



October 15, 2024

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

The annual public comments hearing of the Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MSCCSP or Commission) is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.** It will be held at the Maryland Judicial Center, 187 Harry S. Truman Pkwy., Annapolis, MD 21401.

The MSCCSP invites public comment regarding criminal sentencing policy-related issues. To accommodate all who wish to participate in the meeting, the Commission requests that each speaker limit his or her comments to five minutes. All who are interested in speaking at the meeting are asked to register and submit a written version of their testimony in advance but not later than November 29, 2024.

Please register and submit written testimony by email to David Soulé, Executive Director of the Commission, at dsoule@umd.edu.

Registration is necessary only for those who wish to speak at the public hearing. If participants are not able to present testimony in-person, a videoconference option can be made available upon request. Those who wish to simply observe may view the livestream via the MSCCSP YouTube channel at: <https://youtube.com/live/4WT33HYzJn0>.



Establishment and Charge of the MSCCSP

The Maryland General Assembly created the MSCCSP in May 1999. In July 1999, the MSCCSP formally replaced its predecessor advisory commission, the Maryland Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy. The governing legislation for the MSCCSP, located in Subtitle 2 of Title 6 of the Criminal Procedure Article of the Code of Maryland (Statutes) sets out six legislative goals for sentencing in Maryland, expressing the General Assembly's intention that:

- (1) sentencing should be fair and proportional and that sentencing policies should reduce unwarranted disparity, including any racial disparity, in sentences for criminals who have committed similar crimes and have similar criminal histories;
- (2) sentencing policies should help citizens to understand how long a criminal will be confined;
- (3) sentencing policies should preserve meaningful judicial discretion and sufficient flexibility to allow individualized sentences;
- (4) sentencing guidelines be voluntary;
- (5) the priority for the capacity and use of correctional facilities should be the confinement of violent and career criminals; and
- (6) sentencing judges in the State should be able to impose the most appropriate criminal penalties, including corrections options programs for appropriate criminals.

The MSCCSP was designed and authorized with the purpose of fulfilling those legislative intentions.

MSCCSP Composition

The MSCCSP is composed of the 19 members listed on the next page. The Chair, the Honorable Dana M. Middleton, was appointed by the Governor in July 2023.



Members of the Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy

Members Appointed by the Governor

Chair

Honorable Dana M. Middleton

State's Attorney

Robert H. Harvey, Jr., Esquire

Criminal Defense Attorney

Richard A. Finci, Esquire

Victims' Advocacy Group

Alethea P. Miller

Law Enforcement

Deputy Chief Richard E. Gibson

Criminal Justice or Corrections Policy Expert

Brian D. Johnson, Ph.D.

Local Detention Center

Rodney R. Davis

Public

Kyle E. Scherer, Esquire

Public

Larry L. Johnson

Members Appointed by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland

Appellate Courts

Honorable Melanie M. Shaw

Circuit Court

Honorable Brian L. DeLeonardo

District Court

Honorable Michelle R. Saunders

Members Appointed by the President of the Senate

Senator

Honorable Charles E. Sydnor, III

Senator

Honorable Christopher R. West

Members Appointed by the Speaker of the House

Delegate

Honorable J. Sandy Bartlett

Delegate

Honorable David Moon

Ex-Officio Members

Attorney General

Honorable Anthony G. Brown

State Public Defender

Natasha Dartigue, Esquire

Secretary of Public Safety & Correctional Services

Carolyn J. Scruggs