

 GUIDELINES
E-NEWS

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Introduction to Guidelines E-News

What is Guidelines E-News?

Guidelines E-News is a periodic report delivered electronically via email by the Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MSCCSP). It replaces its predecessor, *Sentencing Fax*, and provides information on the system of voluntary guidelines for the State's circuit courts. This issue of *Guidelines E-News* highlights several recent additions to the MSCCSP website and provides a few tips for completing the sentencing guidelines worksheet. Future issues will highlight any changes to the guidelines, report on sentencing trends using data from the sentencing guidelines worksheets, and provide useful information on worksheet submission.

Additions to the MSCCSP Website

There are a number of recent additions to the MSCCSP website (www.msccsp.org).

- Request Additional Worksheets – Requests for additional guidelines worksheets can now be submitted electronically through the MSCCSP website. This option is available on the web at: www.msccsp.org/guidelines/worksheets.html.
- Updated Guidelines Offense Table – The Guidelines Offense Table was updated on November 24, 2005 (Appendix A of the *Maryland Sentencing Guidelines Manual*). A print-friendly PDF version of the revised table is available on the web at: www.msccsp.org.
- 2005 Annual Report – The 2005 Annual Report of the Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy was completed in December 2005. A print friendly version is available at: www.msccsp.org/publications/ar2005.pdf.

Completing the Guidelines Worksheet

The most common mistake when completing the sentencing guidelines worksheets is the omission of required information. The following are frequently overlooked items:

- **Disposition Type**
- **Reason for Departure (if the actual sentence departs from the guidelines range)**
- **Was the offender sentenced to a Corrections Options program under Commission criteria? (Drug Court __Yes __No Other __Yes __No)**

With regard to the above item on Corrections Options, it is important that the person completing the worksheet check either *Yes* or *No* for *Drug Court* AND *Yes* or *No* for *Other*. If the offender was not sentenced to a Corrections Options program, do not leave the item blank but instead check *No* for *Drug Court* and *No* for *Other*.

It is also important to be aware that home detention is considered a Corrections Options program. If an offender was sentenced to home detention, the person completing the worksheet should check *No* for *Drug Court* and *Yes* for *Other*.

If you have any questions regarding worksheet completion, please call the Commission hotline at 301-403-4165 (Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm) or refer to the *Maryland Sentencing Guidelines Manual* which is also available in a print-friendly version on the MSCCSP website.