Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act: Eligibility, Sentences, and Set Asides (2021-2025)

September 2026

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Youth Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 2018, (YRA) provides a sentencing framework designed to promote rehabilitation and reduce the long-term consequences of criminal convictions for young people aged 24 and younger at the time of their offense. The Act allows eligible youth offenders[1] to receive specialized sentencing options intended to support their successful reintegration into the community. It also establishes a process through which eligible individuals—whether or not they were originally sentenced under the YRA—may petition to have their convictions set aside upon successful completion of their sentence.

Under D.C. Code § 24-906.02, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is responsible for submitting a biennial analysis of YRA sentencing activity. The prior report was issued in October 2022 and covered the time period of 2019-2020. This report examines YRA sentencing and set asides from 2021 through 2025 to answer the following questions:

1. How many cases and persons were eligible for a YRA sentence?
2. How many cases and persons received a YRA sentence?
3. How many cases and persons applied for and received a set aside?
4. How many individuals received a YRA sentence more than once? What were the offenses for which they received YRA sentences?

The CJCC will issue a subsequent report after receipt of necessary data.[2] This follow-up report will address additional questions related to factors associated with receiving a YRA sentence or set aside; recidivism, comparing those who did and did not receive a YRA sentence or set aside; sentences received and departures from mandatory minimums; and the impact of programming.

[1] D.C. Code § 24–901(6): "Youth offender" means a person 24 years of age or younger at the time that the person committed a crime other than murder, first degree murder that constitutes an act of terrorism, second degree murder that constitutes an act of terrorism, first degree sexual abuse, second degree sexual abuse, and first degree child sexual abuse https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/24-901

[2] CJCC requires an Administrative Order (AO) from the Court to be able to work with and share data with partners on cases that have been set aside, as these cases are considered a type of sealed case. CJCC received this AO on August 26, 2026.

Key Takeaways

Key findings from the analysis of cases and persons include:

YRA Eligibility

- 19.6% of cases with at least one sentence date in calendar years 2021 through 2025 were eligible for a YRA sentence (4,944 of 25,163 cases).
- 22.0% of people sentenced in calendar years 2021 through 2025 were eligible for YRA sentencing in at least one case (3,676 of 16,717 persons).
- Carrying a pistol without a license, as a felony, (CPWL – felony) and simple assault were the two most common lead charges disposed as guilty for cases eligible for a YRA sentence, representing respectively 21.5% (1,063 of 4,944) and 11.2% (553 of 4,944) of cases.

YRA Sentencing

- 51.2% of eligible cases received a YRA sentence at least once (2,533 of 4,944 eligible cases).
- 60.2% of eligible people received a YRA sentence in at least one case (2,213 of 3,676 eligible people).
- CPWL – felony and robbery, including attempted robbery, were the most common offenses for cases with a YRA sentence, representing 32.7% (828 of 2,533) and 8.2% (207 of 2,533) of cases, respectively.
- A YRA sentence may be handed down more than once in the same case. Of those cases where a YRA sentence was received, 81.6% received it once (2,068 of 2,533 cases), 14.6% received a YRA sentence twice (370 of 2,533 cases), and less than 4% of cases received a YRA sentence three or more times.
- Individuals can also receive multiple YRA sentences across different cases. 82.3% of the individuals who ever received a YRA sentence had received a YRA sentence in one case (1,822 of 2,213 persons) and 12.8% of individuals received a YRA sentence in two distinct cases (283 of 2,213 persons). This analysis, alone, includes all cases and all sentences, including those before 2021.

YRA Set Aside

- 906 individuals across 953 cases filed a motion for a set aside between 2021 and 2025. The CJCC does not have information about how many individuals and cases were eligible to file a motion for a set aside.
- Of the cases where a motion was filed, 87.5% had received a set aside by the time of the data pull in September 2026 (834 of 953 cases). This represented 798 individuals, or 88.1% of the 906 individuals who had filed a motion.

- In the remaining 12.5% of cases where a motion was filed (119 cases), and for the remaining 11.9% of individuals (108 persons), the CJCC does not have data on the outcome of the motion: either the motion was denied or the decision was still pending at the time of the data pull. In each year except 2021 (when there were a remarkably small number of motions made), approximately 83-93% of motions resulted in a set aside.

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The CJCC would like to extend gratitude for support and collaboration to partners at the DC Superior Court. The CJCC would also like to thank CJCC's Information Technology team, particularly Abeje Woldie and Colleen Moses, for their consistent support on this project. For this report, Dr. Niloufer Taber, Director of Research and Policy, and Bailey Maryfield, Social Scientist, developed the methodology, conducted data analysis, and contributed writing.

Introduction and Background

The Goals of the Youth Rehabilitation Act

The Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act, as amended in 2018, (YRA) reflects the District's commitment to providing developmentally appropriate sentencing alternatives for young people who become involved in the criminal justice system. Research in adolescent development shows that individuals aged 18 to 24 are still undergoing significant neurological, psychological, and social maturation. These developmental characteristics influence risk-taking, impulse control, decision-making, and responsiveness to rehabilitative programming. The YRA's framework recognizes these factors and emphasizes the importance of balancing accountability with opportunities for growth and reintegration.

The YRA was originally enacted to ensure that eligible youth offenders could receive sentences tailored to their developmental needs and, when appropriate, earn the opportunity to have their conviction set aside. The 2018 amendment broadened eligibility and strengthened procedural mechanisms in ways intended to increase access to rehabilitative sentencing opportunities. The Act's goals align with broader youth justice principles that emphasize mitigation of long-term consequences and enhancement of pathways to stability, education, employment, and community engagement.

The set aside provision of the Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2018 is a central component of the District's rehabilitative sentencing framework. The YRA has provisions for automatic set asides and set asides by motion. Automatic set asides occur if a youth offender is discharged early from their sentence. Set asides by motion allow eligible youth offenders to petition the Court to have their conviction set aside after successfully completing their sentence. This component of the YRA aims to reduce long-term barriers associated with criminal justice involvement—particularly those affecting employment, education, housing, and economic stability—while reinforcing the principle that young adults can demonstrate meaningful change and rehabilitation. The rationale behind this provision lies in the recognition that young adults, particularly those 24 or younger at the time of the offense, still have significant potential for growth and rehabilitation. Removing the conviction from public view allows individuals to pursue opportunities without facing the stigmatizing effects of a criminal record.

The YRA includes a statutory requirement under § 24-906.02 directing the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) to conduct biennial analyses of youth sentencing activity. The following areas of analysis are mandated:

1. The number of cases and persons eligible for sentencing and to have their convictions set aside under this subchapter, and how many persons were sentenced or had their convictions set aside under this subchapter;
2. The factors that affected the likelihood of receiving a sentence under this subchapter, such as assessed offense type, prior arrests, prior juvenile commitment, or age;
3. The extent to which cases eligible to be sentenced under this subchapter were subject to mandatory-minimum terms, and if so, the extent to which mandatory-minimum terms were imposed;
4. The type and length of sentences for those sentenced under this subchapter, compared to those not sentenced under this subchapter;
5. The factors that affected the likelihood that those sentenced under this subchapter would have their convictions set aside;
6. A comparison of the recidivism of those sentenced under this subchapter who had their convictions set aside, compared to those sentenced under this subchapter who did not have their convictions set aside;
7. A comparison of the recidivism of those sentenced under this subchapter to similarly situated persons not sentenced under this subchapter; and
8. The impact of programming provided to youth offenders under this subchapter.

This report examines the years 2021 through 2025, representing the next comprehensive study period following earlier CJCC reports. This timeframe is particularly important for understanding how youth justice trends have evolved in the years after the initial implementation of the 2018 amendment and during a period marked by broader changes across the criminal justice system.

This report includes findings related to cases and persons eligible for a YRA sentence; cases and persons sentenced under YRA; cases and individuals who filed a motion for a set aside; and cases and individuals who received a set aside. These topics address the requirements in point 1, above, only, as additional data and an administrative order governing data sharing of set aside cases were not available in time to conduct further analyses. A second iteration of this report to answer the remaining questions will be available at a later date.

Cases/Persons Eligible

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility under the YRA is determined through a sequence of statutory requirements:

- **Age**: The individual must have been **24 years old or younger** at the time the offense occurred. This criterion reflects developmental science showing that individuals in this age range are still maturing biologically and psychologically and may benefit from rehabilitative sentencing.
- **Offense Type**: The conviction cannot involve certain serious offenses including murder, first degree murder that constitutes an act of terrorism, second degree murder that constitutes an act of terrorism, first degree sexual abuse, second degree sexual abuse, and first degree child sexual abuse. All remaining offenses—including many violent, property, weapon, traffic, and drug offenses—qualify. Importantly, legal eligibility for the YRA exists at the charge level rather than the case level. However, for the purpose of this report, which provides information at the case and person level, if the individual was found guilty on one ineligible charge, then the entire case was considered ineligible.
- **Disposition**: The case must result in a conviction (either through a guilty plea or verdict or plea of no contest). Cases resolved by dismissal, acquittal, or diversion are not eligible. Again, since YRA eligibility is at the charge level rather than the case level, if an ineligible charge was disposed as not guilty, and the remaining charges on the case for which the person was disposed as guilty were eligible, then the case remains eligible for the YRA.
- **Adult Sentencing**: The youth must face charges, be disposed, and be sentenced in the adult criminal justice system and therefore must be aged 15 or older at the time of the offense. Youth adjudicated in the juvenile system are not eligible for YRA sentencing or set aside relief under the adult framework.

These criteria define the analytic universe for determining YRA sentencing and set aside eligibility and highlight how statutory boundaries shape access to rehabilitative sentencing pathways. As a note, the Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2018 (DC Law 22-197) made several key changes to YRA eligibility, including expanding the maximum age of eligibility from 21 to 24, decoupling eligibility for the YRA set aside from receiving a YRA sentence, and making several additional charges ineligible.

Cases with a sentence date after the effective date of the Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2018 (DC Law 22-197) (December 13, 2018), that meet the age and offense requirements, are eligible for a YRA sentence, even if the case was filed, disposed, or originally sentenced prior to this effective date. A sentence date might be the original sentencing event, a probation revocation hearing, or related to motions for sentence reduction, such as those under the Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act (IRAA).

To be eligible to file a set aside motion, an individual must have additionally:

- Fully completed the sentence associated with the conviction, including incarceration, probation, parole, or supervised release.
- Satisfied all conditions of supervision or court-ordered requirements (e.g., restitution, treatment, coursework).

This set aside process requires deliberate action from the individual or their legal representative. A petition must be filed with the appropriate authority—usually the Superior Court—requesting the conviction be set aside. A comprehensive motion typically includes:

- evidence of sentence completion,
- compliance with supervision conditions,
- demonstration of rehabilitative progress, and
- absence of new disqualifying criminal behavior.

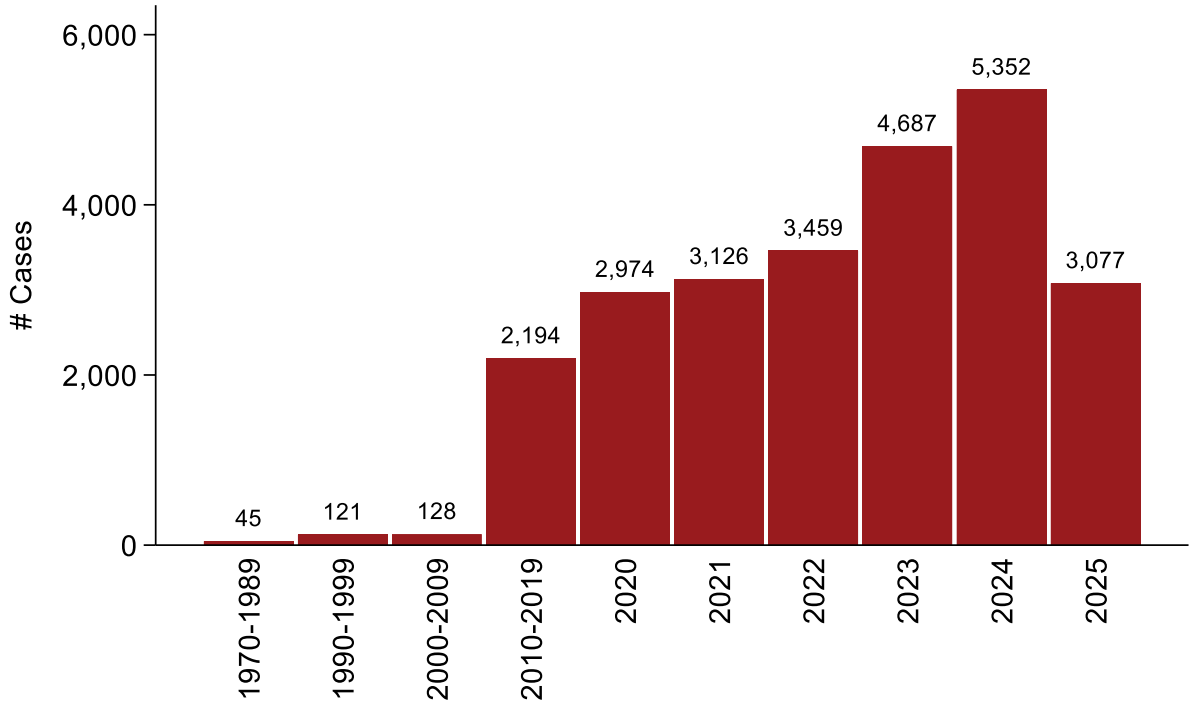
However, as discussed further, the CJCC is able to provide data only on how many individuals filed such a motion and how many individuals had a successful motion. The CJCC is not able to identify how many individuals were eligible for or received an automatic set aside, or who were eligible to file a motion but did not.

Findings

YRA Eligibility

This report analyzes cases with at least one sentence date between 2021 and 2025. Some of these cases may have been filed or disposed before this period, including much prior: among cases with at least one sentence date in the time frame, the earliest filing dates to 1974. (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Case File Date: All Cases with at Least One Sentence Date between 2021 and 2025



Case-Level vs. Person-Level Eligibility

This section presents counts of eligible cases and persons for the years 2021 through 2025. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to generate counts and percentages.

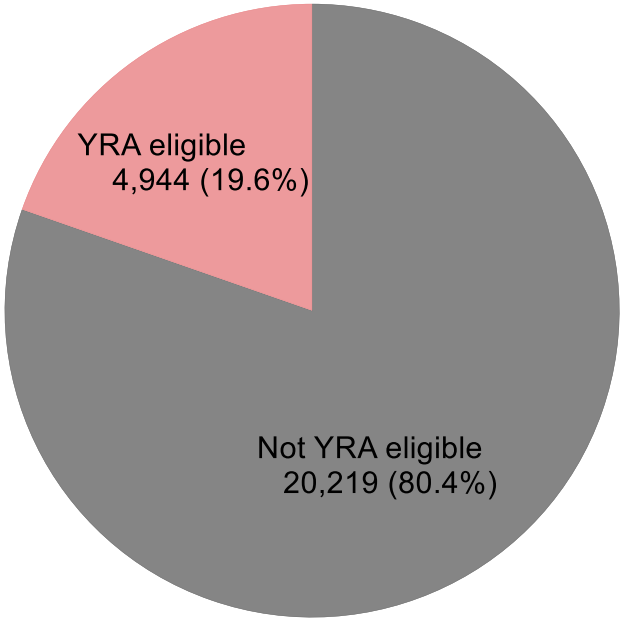
The YRA analysis requires distinguishing between case-level and person-level eligibility:

- **Case-Level Eligibility** refers to the number of disposed cases meeting the statutory criteria for potential YRA sentencing.
- **Person-Level Eligibility** reflects the number of unique individuals associated with those cases.

Because a single individual may be associated with multiple disposed cases in a given year, person-level counts are typically smaller than case-level counts.

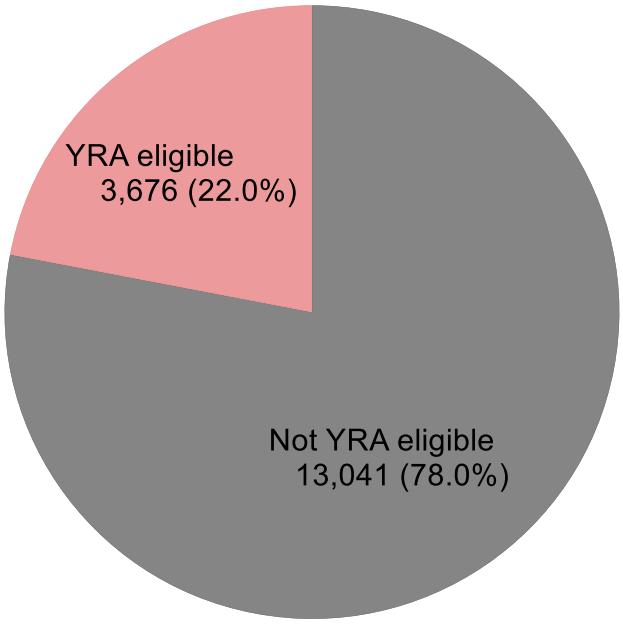
Of the 25,163 cases with at least one sentence date in calendar years 2021 through 2025, 4,944 cases (19.6%) were eligible for a YRA sentence. (Figure 2) Carrying a pistol without a license, as a felony, (CPWL – felony) and simple assault were the two most common lead charges disposed as guilty for cases eligible for a YRA sentence, representing respectively 21.5% (1,063 of 4,944) and 11.2% (553 of 4,944) of cases.

Figure 2: YRA Eligibility for Cases with at Least One Sentence Date, 2021-2025



Of the 16,717 unique individuals who had a case with at least one sentence date in calendar years 2021 through 2025, 3,676 people (22.0%) were eligible for YRA sentencing on at least one case. (Figure 3) For the person-level analysis, individuals with multiple cases were classified as eligible if at least one case was eligible for YRA sentencing, even if other cases were not. Individuals classified as ineligible were those whose cases were all ineligible (if they had more than one case).

Figure 3: YRA Eligibility for Individuals with at Least One Sentence Date, 2021-2025



Individuals may have had multiple sentencing events, either for the same case or on different cases, during the time period analyzed. The number of cases with a sentencing event generally increased between 2021 and 2025. Over this time, the number of cases eligible for a YRA sentence fluctuated but showed a slight upward trend in the last three years. (Table 1) Within each year, the percentage of cases with a sentence date eligible for a YRA sentence also fluctuates, with the most recent year having the lowest percentage. This is due to the increase in the total number of cases with a sentence event growing faster than the number of cases eligible for a YRA sentence.

Table 1: Number of Cases with a Sentencing Event, by Year of Sentence Date: All Cases and YRA Sentence Eligible Cases

Year of sentencing event	Number of cases with a sentencing event	Number (%) of cases eligible for a YRA sentence
2021	3,097	669 (22%)
2022	4,751	1,086 (23%)
2023	4,655	969 (21%)
2024	5,617	1,067 (19%)
2025	7,043	1,153 (16%)
Total	**25,163**	**4,944 (19.6%)**

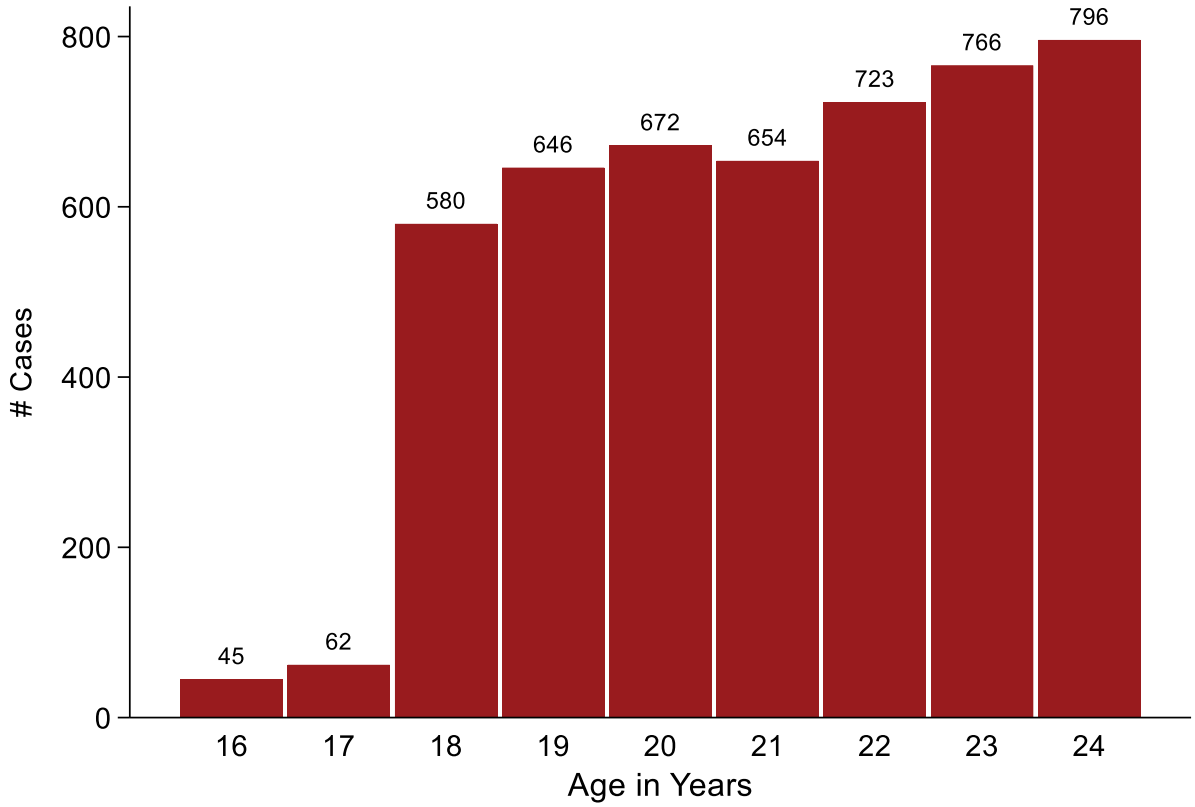
Table 2: Demographics of Individuals with a Sentence Date: All Individuals and YRA Sentence Eligible Individuals

Demographics	Number (%) of individuals with a sentencing event	Number (%) of individuals eligible for a YRA sentence
Sex		
Female	2,535 (15%)	457 (12%)
Male	14,043 (84%)	3,182 (87%)
Unknown	139 (1%)	37 (1%)
Race/Ethnicity		
Black	14,161 (85%)	3,138 (85%)
White	1,461 (9%)	287 (8%)
Hispanic	213 (1%)	56 (2%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	78 (<1%)	17 (<1%)
Other/Unknown	804 (5%)	178 (5%)
Total	**16,717 (100%)**	**3,676 (100%)**

Individuals with a sentence date were predominately male and Black. Demographic distributions by sex and race/ethnicity among people eligible for a YRA sentence closely mirrored those of all individuals with a sentence date during this time period. (Table 2)

While sex and race/ethnicity did not vary in Court data, age at offense may vary. A person's age at the time of the offense may vary across different cases or even across multiple charges within a single case. Presented below is the age at offense of the top charge for individuals eligible for a YRA sentence for each case. (Figure 4) Individuals with multiple cases are represented more than once. As shown, cases with individuals eligible for a YRA sentence tend towards the older ages of the eligible age range (15-24 years) at the time of offense. A small numbers of cases involve those under the age of 18 at the time of offense who were charged as adults.

Figure 4: YRA Sentence Eligible Cases, 2021-2025: Age at Time of Top Offense



YRA Sentence

This section describes how many YRA-eligible cases and persons received YRA sentences during the 2021–2025 study period. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to generate counts and percentages. Court data did not have a consistently entered flag to indicate whether a case was sentenced under YRA; CJCC analysts used textual analysis of docket text of judgment and commitment orders to capture when a person received the YRA. However, this approach could miss that a case or a person received a YRA sentence if it was not explicitly mentioned in docket text.

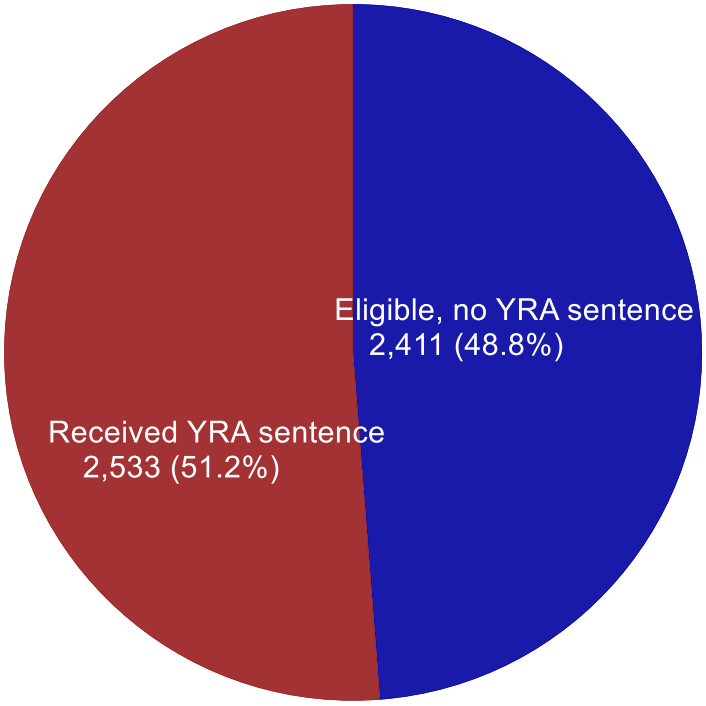
Overview of Sentencing Activity

Youth Rehabilitation Act sentencing trends offer insight into how the District's justice system applies rehabilitative principles to emerging adults. Among individuals identified as eligible under the YRA, only a subset ultimately receives a YRA sentence. The proportion of eligible individuals receiving these sentences varies across offense categories, demographic profiles, judicial practices, and case circumstances.

A YRA sentence can take several forms, such as probation, short split sentences, long split sentences, or incarceration. These sentencing types reflect different balances of accountability and rehabilitation, and they often align with factors such as offense severity or a youth's criminal history. Because the YRA is designed to emphasize developmentally appropriate responses, understanding these patterns is essential for evaluating the Act's implementation.

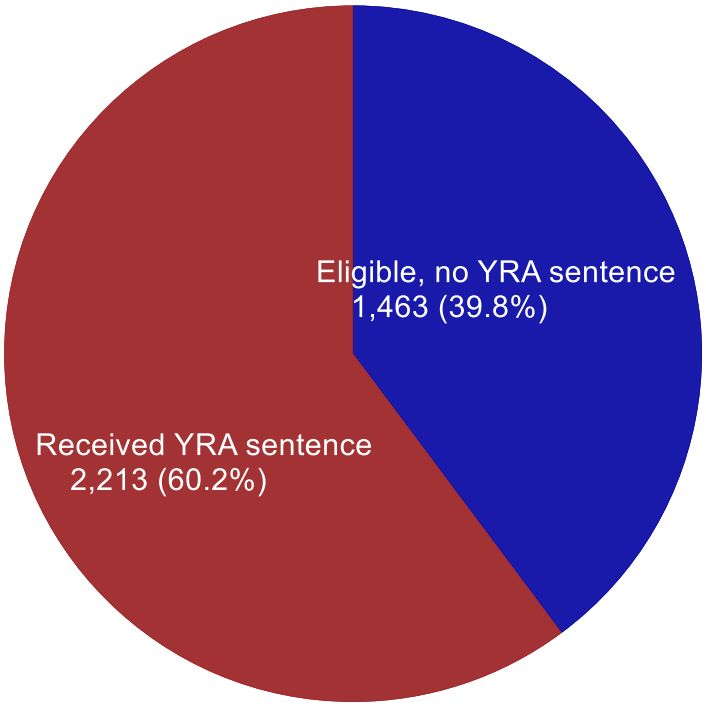
Of the 4,944 cases eligible for a YRA sentence, in 2,533 cases (51.2% of those eligible) the individual received at least one YRA sentence between 2021 and 2025. (Figure 5) CPWL – felony and robbery, including attempted robbery, were the most common offenses for cases with a YRA sentence, representing 32.7% (828 of 2,533) and 8.2% (207 of 2,533) of cases, respectively. Overall, 10.1% of all cases with a sentencing event between 2021 and 2025 received at least one YRA sentence.

Figure 5: Eligible Cases that Received a YRA Sentence, 2021-2025



Of the 3,676 individuals eligible for a YRA sentence between 2021 and 2025, 2,213 (60.2%) received a YRA sentence. (Figure 6) If the individual received a YRA sentence on one or more cases, they were classified as a person who received a YRA sentence, even if they did not receive a YRA sentence on other cases for which they were eligible.

Figure 6: Eligible Individuals who Received a YRA Sentence in at Least One Case, 2021-2025



Individuals who received a YRA sentence between 2021 and 2025 were predominately male and Black. (Table 3) This reflects the sex and race/ethnicity demographics of those who had a sentencing event and those were eligible for a YRA sentence during this time period.

Table 3: Demographics of Individuals who Received a YRA Sentence

Demographics	Number (%) of individuals who received a YRA sentence
Sex	
Female	279 (13%)
Male	1,911 (86%)
Unknown	23 (1%)
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	1,870 (85%)
White	182 (8%)
Hispanic	36 (2%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	11 (<1%)
Other/Unknown	114 (5%)
Total	**2,213 (100%)**

As mentioned, an individual can receive a YRA sentence multiple times, either in the same case or in different cases. There were 3,061 YRA sentences handed down across the 2,533 cases in which the individuals ever received a YRA sentence. (Table 4) Individuals who received the YRA sentence were mostly between 18 and 24 years old at the time they received the YRA sentence. Approximately 10% of those eligible for a YRA sentence were 25 years old or older at the time they received a YRA sentence. As a reminder, regardless of the age at sentence, all individuals were 24 or under at the time of offense.

Table 4: Age Ranges of Individuals who Received a YRA Sentence at Time of Sentencing: The First Time Receiving a YRA Sentence and Every Time Receiving a YRA Sentence

Age in years when received a YRA sentence	Number (%) of sentencing events where an individual received a YRA sentence	Number (%) of cases where an individual received a YRA sentence (first time received a YRA sentence on that case)
Age in years		
16-17	25 (1%)	15 (1%)
18-24	2,717 (89%)	2,288 (90%)
25+	319 (10%)	230 (9%)
Total	**3,061 (100%)**	**2,533 (100%)**

Receiving a YRA Sentence More than Once

The CJCC treated each unique docket entry mentioning a YRA sentence as an individual sentencing event. As noted, this approach may miss some YRA sentences if they are not explicitly recorded in the docket text. Importantly, a single YRA sentencing event may be counted as two, if the same event resulted in two different docket entries with different dates.

There were 2,213 unique individuals who received a YRA sentence at least once between 2021 and 2025. These individuals may have received the YRA sentence more than once, in the same case or across multiple cases. These multiple YRA sentences could have occurred within the time period of 2021 to 2025 and/or prior to 2021.

Docket text and dates show that most individuals received a YRA sentence only once, even when including sentences given before 2021. Of the 2,533 with a YRA sentence from 2021–2025, there were 2,068 cases (81.6%) where the person received a YRA sentence once; 370 cases (14.6%) where the person received a YRA sentence twice; and less than 4% of cases where the individual received a YRA sentence three or more times. (Table 5)

Table 5: The Number of Times a Person Received a YRA Sentence on a Particular Case, among YRA Sentenced Cases, 2021-2025

Number of times the individual received a YRA sentence on one case	Number (%) of Cases
Once	2,068 (82%)
Twice	370 (15%)
Three times	78 (3%)
Four or more times	16 (<1%)
Total Cases where the individual received a YRA sentence between 2021-2025	**2,533 (100%)**

No clear patterns emerged in the top charge comparing cases that received a YRA sentence once to those that received it more than once. Among the 2,068 cases which received a YRA sentence once, the most common top charge was CPWL – felony (34.0%, or 703 out of 2,068 cases). CPWL – felony was also the most common top charge among the 370 cases that received a YRA sentence twice (28.1%, or 104 out of 370 cases), and among the 78 cases that received a YRA sentence three times (20.5%, or 16 out of 78 cases). As mentioned earlier, CPWL – felony was the most common top charge across cases that received a YRA sentence, overall.

Regarding the possibility of having multiple YRA sentences across different cases, of the 2,213 individuals who received at least one YRA sentence between 2021 and 2025, 1,822 individuals (82.3%) had received a YRA sentence in one case and 283 (12.8%) received a YRA sentence in two distinct cases. (Table 6) All cases in the individuals' criminal history were examined, including those with sentencing events prior to 2021.

Table 6: The Number of Times a Person Received a YRA Sentence, among Individuals who Received a YRA sentence, 2021-2025

Number of times the individual received a YRA sentence on a case	Number (%) of Cases
Once	1,822 (82%)
Twice	283 (13%)
Three times	77 (4%)
Four or more times	31 (1%)
Total individuals who received a YRA sentence between 2021-2025	**2,213 (100%)**

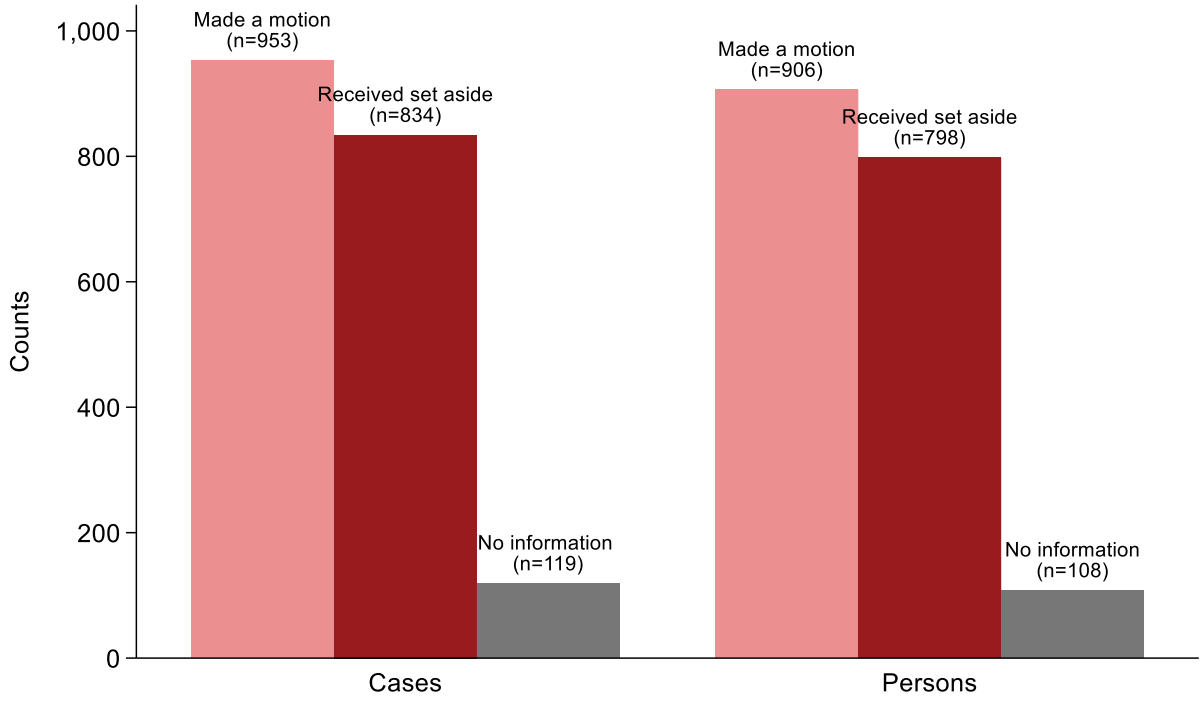
Set Aside

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to generate counts and percentages. Individuals may have the completion of their sentence recorded by a variety of entities, including the

Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), the DC Department of Corrections (DOC), or, in some cases, by DC Superior Court. Individual-level data on sentence completions was not available from BOP or from CSOSA due to the Federal Privacy Act. Therefore, the CJCC was not able to determine the numbers of individuals who were eligible to file a motion for a set aside, and instead presents how many individuals filed a motion for a set aside. However, it is assumed that not everyone who is eligible files a motion for a set aside. Furthermore, those who filed a motion may have become eligible outside the time period of interest. Motion statuses were unavailable in the data pull.

Between 2021 and 2025, 906 individuals across 953 cases filed a motion for a set aside between 2021 and 2025. (Figure 7) Of the 953 cases, 834 (87.5%) had received a set aside by the time of the data pull in September 2026; this represented 798 individuals, or 88.1% of the 906 individuals who had filed a motion. In the remaining 119 cases, and for the remaining 108 individuals, the CJCC does not have data on the outcome of the motion: either the motion was denied or the decision was still pending at the time of the data pull.

Figure 7: YRA Motions Made and Set Asides Received: Cases and Persons, 2021-2025



The number of motions made varied somewhat by year, with substantially fewer motions made in 2021 and 2022 compared to 2023, 2024, and 2025: in 2021 and 2022, there were 25 and 165 motions filed, as compared to between 229-271 motions filed in subsequent

years. (Table 7) The CJCC does not have an explanation for why the number of motions filed in 2021, 25 motions, was an order of magnitude smaller than in subsequent years.

Table 7: Set Aside Motions Filed and Set Asides Received, by Year Motion Filed

Year motion filed	Number of motions filed	Number (%) of successful motions*	
2021	25	18**	7**
2022	165	143 (87%)	87 (13%)
2023	271	226 (83%)	83 (17%)
2024	263	234 (89%)	89 (11%)
2025	229	213 (93%)	93 (7%)

* Motions may have been successful in the same or subsequent year to when the motion was filed
** To avoid base effects, the CJCC does not provide percentages when the total is smaller than 100.

In each year except 2021, approximately 83-93% of motions resulted in a set aside. (Table 7) Since there is no information on the outcome of the remaining motions, these percentages may represent a minimum. Finally, there were an additional 361 cases in which a set aside was granted between 2021 and 2025 where information on when the motion for the set aside was filed was not available. These may have been motions made prior to the analytical time period.

Table 8: Demographics of Individuals who Filed a Set Aside Motion and Who Received a Set Aside, 2021-2025

Demographics	Number (%) of individuals who filed a motion for a set aside	Number (%) of individuals who received a set aside
Sex		
Female/Unknown	136 (15%)	151 (15%)
Male	770 (85%)	850 (85%)
Race/Ethnicity		
Black	774 (85%)	853 (85%)
White	88 (10%)	90 (9%)
Hispanic	15 (2%)	16 (2%)
Other/Unknown	29 (3%)	42 (4%)
Total	**906 (100%)**	**1,001 (100%)**

Demographics among individuals who filed a motion for a set aside and who received a set aside had similar patterns, with approximately 85% of those filing a motion or receiving a set aside being male. (Table 8) Across both groups, 85% were Black, and 9-10% were Hispanic. These demographic patterns are remarkably similar to individuals with a

sentencing event (Table 2), eligible for a YRA sentence (Table 2), or receiving a YRA sentence (Table 3).

Discussion

The Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2018 reflects the District's commitment to supporting the developmental needs of emerging adults through sentencing alternatives that balance accountability with rehabilitation. The 2021–2025 study period offers an important opportunity to evaluate whether the implementation of the YRA continues to align with legislative intent and how sentencing outcomes for eligible youth may have evolved during this five-year timeframe.

Comparison to Prior Findings

The most recent prior YRA report released by the CJCC in 2022 covered YRA cases disposed and sentenced in 2019 and 2020. During that two-year timeframe, 23% of cases disposed and sentenced were eligible for a YRA sentence by charges and age at offense and 55% of those eligible received a YRA sentence. During 2019 and 2020, there were 384 cases that had their convictions set aside under YRA. YRA-eligible cases included convictions for 2,116 offenses at the time of analysis.

Direct comparison to prior reports is complicated by the fact that the methods for the present study, for cases sentenced between 2021 and 2025, differ in important ways from the previous study. First, the CJCC considered all cases that had a sentence date during the time period, not restricting to cases both disposed and sentenced during the time period of interest. This methodological change was to ensure that the report accurately represented when individuals are legally eligible for a YRA sentence, which can include cases that were disposed prior to the reporting period. Individuals remain eligible for a YRA sentence following disposition, if their age at offense and if the offenses for which they were disposed as guilty or no contest are eligible. This means that individuals who were disposed before 2021, sometimes far before 2021, remained eligible for a YRA sentence at every sentencing event. This approach, however, means that the cases presented in this report may have been reported on in prior reports as well. This report found that among the 25,163 cases with a sentence between 2021 and 2025, just under 20% of cases (4,944) were eligible for a YRA sentence, and just over 10% of cases (2,533) received a YRA sentence. Expanding the denominator to include cases disposed prior to the time period of interest may account for these differences.

Appendix I: Methodology and Limitations

This appendix outlines the methodological approach and analytical considerations necessary for evaluating Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act (YRA) activity during the 2021–2025 study period. Limitations are highlighted to indicate where careful consideration should be given to the study's findings. Importantly, none of the limitations were considered to be fatal to the analysis.

Data Sources and Collection

For this initial analysis, DC Superior Court data was used to identify individuals who had a sentencing event, who were eligible for the YRA by charge and age at offense, who filed a motion for a set aside, and who received a set aside. With the Court's permission, data was extracted from JUSTIS and included three distinct populations:

- Sentenced Population: Individuals who had at least one sentence date between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2025.
- Motion to Set Aside Population: Individuals who filed a motion to set aside between 2021 and 2025, regardless of when they were sentenced.
- Set Aside Population: Individuals who received a set aside between 2021 and 2025, regardless of when they were sentenced.

The DC Courts did not review or verify the data that the CJCC extracted from JUSTIS.

Methodology

Stata version 19.5 was used for all analyses. Descriptive statistical analyses were used to generate counts and percentages for cases/persons eligible, sentenced, and set aside.

Limitations

Administrative justice data is often complex, and several limitations related to data availability and accuracy must be acknowledged.

While eligibility for a YRA sentence could be made based on charges and the age at offense, identification of whether an individual received a YRA sentence on a case was derived from using analytical software (Stata v19.5) to code narrative from docket text, as there is no consistently used code or other data point which captures whether or when a case or person received a YRA sentence. While there is a YRA sentence flag that exists in Court data, it is not consistently used; relying on this flag to classify cases or individuals as receiving or not receiving a YRA sentence may lead to an undercount of who received a YRA sentence, as those who did receive a YRA sentence but not the YRA sentence flag would be

misclassified as not receiving a YRA sentence. Docket text associated with judgement and commitment orders more consistently mentions when an individual receives a YRA sentence. The use of docket text mitigates but does not eliminate this limitation; if a person received a YRA sentence, but that was not entered specifically into the extractable docket text, then that person would have been misclassified as not having received the YRA. The CJCC appreciates technical assistance from the Court to develop an improved approach for classifying cases and individuals as receiving or not receiving a YRA sentence for this report.

The use of docket text, however, creates an additional limitation for analyses of whether a person or a case received a YRA sentence more than once. If the fact of a person receiving a YRA sentence was docketed twice, despite having been received once, that would have been identified as two separate sentencing events. Therefore, while the number of cases and people receiving the YRA may be taken as a minimum, the number of times an individual received the YRA may be either an underestimate or an overestimate.

As mentioned, a person becomes eligible to file a motion applying for their conviction to be set aside "after the completion of the youth offender's probation or sentence of incarceration, supervised release, or parole, whichever is later", per D.C. Code § 24–906 (e-1)(1). Individuals under the law have the right to file a motion after the completion of their sentence; however, there may be a gap between individuals who are eligible for relief and those who actually exercise that right. The CJCC is able to provide data only on how many individuals and cases filed such a motion, as sentence completion data belongs to a variety of agencies, including some whose data is protected by the Federal Privacy Act. Therefore, this report cannot identify how many individuals had the right to file a motion for a set aside but did not exercise that right.

Similarly, the data available for this report includes whether an individual made a motion for the set aside, and those who received the set aside. However, the data does not allow us to distinguish between those whose motion for the set aside was denied and those who had not yet received a decision on their motion and may in the future be granted the set aside.

Analyses by charge identified the "top charge", the lead or most serious charge, as the charge listed first. Typically, the most serious charge is intended to be listed first, but if that were not the case, then the top charge would be misidentified in this analysis.

Finally, sex and race/ethnicity demographics were taken from Court data and may not represent how individuals identify themselves.

These limitations do not prevent analysis but require careful contextualization.