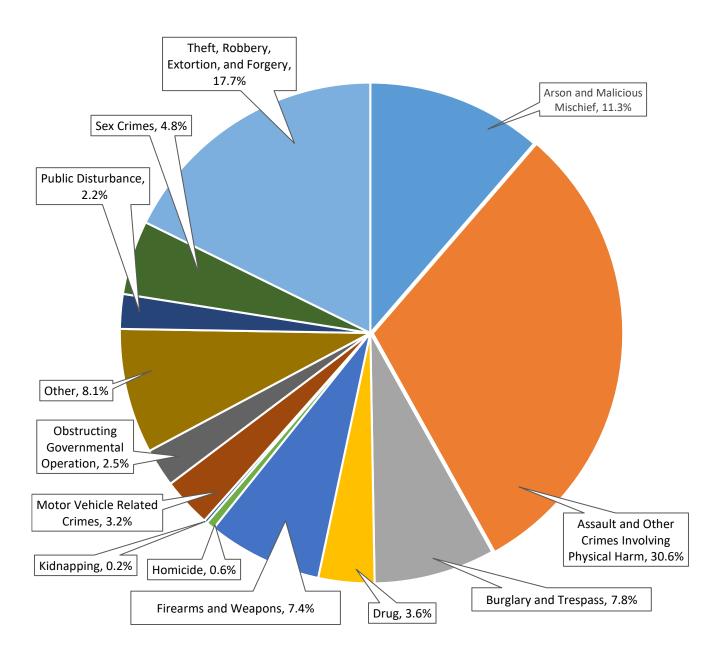
Table 7. Average Confinement Ordered by Non-Felony Offense Categories

Non-Felony Offenses by Category	Number	Average (Days)
Arson and Malicious Mischief	333	5.8
Assault and Other Crimes Involving Physical Harm	918	8.9
Burglary and Trespass	264	4.8
Drug	118	7.9
Firearms and Weapons	97	9.5
Kidnapping	2	15.0
Motor Vehicle Related Crimes	86	5.1
Obstructing Governmental Operation	130	7.0
Other	207	7.7
Public Disturbance	103	7.6
Sex Crimes	13	12.9
Theft, Robbery, Extortion, and Forgery	349	6.7
Total	2,620	

Table 8. Distribution of Offense by Categories

Offense by Category	Number	Percentage
Arson and Malicious Mischief	416	11.3%
Assault and Other Crimes Involving Physical Harm	1,278	30.6%
Burglary and Trespass	363	7.8%
Drug	155	3.6%
Firearms and Weapons	267	7.4%
Homicide	7	0.6%
Kidnapping	15	0.2%
Motor Vehicle Related Crimes	152	3.2%
Obstructing Governmental Operation	164	2.5%
Other	302	8.1%
Public Disturbance	103	2.2%
Sex Crimes	146	4.8%
Theft, Robbery, Extortion, and Forgery	1,067	17.7%
Total	4,435	100.0%

Figure 6. Distribution of Offense Category



Violent and Non-violent Offenses

The great majority (88.4%) of FY 2024 juvenile adjudications were for offenses classified as non-violent (Table 9). Non-violent offenses carried an average minimum sentence of 14.5-day confinement and an average maximum sentence of 19.1-day confinement.

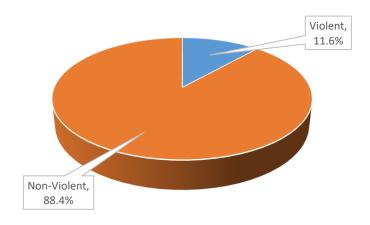
Table 9. Violent and Non-Violent Offenses

Offense	Number	Average Term
Serious Violent	34	77 to 83 Weeks
Violent	479	28 to 45 Weeks
Non-Violent	3,922	14.5 to 19.1 Days
Total	4,435	

Adjudications for juvenile "serious violent offenses" were extremely rare in FY 2024, accounting for only 34 (or 1%) of 4,435 offenses committed. Total confinement for serious violent offenses carried an average range of 77 to 83 week confinement in JR. 13

There were an additional 479 juvenile adjudications for offenses categorized as violent, with an average confinement range of 28 to 45 weeks.

Figure 7. Violent and Non-Violent Offenses



¹² "Serious violent offense" is a subcategory of violent offense and means:

⁽a)(i) Murder in the first degree; (ii) Homicide by abuse; (iii) Murder in the second degree; (iv) Manslaughter in the first degree; (v) Assault in the first degree; (vi) Kidnapping in the first degree; (vii) Rape in the first degree; (viii) Assault of a child in the first degree; or (ix) An attempt, criminal solicitation, or criminal conspiracy to commit one of these felonies; or (b) Any federal or out-of-state conviction for an offense that under the laws of this state would be a felony classified as a serious violent offense under (a) of this subsection . (RCW 9.94A.030(46)).

¹³ Most individuals under the age of 18 committing "serious violent offenses" are sentenced as adults and therefore are not technically juvenile offenders. These sentences are reported in a separate CFC publication: "Statistical Summary of Adult Felony Sentencing: Fiscal Year 2024" available on the CFC website.

Suspended Disposition Alternatives

The state juvenile law permits a number of alternatives to the standard presumptive sentencing ranges (Option A), depending on the current offense, criminal history, and treatment needs of the youth. There are three "alternative" dispositions which allow a court to impose a sentence, and then suspend that sentence in favor of a community based local sanctions disposition. These three alternatives are based on compliance with appropriate treatment goals.

1. Suspended Dispositions (Option B) (RCW 13.40.0357)

Option B provides authority to the court to suspend a portion of the standard range confinement time in order for the youth to participate in a treatment or education program. The court imposed approximately 138 Option B suspended dispositions with an average minimum confinement of 2.1 days, a suspended range of confinement with an average minimum of 95.4 days and an average maximum of 205.8 days, and an average of 11.4 months of community supervision.

2. Chemical Dependency/Mental Health Disposition Alternative (CDMHDA) (Option C) (RCW 13.40.165)

During FY 2024, 57 dispositions were imposed under the Co-Occurring CDMHDA option. CDMHDA provides chemically dependent/Mental Health youth with an alternative disposition that includes mental health, drug or alcohol treatment. Co-Occurring CDMHDA involved an average confinement of 0.3 days, a suspended range of confinement with an average minimum of 76.9 days; an average maximum of 97.4 days; and an average of 10.5 months of community supervision.

3. Special Sex Offender Disposition Alternative (SSODA) (RCW 13.40.162)

During FY 2024, 120 dispositions were imposed under the Special Sex Offender Disposition Alternative option. SSODA authorizes the court to suspend the standard range disposition and impose inpatient or outpatient treatment for certain sex offenses. The court may impose a number of special conditions as a prerequisite of the suspended disposition. SSODA dispositions carried an average minimum confinement of 1.2 days, a suspended range of confinement with an average minimum of 95.3 days and an average maximum of 145.4 days, and an average of 22.6 months of community supervision.

Table 10. Juvenile Disposition Alternatives

	Average Range of Confinement (Days)					Supervision
Alternative	Confinement		Suspe	ended	(months)	
	Number —	Min	Max	Min	Max	
CDDA	-	-	-	-	-	-
Co-Occurring CDMHDA	57	0.3	0.3	76.9	97.4	10.5
MHDA	-	-	-	-	-	-
Option B – Suspended Disposition	138	2.1	2.1	95.4	205.8	11.4
SSODA	120	1.2	1.2	95.3	145.4	22.6

Manifest Injustice Offenses (Option D)

In addition to the alternatives described above, the court may depart from the standard range by imposing a Manifest Injustice order either above or below the standard range.¹⁴ Of the dispositions imposed in FY 2024 for the 4,435 offenses, 134 received a manifest injustice order (3%) in FY 2024, as detailed in Table 11.

¹⁴ The court may declare a "Manifest Injustice" and sentence outside the standard range when the facts and circumstances of a case or characteristics of the juvenile lead to the conclusion that dispositions ordered within the standard range would be manifestly unjust. The court's findings of a Manifest Injustice must be supported by clear and convincing evidence and its justification entered into the record.

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Table 11. Ratio of Manifest Injustice (MI) by Offenses

Category By Offenses	Total Offenses	Offenses Ordered in Standard Range	Offenses with MI	Ratio of MI
Arson and Malicious Mischief	416	410	6	1.4%
Assault and Other Crimes Involving Physical Harm	1,278	1,229	49	3.8%
Burglary and Trespass	363	358	5	1.4%
Drug	155	153	2	1.3%
Firearms and Weapons	267	265	2	0.7%
Homicide	7	4	3	42.9%
Kidnapping	15	15	-	0.0%
Motor Vehicle Related Crimes	152	150	2	1.3%
Obstructing Governmental Operation	164	161	3	1.8%
Other	302	299	3	1.0%
Public Disturbance	103	101	2	1.9%
Sex Crimes	146	129	17	11.6%
Theft, Robbery, Extortion, and Forgery	1,067	1,027	40	3.7%
Total	4,435	4,301	134	3.0%

The most common reasons for mitigated Manifest Injustice sentences were "other mitigating factor" and "all parties agree to mitigated sentence." The most cited reasons for aggravated Manifest Injustice sentences were "all parties agree to aggravated sentence," and "recent criminal history or failed to comply with diversion agreement" as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Total Manifest Injustice Reasons

Mitigating Reasons	Number
Acted under strong and immediate provocation	1
All parties agree to mitigated sentence	4
One year or more between current offense and prior offense	5
Other mitigating factor	19
Suffered mental or physical condition that reduced capability for the offense	6
The conduct neither caused nor threatened serious bodily injury or did not contemplate the conduct would cause or threaten serious bodily injury	4

Aggravating Reasons	
All parties agree to aggravated sentence (up)	28
Finding of sexual motivation	1
Heinous, cruel or depraved	3
Highly likely to reoffend	6
Impose a serious and clear danger to society	3
Need the structure, intensive treatment, training and supervision	1
Other aggravating factor	19
Other complaints resulting in diversions or guilty plea not listed in history	12
Recent criminal history or failed to comply with diversion agreement	28
Standard range too lenient considering priors	9
Unsuitable for treatment in the community - immediate criminal activity after release	1
Victim was particularly vulnerable	5
While committing or fleeing from offense inflicted or attempted to inflict injury	17

Summary

This report details characteristics of the 2,998 FY 2024 Washington State juvenile offender dispositions reported to the Caseload Forecast Council.

As the data shows, more than three quarters (77%) of the dispositions involved young males. Most youths sentenced in juvenile court have little or no criminal history. In fact, approximately 62.4% of dispositions were imposed on youths with no prior offenses.

Similarly, most youths sentenced in court were there for relatively minor crimes. Almost two thirds (59.1%) of the youths sentenced in FY 2024 were sentenced for offenses that were gross misdemeanors or misdemeanors.

Washington is among the small number of states with presumptive sentencing guidelines for juvenile offenders. Although courts have access to a variety of sentencing alternatives for youths with specific treatment needs (sex offenders, chemical dependency/mental health issues, and Option B), the majority of youths (97%) are sentenced under the presumptive sentencing guidelines.

One of the intents of the Washington juvenile code and its system of presumptive sentencing guidelines is to promote accountability and proportionality in the sentencing of youths. The data in this report support the conclusion that these intents are being realized, at least to the extent that the severity of sanctions ordered by the courts tend to increase with the seriousness of the offense and the extent of prior criminal history.

There was racial/ethnic disproportionality in the sentenced population. Compared to the state as a whole, those adjudicated in FY 2024 were more likely to be Native American or African American.

While it is beyond the scope of this report to determine the causes of gender and racial/ethnic disproportionality in the sentenced population, the data is clear that it persists.

This report is updated annually. It, along with prior annual reports, is available on the Caseload Forecast Council's (CFC) website: www.cfc.wa.gov.

The juvenile disposition data contained in this report come from Washington Disposition forms sent to the CFC by the courts. Data include all juvenile dispositions known to the CFC that were imposed between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024 (FY 2024). Data elements entered into the CFC database and used in the report include race, gender, type of sentence, current offense, offense history, offender score, and the imposed terms of confinement and community supervision.

Comments or questions may be directed to:

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