



PRETRIAL SERVICES AGENCY *for the* DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PROMOTING PRETRIAL JUSTICE AND ENHANCING COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Arrest-Free Rates for Defendants Released to the Community in Washington, DC:
 FY 2019 – FY 2023**

Over the last 57 years, the Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia (PSA) has become a national leader in the pretrial justice field by effectively supporting a system of non-financial release that promotes the fair administration of justice, while also recognizing the need to assure community safety.

Tracking new arrests during the pretrial supervision period is a critical national standard for pretrial service programs and used as an outcome measure in at least 36 states and the federal judicial system.¹

PSA defines the arrest-free rate as the percentage of non-surety released defendants who remain free of new, papered, US or serious traffic charges in Washington, DC, while the original case is pending. The annual target for PSA’s arrest-free rate is 88%. Our analysis also includes data for new arrests occurring in the neighboring states of Maryland and Virginia;² and nationwide.

During fiscal year 2023, a total of 14,561 defendants were released to the community while awaiting trial. Of these, 1,128 defendants were arrested for an offense within DC while awaiting trial, leaving an arrest-free rate of 92%. When PSA’s arrest-free rate is expanded to include new arrests occurring in Maryland and Virginia, the rate remains relatively stable at around 90%. Expanding the analysis nationwide, the arrest-free rate remains consistent at 90%. The table below compares arrest-free rates locally, regionally, and nationally.

Fiscal Year	Released Defendants	New Arrests within DC		New Arrests within DC, MD, VA		New Arrests Nationwide	
		Number	Arrest-Free Rate	Number	Arrest-Free Rate	Number	Arrest-Free Rate
2019	18,362	2,344	87%	2,398	87%	2,402	87%
2020	15,438	1,862	88%	1,910	88%	1,914	88%
2021	15,843	1,625	90%	1,698	89%	1,707	89%
2022	16,090	1,200	93%	1,258	92%	1,270	92%
2023*	14,561	1,128	92%	1,420	90%	1,457	90%

*On February 9, 2024, the FY 2023 arrest-free data were updated to reflect a correction to Released Defendants and New Arrests within DC defendant counts.

¹ Source: Measuring What Matters: Outcomes and Performance Measures for the Pretrial Field, National Institute of Corrections, US Department of Justice, Washington, DC, 2011.

² This includes statewide data, but the majority of arrests occur in Arlington and Fairfax Counties in Virginia; and Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in Maryland.