Methodology

Data Source

Issue 16 (October 2026) of the Sentencing Snapshot provides a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of and sentences for guidelines-eligible individuals sentenced in Maryland circuit courts for vehicular homicide offenses from fiscal years (FY) 2022 through 2026. These analyses used data from sentencing guidelines worksheets submitted to the Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MSCCSP) via the Maryland Automated Guidelines System (MAGS) or paper guidelines worksheets.

Sentencing guidelines worksheets are completed for all criminal sentencing events involving an incarcerable offense that originate in and are sentenced in Maryland circuit courts. Additionally, guidelines worksheets are completed for sentencing events involving jury trial prayers (JTPs) and appeals from the District Court, if a pre-sentence investigation (PSI) is ordered. A sentencing event is defined as one individual, sentenced in front of the same judge, on the same day. A sentencing event may contain multiple offenses.

These analyses exclude sentencing guidelines worksheets submitted for sentence reconsideration/modification hearings and three-judge panel reviews.[1] Sentencing guidelines worksheets are not completed for violations of probation or parole. Sentencing guidelines worksheets are not submitted to the MSCCSP for District Court cases.

[1] From FY 2022 through FY 2026, approximately 1% of sentencing events for which a guidelines worksheet was submitted were for sentence reconsideration/modification hearings or three-judge panel reviews.

Vehicular Homicide Laws in Maryland

Table 1 provides the current laws prohibiting vehicular homicide in Maryland.

Table 1. Vehicular Homicide Laws in Maryland				
Offense	**Source**	**Stat Max**	**Ser. Cat.**	**Fine**
Criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle or vessel				
1st offense	CR, § 2-210(f)(1)	3Y	VII	$5,000
Subsequent	CR, § 2-210(f)(2)	5Y	V	$10,000
Negligent homicide by motor vehicle or vessel				
while under the influence of alcohol, 1st offense	CR, §2-503(c)(1)	5Y	V	$5,000
while under the influence of alcohol, subsequent	CR, §2-503(c)(2)	10Y	IV	$10,000
while impaired by alcohol, 1st offense	CR, §2-504(c)(1)	3Y	VI	$5,000
while impaired by alcohol, subsequent	CR, §2-504(c)(2)	5Y	V	$10,000
while impaired by drugs, 1st offense	CR, §2-505(c)(1)	5Y	V	$5,000
while impaired by drugs, subsequent	CR, §2-505(c)(2)	10Y	IV	$10,000
while impaired by CDS, 1st offense	CR, §2-506(c)(1)	5Y	V	$5,000
while impaired by CDS, subsequent	CR, §2-506(c)(2)	10Y	IV	$10,000
Manslaughter by vehicle or vessel				
1st offense	CR, §2-209(d)(1)	10Y	IV	$5,000
Subsequent	CR, §2-209(d)(2)	15Y	III	$10,000

Analyses

This section provides statistics corresponding to the figures in Sentencing Snapshot #16.

Table 2 provides the total number of guidelines-eligible criminal sentencing events and offenses for each vehicular homicide offense sentenced in Maryland from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 2. Guidelines-Eligible Criminal Sentencing Events and Offenses Sentenced in Maryland, by Type of Vehicular Homicide Offense, FY 2022 through FY 2026

Offense Name	Offenses		Sentencing Events [1]	
	#	%	#	%
Criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle or vessel				
1st offense	91	100.0%	83	100.0%
Subsequent	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Subtotal	91	100.0%	83	-
Negligent homicide by motor vehicle or vessel				
while under the influence of alcohol, 1st offense	32	65.3%	26	61.9%
while under the influence of alcohol, subsequent	10	20.4%	9	21.4%
while impaired by alcohol, 1st offense	4	8.2%	4	9.5%
while impaired by alcohol, subsequent	1	2.0%	1	2.4%
while impaired by drugs, 1st offense	1	2.0%	1	2.4%
while impaired by drugs, subsequent	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
while impaired by CDS, 1st offense	1	2.0%	1	2.4%
while impaired by CDS, subsequent	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
-	49	100.0%	42	-
Manslaughter by vehicle or vessel				
1st offense	192	54.5%	176	90.7%
Subsequent	18	5.1%	18	9.3%
Subtotal	210	100.0%	194	-
Total	**350**	**-**	**316**	**-**

[1] A sentencing event is defined as one individual, sentenced in front of the same judge, on the same day. Sentencing event percentages do not sum to 100% as a sentencing event may contain multiple offenses from multiple crime categories.

Table 3 provides the number of guidelines-eligible vehicular homicide offenses sentenced in Maryland circuit courts, by fiscal year.

Table 3. Vehicular Homicide Offenses Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts, by Year, FY 2022 through FY 2026

	Total	Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter	Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired	Vehicular Manslaughter
FY 2022	63	15	10	38
FY 2023	73	21	7	45
FY 2024	86	26	12	48
FY 2025	72	16	14	42
FY 2026	56	13	6	37
Total	**350**	**92**	**49**	**210**

Table 4 provides the number of guidelines-eligible sentencing events including at least one vehicular homicide offense, sentenced in Maryland circuit courts, by judicial circuit, from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 4. Guidelines Individuals Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts for Vehicular Homicide Offenses by Judicial Circuit, FY 2022 through FY 2026

			Sentencing Event Contains One or More:					
Judicial Circuit	**All Sentencing Events**		**Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter**		**Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired**		**Vehicular Manslaughter**	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1st	3,340	7.0%	8	9.6%	4	9.5%	9	4.6%
2nd	2,141	4.5%	8	9.6%	7	16.7%	7	3.6%
3rd	8,885	18.6%	11	13.3%	5	11.9%	40	20.6%
4th	2,938	6.1%	0	0.0%	3	7.1%	5	2.6%
5th	6,415	13.4%	11	13.3%	4	9.5%	43	22.2%
6th	6,002	12.6%	12	14.5%	4	9.5%	28	14.4%
7th	8,684	18.2%	23	27.7%	12	28.6%	37	19.1%
8th	9,401	19.7%	10	12.0%	3	7.1%	25	12.9%
Total	**47,806**	**100.0%**	**83**	**100.0%**	**42**	**100.0%**	**194**	**100.0%**

Circuits:

- 1st Circuit: Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties
- 2nd Circuit: Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties
- 3rd Circuit: Baltimore and Harford Counties
- 4th Circuit: Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties
- 5th Circuit: Anne Arundel, Carroll, and Howard Counties
- 6th Circuit: Montgomery and Frederick Counties
- 7th Circuit: Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties
- 8th Circuit: Baltimore City

Table 5 provides the demographic characteristics of guidelines-eligible individuals sentenced in Maryland circuit courts from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 5. Characteristics of Guidelines Individuals Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts for Vehicular Homicide Offenses, FY 2022 through FY 2026								
			Sentencing Event Contains One or More:					
	All Guidelines Individuals		**Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter**		**Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired**		**Vehicular Manslaughter**	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sex								
Male	35,103	88.3%	57	79.2%	25	73.5%	133	82.6%
Female	4,630	11.7%	15	20.8%	9	26.5%	28	17.4%
Race								
Black	29,947	66.3%	38	46.9%	23	54.8%	89	47.8%
White	10,909	24.1%	27	33.3%	12	28.6%	64	34.4%
Hispanic	3,610	8.0%	15	18.5%	5	11.9%	27	14.5%
Other	726	1.6%	1	1.2%	2	4.8%	6	3.2%
Total	**47,806**		**83**		**42**		**194**	

Notes: Percentages exclude missing data. Sex was missing for 8,073 guidelines individuals sentenced from FY 2022 through FY 2026, including 11 individuals sentenced for criminally negligent vehicular manslaughter, 8 individuals sentenced for negligent homicide by motor vehicle while under the influence/impaired, and 33 individuals sentenced for vehicular manslaughter. Race was missing for 2,614 guidelines individuals sentenced from FY 2022 through FY 2026, including 2 individuals sentenced for one or more offenses including criminally negligent vehicular manslaughter, and 8 individuals sentenced for vehicular manslaughter.

Definitions: Race and Ethnicity are separate fields on the sentencing guidelines worksheet. The following selections are available for Race: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Other, and Unknown. The guidelines worksheet preparer may select more than one race. For the purposes of these analyses, some categories of race and ethnicity are combined. The Other race category combines the following race options: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Other. The Other race category also includes guidelines-sentenced individuals for whom multiple race categories were selected. Unknown race is classified as missing. The Ethnicity field asks whether the guidelines-sentenced individual is of Hispanic or Latino origin, with possible responses Yes, No, or Unknown. “Yes” responses are classified as Hispanic, regardless of selections made in the Race field.

Table 6 provides the prior adult criminal record score for guidelines individuals sentenced in Maryland circuit courts from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 6. Prior Record Score for Guidelines Individuals Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts for Vehicular Homicide Offenses, FY 2022 through FY 2026								
	Sentencing Event Contains One or More:							
	All Sentencing Events		**Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter**		**Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired**		**Vehicular Manslaughter**	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
None	17,375	36.3%	59	71.1%	20	47.6%	93	47.9%
Minor	10,736	22.5%	17	20.5%	14	33.3%	49	25.3%
Moderate	9,930	20.8%	3	3.6%	8	19.0%	25	12.9%
Major	9,765	20.4%	4	4.8%	0	0.0%	27	13.9%
Total	**47,806**	**100.0%**	**83**	**100.0%**	**42**	**100.0%**	**194**	**100.0%**

Note. Instructions for calculating the prior adult criminal record score are located in the Maryland Sentencing Guidelines Manual (MSGM), Chapter 7.1(C).

Table 7 provides the non-suspended sentence length for all guidelines-eligible person and vehicular homicide offenses sentenced in Maryland circuit courts from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 7. Non-Suspended Sentence Length of All Guidelines-Eligible Person and Vehicular Homicide Offenses Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts, FY 2022 through FY 2026								
	All Person Offenses		**Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter**		**Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired**		**Vehicular Manslaughter**	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No incarceration	9,439	19.8%	22	24.2%	8	16.3%	8	3.8%
1 day - 6 months	8,646	18.1%	17	18.7%	2	4.1%	14	6.7%
>6 months - 1 year	6,099	12.8%	19	20.9%	4	8.2%	12	5.7%
>1 year - 2 years	5,912	12.4%	23	25.3%	18	36.7%	51	24.3%
>2 years - 3 years	2,500	5.2%	10	11.0%	7	14.3%	18	8.6%
>3 years - 5 years	6,751	14.2%	0	0.0%	9	18.4%	46	21.9%
>5 years - 10 years	4,067	8.5%	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	53	25.2%
>10 years	4,271	9.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	3.8%
Total	**47,685**	**100.0%**	**91**	**100.0%**	**49**	**100.0%**	**210**	**100.0%**
Average	**4.4 years**		**0.9 years**		**2.0 years**		**4.3 years**	

Table 8 provides sentencing guidelines compliance for individuals sentenced in Maryland circuit courts from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 8. Sentencing Guidelines Compliance for Vehicular Homicide Offenses Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts, FY 2022 through FY 2026

	Sentencing Event Contains One or More:							
	All Sentencing Events		**Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter**		**Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired**		**Vehicular Manslaughter**	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Within	39,275	82.2%	81	97.6%	37	88.1%	154	79.4%
Below	6,005	12.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	7.2%
Above	2,522	5.3%	2	2.4%	5	11.9%	26	13.4%
Total	**47,806**		**83**		**42**		**194**	

Notes: Percentages exclude missing data. Compliance was missing for 4 sentencing events. Sentencing guidelines compliance is computed based on the overall non-suspended sentence length for the sentencing event. The sentencing event may include multiple offenses. A sentence is defined as guidelines-compliant if it meets at least one of the following conditions:

- The non-suspended sentence (defined as the sum of incarceration, credit for time served, and home detention) is within the guidelines range;
- The non-suspended sentence exceeds the upper guidelines limit but includes only credit for time served;
- The sentencing event was disposed of via an ABA plea agreement or, effective April 1, 2021, an MSCCSP binding plea agreement; or
- The sentencing event involved the imposition of one or more corrections options and the total sentence falls within or above the recommended guidelines range (excluding sentencing events that contain a crime of violence, child sexual abuse, or escape).

Table 9 provides the statistics on the number of victims involved in vehicular homicide sentencing events in Maryland circuit courts from FY 2022 to FY 2026.

Table 9. Victim Count and Sentence Type for Vehicular Homicide Offenses Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts, FY 2022 through FY 2026

	Vehicular Homicide			**Consecutive Sentences**		**Concurrent Sentences**	
	#		%	#	%	#	%
One	290		91.8%	-	-	-	-
Two	22		7.0%	20	90.9%	2	9.1%
Three	2		0.6%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
Four	1		0.3%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Five	0		0.0%	-	-	-	-
Six	1		0.3%	1	100%	0	0.0%
Total	**316**		**100%**	**23**	**88.5%**	**3**	**11.5%**

Tables 10 and 11 provide statistics on special victim vulnerability and non-suspended sentence length when special victim vulnerability is scored for offenses sentenced in Maryland circuit courts from FY 2022 through FY 2026.

Table 10. Special Victim Vulnerability for Vehicular Homicide Offenses Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts, FY 2022 through FY 2026

	All Person Offenses		Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter		Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired		Vehicular Manslaughter	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	5,408	11.3%	18	19.8%	4	8.2%	27	12.9%
No	42,273	88.7%	73	80.2%	45	91.8%	183	87.1%
Total	**47,681**		**91**		**49**		**210**	

Note. Special victim vulnerability "refers to cases in which the relative status of the victim tends to render the actions of the perpetrator more serious." Per the MSGM, "[a] vulnerable victim is anyone: a. Younger than 11 years old; b. 65 years old or older; or c. Having a temporary or permanent physical or mental disability, including an individual who is physically or mentally limited in a material way. Examples of a temporary physical or mental limitation include, but are not limited to, instances when the offender knew or should have known the victim was pregnant, unconscious, asleep, or intoxicated." (MSGM, Chapter 6.1.D).

Table 11. Non-Suspended Sentence of Guidelines Individuals Sentenced in Maryland Circuit Courts for Vehicular Homicide Offenses when Special Victim Vulnerability is Scored, FY 2022 through FY 2026

	All Person Offenses		Criminally Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter		Negligent Homicide While Under Influence/Impaired		Vehicular Manslaughter	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No incarceration	1,468	27.1%	6	33.3%	0	0.0%	3	11.1%
1 day - 6 months	957	17.7%	6	33.3%	0	0.0%	1	3.7%
>6 months - 1 year	515	9.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.4%
>1 year - 2 years	626	11.6%	4	22.2%	0	0.0%	4	14.8%
>2 years - 3 years	215	4.0%	2	11.1%	1	25.0%	3	11.1%
>3 years - 5 years	469	8.7%	0	0.0%	3	75.0%	4	14.8%
>5 years - 10 years	526	9.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	29.6%
>10 years	632	11.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.4%
Total	**5,408**		**18**		**4**		**27**	
Average	**4.6 years**		**8.5 months**		**4.0 years**		**4.9 years**	