

SENTENCING OF NONVIOLENT AND NONSERIOUS
OFFENDERS; SENSE OF CONGRESS

Pub. L. 98-473, title II, § 239, Oct. 12, 1984, 98 Stat. 2039, provided that:

“Since, due to an impending crisis in prison overcrowding, available Federal prison space must be treated as a scarce resource in the sentencing of criminal defendants;

“Since, sentencing decisions should be designed to ensure that prison resources are, first and foremost, reserved for those violent and serious criminal offenders who pose the most dangerous threat to society;

“Since, in cases of nonviolent and nonserious offenders, the interests of society as a whole as well as individual victims of crime can continue to be served through the imposition of alternative sentences, such as restitution and community service;

“Since, in the two years preceding the enactment of sentencing guidelines, Federal sentencing practice should ensure that scarce prison resources are available to house violent and serious criminal offenders by the increased use of restitution, community service, and other alternative sentences in cases of nonviolent and nonserious offenders: Now, therefore, be it

“Declared, That it is the sense of the Senate that in the two years preceding the enactment of the sentencing guidelines, Federal judges, in determining the particular sentence to be imposed, consider—

“(1) the nature and circumstances of the offense and the history and characteristics of the defendant;

“(2) the general appropriateness of imposing a sentence other than imprisonment in cases in which the defendant has not been convicted of a crime of violence or otherwise serious offense; and

“(3) the general appropriateness of imposing a sentence of imprisonment in cases in which the defendant has been convicted of a crime of violence or otherwise serious offense.”

§ 3552. Presentence reports

(a) PRESENTENCE INVESTIGATION AND REPORT BY PROBATION OFFICER.—A United States probation officer shall make a presentence investigation of a defendant that is required pursuant to the provisions of Rule 32(c) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, and shall, before the imposition of sentence, report the results of the investigation to the court.

(b) PRESENTENCE STUDY AND REPORT BY BUREAU OF PRISONS.—If the court, before or after its receipt of a report specified in subsection (a) or (c), desires more information than is otherwise available to it as a basis for determining the sentence to be imposed on a defendant found guilty of a misdemeanor or felony, it may order a study of the defendant. The study shall be conducted in the local community by qualified consultants unless the sentencing judge finds that there is a compelling reason for the study to be done by the Bureau of Prisons or there are no adequate professional resources available in the local community to perform the study. The period of the study shall be no more than sixty days. The order shall specify the additional information that the court needs before determining the sentence to be imposed. Such an order shall be treated for administrative purposes as a provisional sentence of imprisonment for the maximum term authorized by section 3581(b) for the offense committed. The study shall inquire into such matters as are specified by the court and any other matters that the Bureau of Prisons or the professional consultants believe are pertinent to the factors set forth in

section 3553(a). The period of the study may, in the discretion of the court, be extended for an additional period of not more than sixty days. By the expiration of the period of the study, or by the expiration of any extension granted by the court, the United States marshal shall, if the defendant is in custody, return the defendant to the court for final sentencing. The Bureau of Prisons or the professional consultants shall provide the court with a written report of the pertinent results of the study and make to the court whatever recommendations the Bureau or the consultants believe will be helpful to a proper resolution of the case. The report shall include recommendations of the Bureau or the consultants concerning the guidelines and policy statements, promulgated by the Sentencing Commission pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 994(a), that they believe are applicable to the defendant's case. After receiving the report and the recommendations, the court shall proceed finally to sentence the defendant in accordance with the sentencing alternatives and procedures available under this chapter.

(c) PRESENTENCE EXAMINATION AND REPORT BY PSYCHIATRIC OR PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS.—If the court, before or after its receipt of a report specified in subsection (a) or (b) desires more information than is otherwise available to it as a basis for determining the mental condition of the defendant, the court may order the same psychiatric or psychological examination and report thereon as may be ordered under section 4244(b) of this title.

(d) DISCLOSURE OF PRESENTENCE REPORTS.—The court shall assure that a report filed pursuant to this section is disclosed to the defendant, the counsel for the defendant, and the attorney for the Government at least ten days prior to the date set for sentencing, unless this minimum period is waived by the defendant. The court shall provide a copy of the presentence report to the attorney for the Government to use in collecting an assessment, criminal fine, forfeiture or restitution imposed.

(Added Pub. L. 98-473, title II, § 212(a)(2), Oct. 12, 1984, 98 Stat. 1988; amended Pub. L. 99-646, § 7(a), Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3593; Pub. L. 101-647, title XXXVI, § 3625, Nov. 29, 1990, 104 Stat. 4965.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1990—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 101-647 inserted at end “The court shall provide a copy of the presentence report to the attorney for the Government to use in collecting an assessment, criminal fine, forfeiture or restitution imposed.”

1986—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 99-646, § 7(a)(1), (2), substituted “study shall be” for “study shall take” and inserted “, if the defendant is in custody,” after “United States marshal shall”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 99-646, § 7(a)(3), substituted “the court may order the same psychiatric or psychological examination and report thereon as may be ordered under section 4244(b) of this title” for “it may order that the defendant undergo a psychiatric or psychological examination and that the court be provided with a written report of the results of the examination pursuant to the provisions of section 4247”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-647 effective 180 days after Nov. 29, 1990, see section 3631 of Pub. L. 101-647, set out as an Effective Date note under section 3001 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 99-646, §7(b), Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3593, provided that: "The amendments made by this section [amending this section] shall take effect on the date of the taking effect of section 3552 of title 18, United States Code [Nov. 1, 1987]."

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Nov. 1, 1987, and applicable only to offenses committed after the taking effect of this section, see section 235(a)(1) of Pub. L. 98-473, set out as a note under section 3551 of this title.

USE OF CERTAIN TECHNOLOGY TO FACILITATE CRIMINAL CONDUCT

Pub. L. 104-294, title V, §501, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3497, provided that:

"(a) INFORMATION.—The Administrative Office of the United States courts shall establish policies and procedures for the inclusion in all presentence reports of information that specifically identifies and describes any use of encryption or scrambling technology that would be relevant to an enhancement under section 3C1.1 (dealing with Obstructing or Impeding the Administration of Justice) of the Sentencing Guidelines or to offense conduct under the Sentencing Guidelines.

"(b) COMPILING AND REPORT.—The United States Sentencing Commission shall—

"(1) compile and analyze any information contained in documentation described in subsection (a) relating to the use of encryption or scrambling technology to facilitate or conceal criminal conduct; and

"(2) based on the information compiled and analyzed under paragraph (1), annually report to the Congress on the nature and extent of the use of encryption or scrambling technology to facilitate or conceal criminal conduct."

§ 3553. Imposition of a sentence

(a) FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN IMPOSING A SENTENCE.—The court shall impose a sentence sufficient, but not greater than necessary, to comply with the purposes set forth in paragraph (2) of this subsection. The court, in determining the particular sentence to be imposed, shall consider—

(1) the nature and circumstances of the offense and the history and characteristics of the defendant;

(2) the need for the sentence imposed—

(A) to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote respect for the law, and to provide just punishment for the offense;

(B) to afford adequate deterrence to criminal conduct;

(C) to protect the public from further crimes of the defendant; and

(D) to provide the defendant with needed educational or vocational training, medical care, or other correctional treatment in the most effective manner;

(3) the kinds of sentences available;

(4) the kinds of sentence and the sentencing range established for—

(A) the applicable category of offense committed by the applicable category of defendant as set forth in the guidelines—

(i) issued by the Sentencing Commission pursuant to section 994(a)(1) of title 28, United States Code, subject to any amendments made to such guidelines by act of Congress (regardless of whether such amendments have yet to be incorporated by the Sentencing Commission into amendments issued under section 994(p) of title 28); and

(ii) that, except as provided in section 3742(g), are in effect on the date the defendant is sentenced; or

(B) in the case of a violation of probation or supervised release, the applicable guidelines or policy statements issued by the Sentencing Commission pursuant to section 994(a)(3) of title 28, United States Code, taking into account any amendments made to such guidelines or policy statements by act of Congress (regardless of whether such amendments have yet to be incorporated by the Sentencing Commission into amendments issued under section 994(p) of title 28);

(5) any pertinent policy statement—

(A) issued by the Sentencing Commission pursuant to section 994(a)(2) of title 28, United States Code, subject to any amendments made to such policy statement by act of Congress (regardless of whether such amendments have yet to be incorporated by the Sentencing Commission into amendments issued under section 994(p) of title 28); and

(B) that, except as provided in section 3742(g), is in effect on the date the defendant is sentenced.¹

(6) the need to avoid unwarranted sentence disparities among defendants with similar records who have been found guilty of similar conduct; and

(7) the need to provide restitution to any victims of the offense.

(b) APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES IN IMPOSING A SENTENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the court shall impose a sentence of the kind, and within the range, referred to in subsection (a)(4) unless the court finds that there exists an aggravating or mitigating circumstance of a kind, or to a degree, not adequately taken into consideration by the Sentencing Commission in formulating the guidelines that should result in a sentence different from that described. In determining whether a circumstance was adequately taken into consideration, the court shall consider only the sentencing guidelines, policy statements, and official commentary of the Sentencing Commission. In the absence of an applicable sentencing guideline, the court shall impose an appropriate sentence, having due regard for the purposes set forth in subsection (a)(2). In the absence of an applicable sentencing guideline in the case of an offense other than a petty offense, the court shall also have due regard for the relationship of the sentence imposed to sentences prescribed by guidelines ap-

¹ So in original. The period probably should be a semicolon.