

## Revisions to the Sentencing Matrix for Drug Offenses, Effective July 1, 2016

Following a review of sentencing guidelines compliance by each intersecting cell of the three sentencing matrices and consideration of input received at a public comments hearing held on December 8, 2015, the Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MSCCSP) approved the revisions to rows V and IV of the sentencing matrix for drug offenses displayed in **red** below. The intent of the revisions is to more accurately reflect sentencing practices for these offenses, while also maintaining proportionality across rows and columns of the matrix. The revisions will be adopted in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) **effective July 1, 2016** and should be used for cases sentenced on or after this date. Because guidelines are often calculated in advance of sentencing, this information is being shared with criminal justice practitioners one month prior to the effective date of the revisions. Please note that guidelines calculated in advance of sentencing may need to be recalculated if the sentencing date is postponed or moved up.

Cell Contents:

Row 1 – Current range

Row 2 – Approved revised range

Offender Score								
Offense Seriousness Category	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
V	P-6M	P-12M	3M-12M	6M-18M	1Y-2Y	1.5Y-2.5Y	2Y-3Y	3Y-4Y
	<u>P-1M</u>	<u>P-6M</u>	<u>P-1Y</u>	<u>1M-1Y</u>	<u>2M-18M</u>	<u>3M-2Y</u>	<u>4M-3Y</u>	<u>6M-4Y</u>
IV	P-12M	P-18M	6M-18M	1Y-2Y	1.5Y-2.5Y	2Y-3Y	3Y-4Y	3.5Y-10Y
	<u>P-3M</u>	<u>P-9M</u>	<u>1M-1Y</u>	<u>2M-18M</u>	<u>3M-2Y</u>	<u>4M-2.5Y</u>	<u>6M-3Y</u>	<u>8M-5Y</u>

*P=Probation, M=Months, Y=Years*

In light of the above revisions, the MSCCSP has released a new version of the Maryland Sentencing Guidelines Manual (MSGM, Version 8.0). This new manual includes the revised sentencing matrix for drug offenses (see Table 8-2 of the MSGM), updated sample cases, a figure summarizing sentencing guidelines coverage (see Figure 1-1 of the MSGM), and minor edits and formatting changes.

Due to budget constraints, the MSCCSP is not able to provide printed copies of the MSGM. Please access a print-friendly version of the updated MSGM via the MSCCSP website at:

[msccsp.org/Files/Guidelines/MSGM/guidelinesmanual.pdf](http://msccsp.org/Files/Guidelines/MSGM/guidelinesmanual.pdf). You should discard any prior versions of the MSGM, as information contained within may no longer be accurate.