



Arrest-Free Rates for Defendants Released to the Community in Washington, DC
FY 2016 - 2020

Over the last 50 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 measured as an outcome 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 the Agency’s arrest-free rate is 88%. Our analysis also includes data for new arrests occurring in the neighboring states of Maryland and Virginia²; and nationwide.

During Fiscal Year 2020, a total of 15,438 defendants were released to the community while awaiting trial. Of this number, 1,862 defendants were arrested for an offense within DC while awaiting trial, leaving an arrest-free rate of 88%. When PSA’s arrest-free rate is expanded to include new arrests occurring in Maryland and Virginia, the rate remains relatively stable at around 88%. Expanding the analysis nationwide, the arrest-free rate remains consistent at 88%. 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
2016	19,975	2,500	88%	2,965	85%	2,990	85%
2017	21,529	3,120	86%	3,313	85%	3,320	85%
2018	21,226	2,740	87%	2,828	87%	2,830	87%
2019	18,362	2,344	87%	2,398	87%	2,402	87%
2020	15,438	1,862	88%	1,910	88%	1,914	88%

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¹ 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.