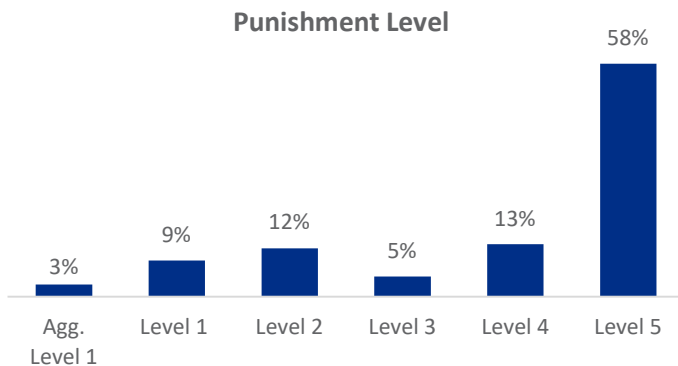


FISCAL YEAR 2024

- ⇒ There were 24,694 convictions for Driving while Impaired (DWI) offenses in FY 2024.
- ⇒ The majority of DWI convictions were in Level 5 (58%).
- ⇒ Most DWI offenders received probation (94%).

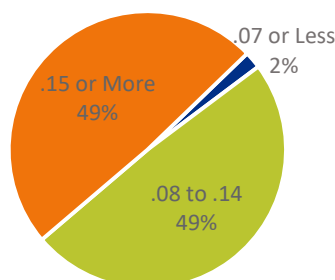
Punishment Level



Offender Characteristics

- Nearly three-fourths of DWI offenders were male (74%).
- Over half (52%) of offenders were White, 30% were Black, 9% were Hispanic, and 9% were Other.
- The average age at offense was 37 years old.
- Of convictions with a BAC recorded (75%), the .08 to .14 category and the .15 or More category each comprised 49% of convictions.

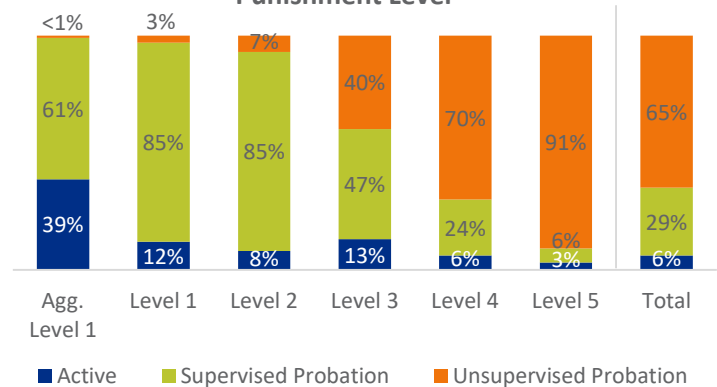
Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)



Punishment

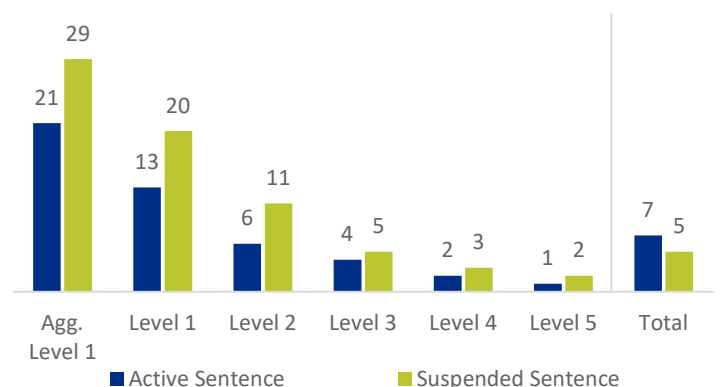
- 6% of DWI convictions resulted in an active sentence, 29% resulted in supervised probation, and 65% resulted in unsupervised probation.
- Aggravated Level 1 had the highest percentage with active sentences (39%); Level 5 had the highest percentage with unsupervised probation (91%).
- Level 3 had a higher percentage of active sentences than Level 2 (13% compared to 8%), possibly due to DWI sentencing factors.

Type of Sentence Imposed by Punishment Level



- On average, Aggravated Level 1 offenders had the longest active sentences (21 months).
- Among convictions in Level 1 through Level 5, the average active sentence length was generally half of the statutory maximum.

Average Sentence Imposed (Months) by Punishment Level



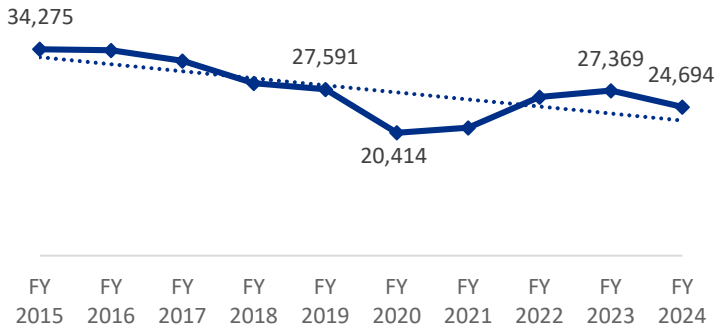
- Probation was imposed for all 23,061 DWI convictions with a suspended sentence; over two-thirds (69%) received unsupervised probation.
- The average probation term was 18 months for supervised and 13 months for unsupervised probation.
- Special probation was ordered for 25% of offenders with probation; the average period of confinement for special probation was 23 days. Nearly all Aggravated Level 1 sentences (96%) included special probation.
- Fines were imposed for 81% of DWI convictions with an average fine of \$203. The most frequently imposed fine was \$100.

QUICK FACTS: DWI CONVICTIONS

FISCAL YEAR 2015 – FISCAL YEAR 2024

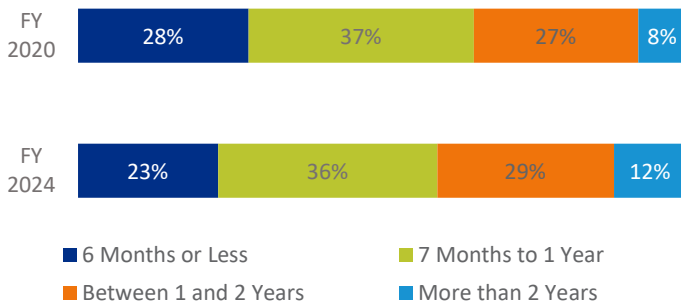
Overall, DWI convictions have declined 28% since FY 2015; the sharpest decline occurred with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 (26% from FY 2019 to FY 2020). DWI convictions decreased 10% from FY 2023 to FY 2024. The distribution of DWI convictions by punishment level has remained stable since FY 2020. Over half of convictions were for Level 5 offenses, ranging from 55% to 58% per year.

DWI Convictions



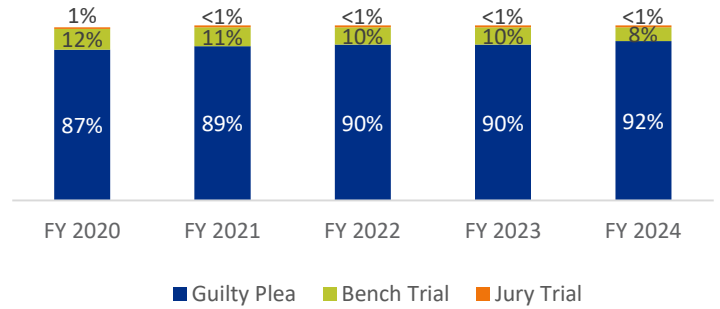
A lower percentage of DWI convictions were sentenced in 1 year or less (59% in FY 2024 compared to 65% in FY 2020). Correspondingly, the percentage of convictions that took more than 2 years to be sentenced has increased. In both years, median time to sentencing decreased as the punishment level decreased, with the median for Aggravated Level 1 convictions being about 4 months longer than Level 5 convictions.

Time to Sentencing



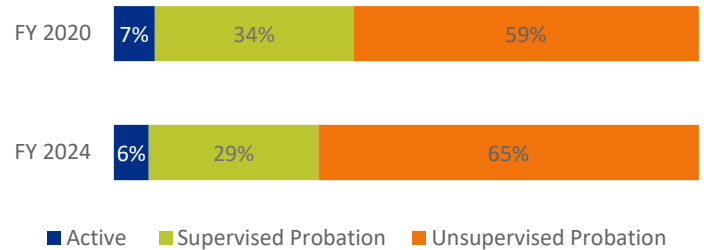
The percentage of convictions resulting from guilty pleas has increased (92% in FY 2024 compared to 87% in FY 2020), while the percentage resulting from bench trials has decreased (8% in FY 2024 compared to 12% in FY 2020). Jury trials typically occurred in less than 1% of convictions.

Method of Disposition



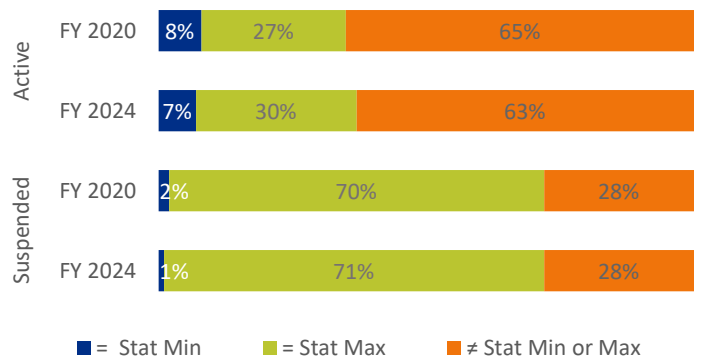
A higher percentage of DWI convictions resulted in unsupervised probation in FY 2024 (65%) compared to FY 2020 (59%).

Type of Punishment



Relative to the statutory minimum and maximums, sentences imposed were similar in FY 2020 and FY 2024; most suspended sentence lengths were equal to the statutory maximum.

Sentence Length Relative to the Statutory Minimum and Maximum Sentences



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2015 – FY 2024 DWI Statistical Report Data

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The Honorable Charlie Brown, Chairman
Michelle Hall, Executive Director

For the NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission's *DWI Statistical Report* and all other publications, see the Commission's website: www.NCSPAC.org.