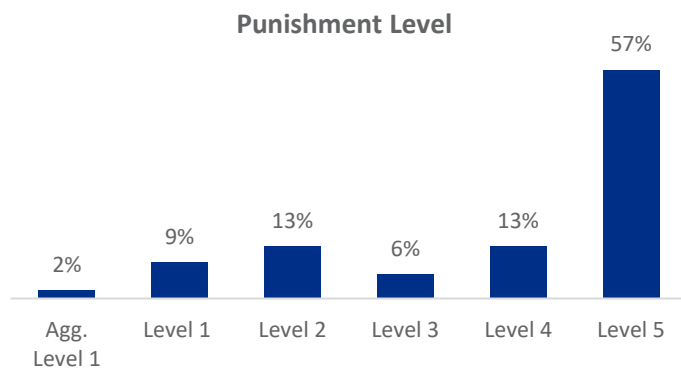


## FISCAL YEAR 2023

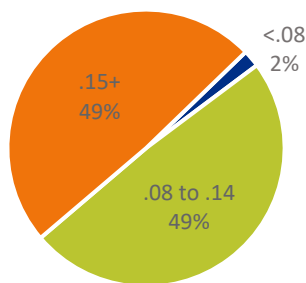
- ⇒ There were 27,369 sentences imposed for DWI convictions in FY 2023.
- ⇒ The majority of DWI convictions were in Level 5 (57%).
- ⇒ Most convicted DWI offenders received probation (94%).



### Offender Characteristics

- Nearly three-fourths of DWI offenders were male (74%).
- Over half (51%) of offenders were White, 31% were Black, 11% were Hispanic, and 7% were Other.
- The average age at offense was 36 years old.
- Of offenders with a BAC recorded (75%), nearly half (49%) were in the highest BAC category (BAC of .15 or more).

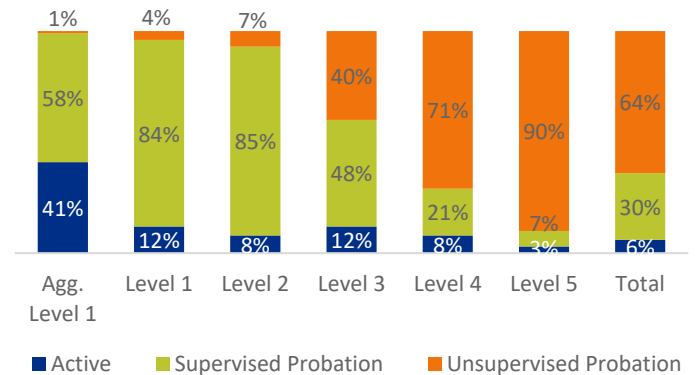
### Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)



### Punishment

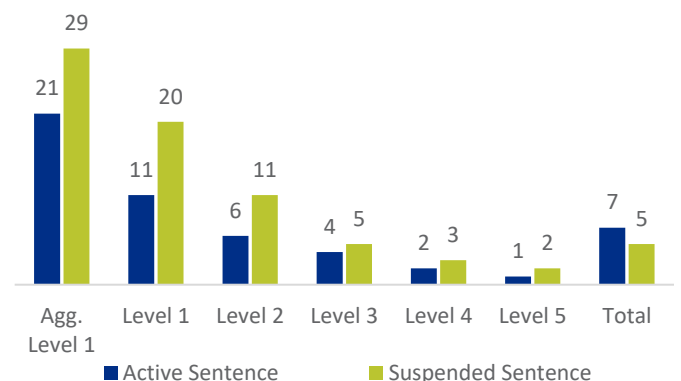
- 6% of DWI convictions resulted in an active sentence, 30% resulted in supervised probation, and 64% resulted in unsupervised probation.
- Aggravated Level 1 had the highest percentage with active sentences (41%); Level 5 had the highest percentage with unsupervised probation (90%).
- Level 3 had a higher percentage of active sentences than Level 2 (12% 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).
- For all punishment levels, the average active sentence length was roughly half of the statutory maximum.

### Average Sentence Imposed (Months) by Punishment Level



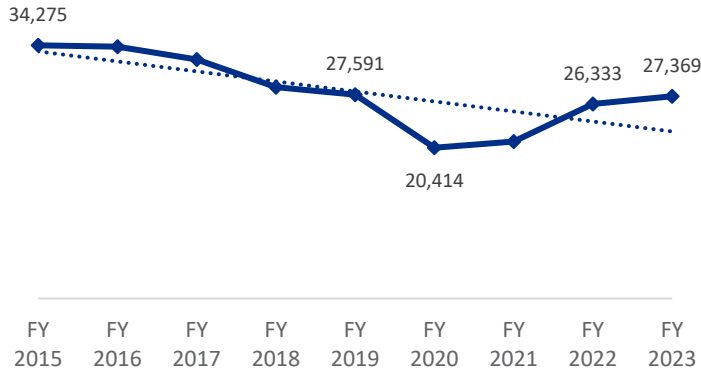
- Probation was imposed for all 25,588 DWI convictions with a suspended sentence; over two-thirds (68%) received unsupervised probation.
- The average probation term was 18 months for supervised and 13 months for unsupervised probation.
- Special probation was ordered for 27% of offenders with probation; the average term of confinement for special probation was 23 days. Nearly all Aggravated Level 1 sentences (97%) included special probation.
- Fines were imposed for 85% of offenders who received probation with an average fine of \$204. The most frequently imposed fine was \$100.

# QUICK FACTS: DWI CONVICTIONS

## FISCAL YEAR 2015 – FISCAL YEAR 2023

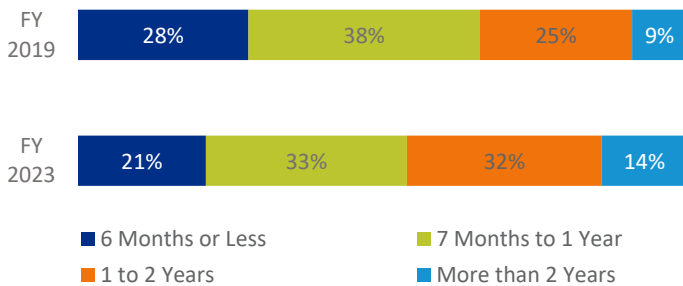
Overall, DWI convictions have declined 20% since FY 2015; the sharpest decline occurred with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 (26% from FY 2019 to FY 2020). DWI convictions increased 4% from FY 2022 to FY 2023 and have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**DWI Convictions**



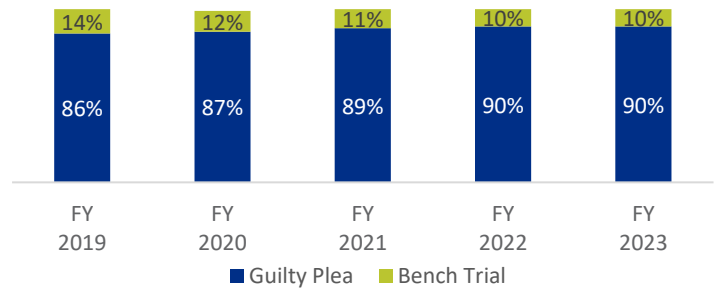
A lower percentage of DWI convictions were sentenced in 1 year or less (54% in FY 2023 compared to 66% in FY 2019). Correspondingly, the percentage of convictions that take more than 2 years to be sentenced has increased. The median time to sentencing was also longer for FY 2023 (12 months) compared to previous years (ranging from 9 to 10 months).

**Time to Sentencing**



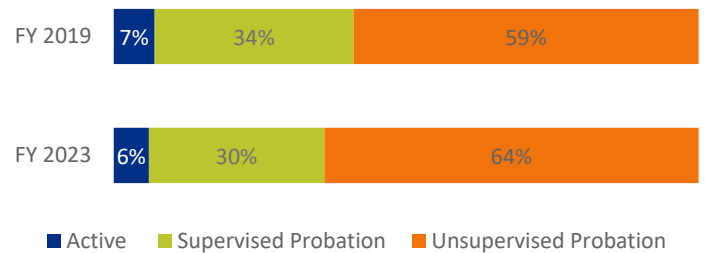
The percentage of convictions resulting from guilty pleas has increased (90% in FY 2023 compared to 86% in FY 2019), while the percentage resulting from bench trials has decreased (10% in FY 2023 compared to 14% in FY 2019). Jury trials typically occurred for less than 1% of convictions.

**Method of Disposition**



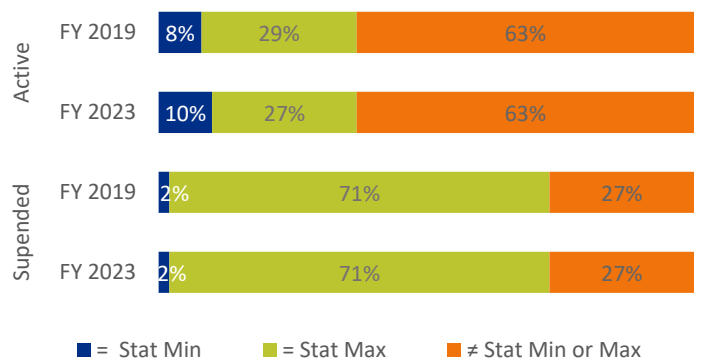
The distribution of DWI convictions by punishment level and punishment type has remained stable since FY 2015. Over half of convictions were for Level 5 offenses, ranging from 55% to 57% per year. The majority of offenders received unsupervised probation.

**Type of Punishment**



Relative to the statutory minimum and maximums, sentences imposed were similar in FY 2019 and FY 2023; most suspended sentence lengths were equal to the statutory maximum.

**Sentence Length Relative to the Statutory Minimum and Maximum Sentences**



Note: FY 2015 is the first year DWI data was published by the NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission.  
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2015 – FY 2023 DWI Statistical Report Data

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(919) 890-1470

**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](http://www.NCSPAC.org).