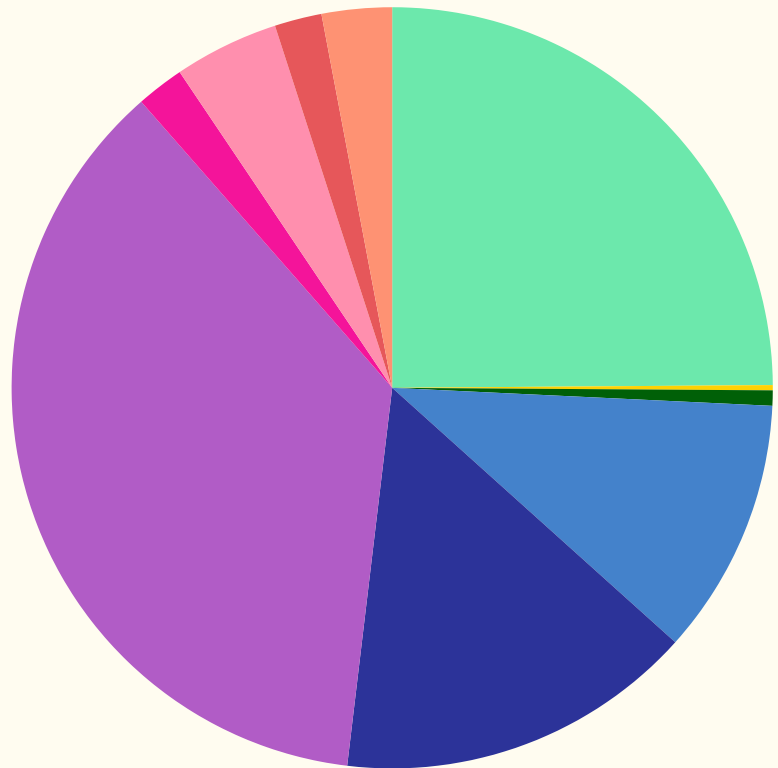


Women & Gender-Diverse Crime Statistics

Criminal charges received by women & gender-diverse people in Halifax & Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

- Property Offences
- Administration of Justice Offences
- Violent Offences*
- Weapons and Firearms Offences
- Driving Offences
- Other Offences
- Fraudulent Transaction Offences
- Drug Offences
- Disorderly Conduct Offences
- Sexual Offences



2023-2024

A Note on the Language Used

This study analyzes data from the Provincial Court Dockets (as described under methodology below). It is important to note that the subjects of this study have all been charged with criminal offences, but not all have been found guilty. In an effort to recognize an accused person's presumption of innocence as provided under section 11(d) of *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the subjects of this study will be referred to as (alleged) offenders. The actions they are accused of are the things they (allegedly) committed. This is to acknowledge that while some of the women and gender-diverse individuals have been convicted of the offences for which they have been charged, others are still legally innocent.

Methodology

As the Access to Justice Coordinator at Coverdale Justice Society, I received the Nova Scotia court dockets via email each morning that matters were scheduled. This report is based on my analysis of the dockets from the Halifax and Dartmouth Provincial Courts from May 10, 2023 until May 10, 2024. These dates were arbitrarily chosen, however, the conscious aim was to conduct research for a period of one year. Youth Court matters were not considered within the scope of this study.

Identifying Female (Alleged) Offenders

It is important to note that no names or identifying features were recorded throughout the course of this research. However, the method used to identify female and gender-diverse (alleged) offenders required analyzing their names. The dockets do not list the pronouns of (alleged) offenders.

To identify female (alleged) offenders, gender was assumed based on their first and middle names (if applicable) as they appeared in the provincial court dockets. The charges associated with names that are typically assigned to women and girls were recorded. When I was unfamiliar with a particular name, I conducted external research to determine which gender was most frequently associated with that name. When my research indicated the name was more commonly used as a woman's name, I recorded the charges associated with those names. When a name was unisex, the charges were recorded assuming the (alleged) offender was female.

Identifying Gender-Diverse (Alleged) Offenders

The gender-diversity of an (alleged) offender was assumed when the provincial court docket listed a name that is typically associated with one gender, followed by AKA and different name that is usually associated with the opposite gender. For example, the name on the docket might have read "Jane Doe AKA John Doe." The charges associated with (alleged) offenders who were identified as gender-diverse though these means were recorded.

Recording Data

I recorded data in a Google Sheets document. Information was gathered under four columns: (1) date, (2) court (Dartmouth or Halifax), (3) *Criminal Code* Section, and (4) offence. All charges associated with a person I had identified as being either a woman or a gender-diverse person using the above methodology were recorded under the "*Criminal Code* Section" column. The column entitled "offence" contained a brief description of the offence from the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations associated with this research method. First, there are limitations to the accuracy of the methodology used to identify women and gender-diverse (alleged) offenders. Though it is still common in many Canadian communities to associate certain names with a particular gender, names themselves are genderless. Additionally, names are becoming increasingly gender-neutral. Not only is it impossible to accurately determine someone's gender from their name alone, gender in general is not something that can be assumed. A person's gender-identity and how they identify cannot be gauged from their name, appearance, or other superficial means. However, because the provincial courts do not ask (alleged) offenders for their pronouns and record them on the provincial court dockets, analyzing names was the best method for identifying women and gender-diverse (alleged) offenders that I had available.

Second, the data collected is not based on unique charges. Instead, every time a female or gender-diverse (alleged) offender was identified, all charges associated with that person on that docket were recorded. This means that each time an (alleged) offender appeared in court, their charge was rerecorded. Without keeping data on the identities of each (alleged) offender and following their case as it moved through the court system, it was impossible to avoid re-recording their charges as they appeared in court.

Overall Results

Total Number of Charges Recorded **35,099**

Unique Charges

*The number of different *Criminal Code* sections recorded

236

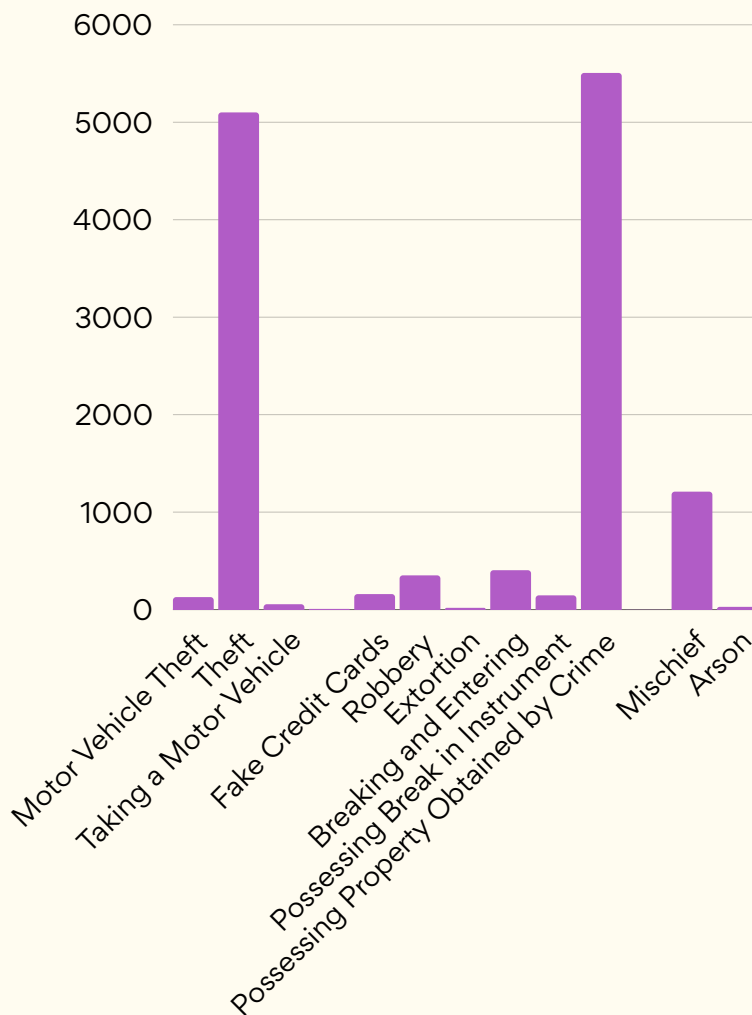
Most Common Charges

Charge	Description	Frequency
355(B)	Possession of property obtained by crime, under \$5,000	4,960
334(B)	Theft under \$5,000	4,942
145(5)(A)	Failure to comply with a condition of a release order	3,718
266	Assault	1,940
733.1(1)(A)	Failure to comply with a probation order.	1,687

Results by Category of Offence

Property Offences

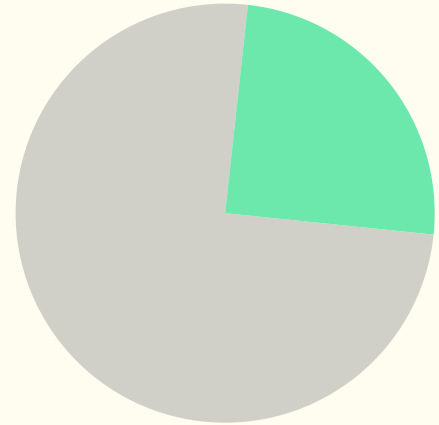
Property offences accounted for **36.7%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of property offences recorded was **13,114**.



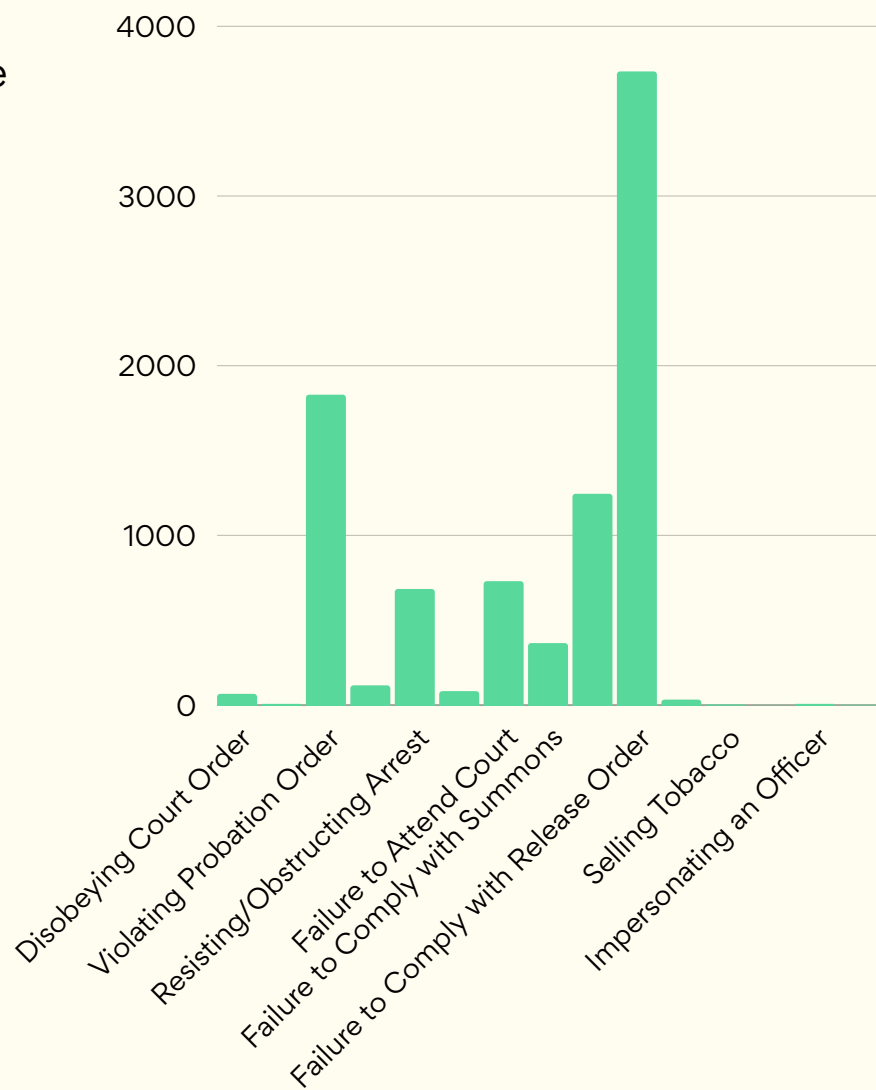
The most common property offences were **possessing/trafficking in property obtained by crime** (354, 355, 355.2) with 5,506 recorded charges and **theft** (334) with 5,101 recorded charges.

Administration of Justice Offences

Administration of justice offences accounted for **24.9%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of administration of justice offences was **8,904**.



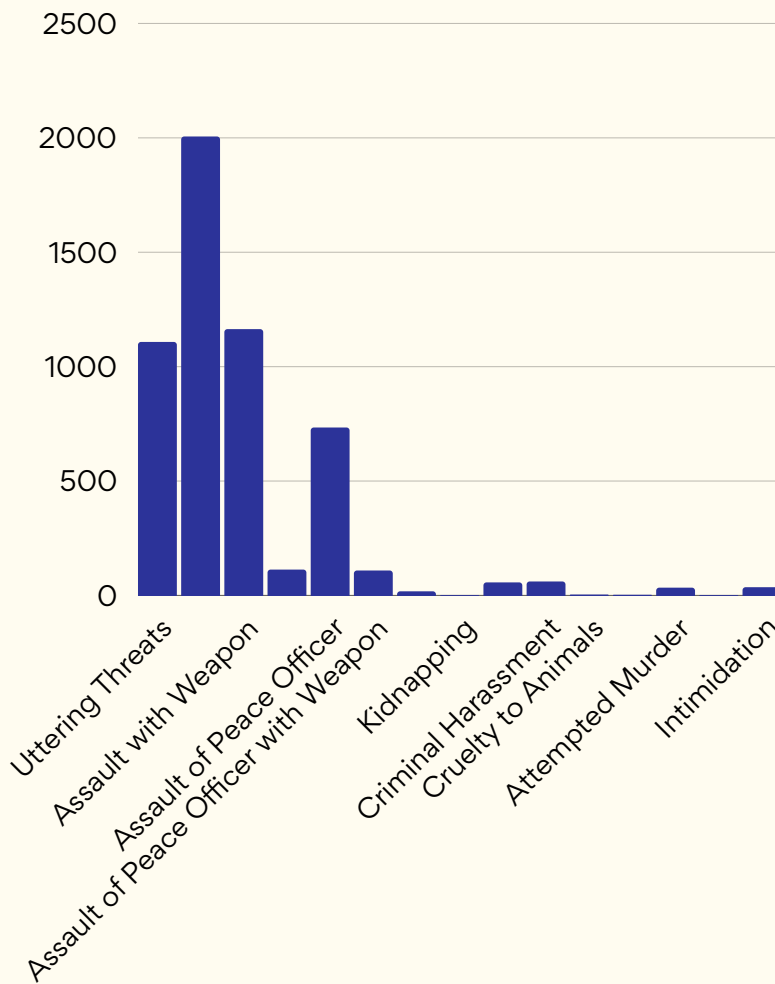
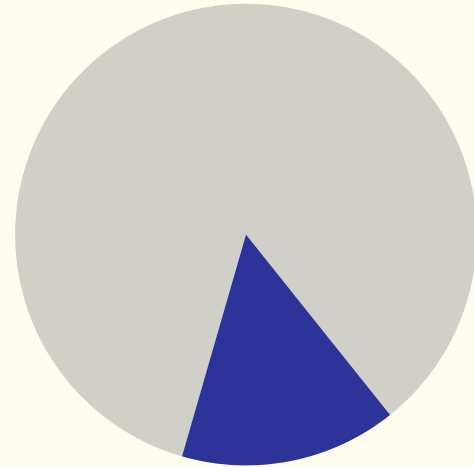
The most common administration of justice offences are caused by disobeying pre-trial release conditions or sentences from previous convictions. The most frequent of these offences were **failure to comply with the conditions of a release order** with 3,734 charges and **violating a probation order** with 1,829 charges.



Violent Offences*

* Though categorized as violent offences, many offences in this section do not involve the physical contact we usually associate with violence.

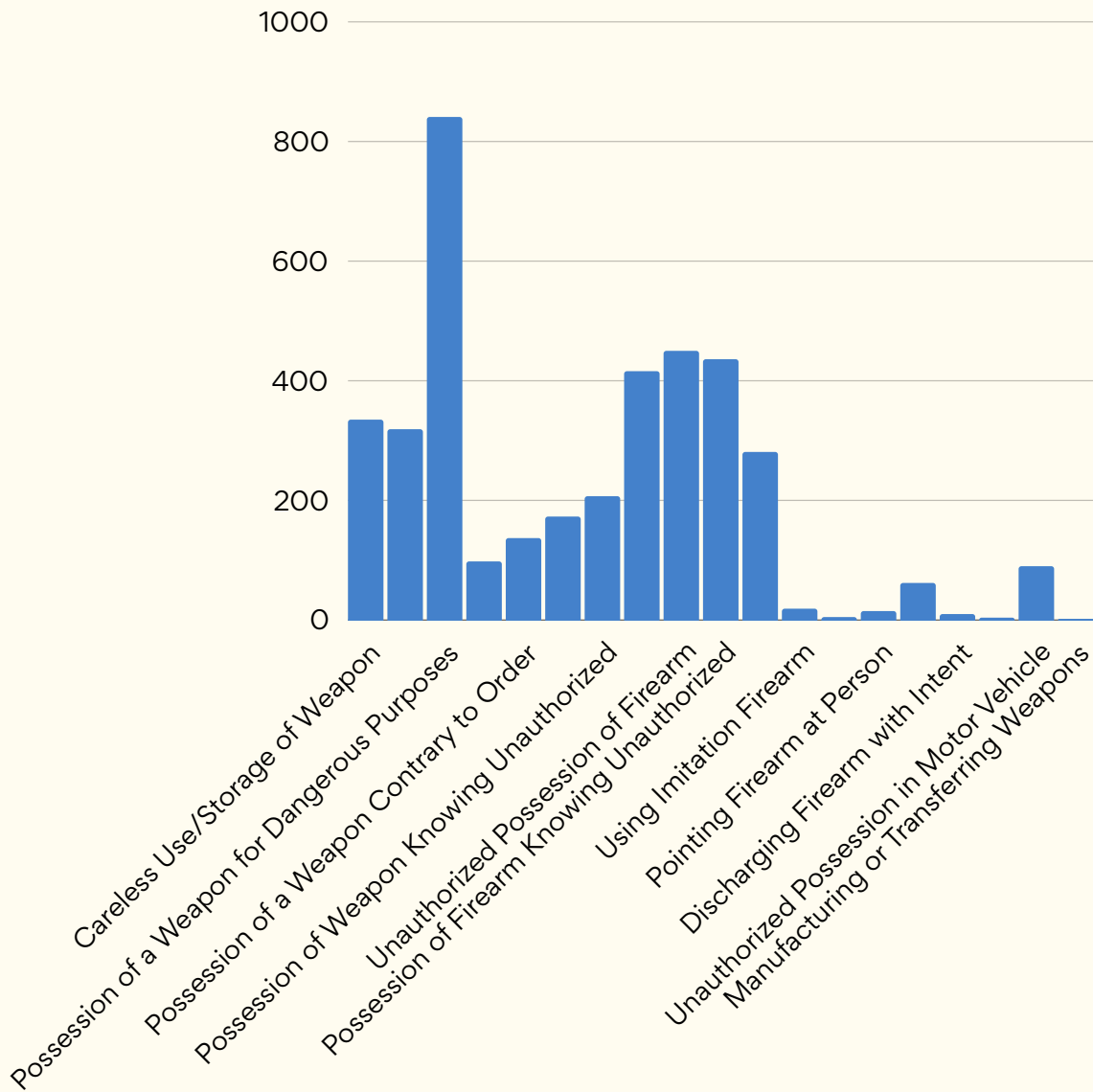
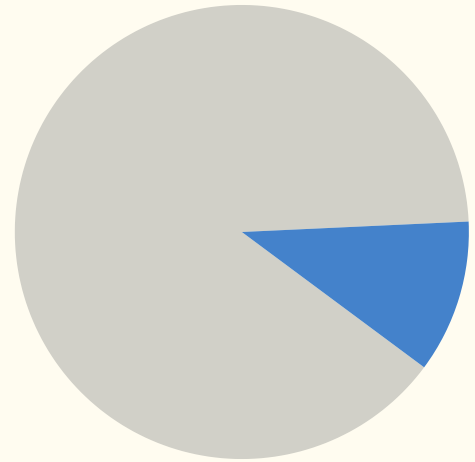
Violent offences account for **15.2%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of violent offences was **5,451**.



The most common violent offence was **assault** (266), often called common assault. Common assault encompasses any application of force, no matter how small. There were **2,006** assaults recorded. Serious violent offences, like murder, were rare. Only 3 murder charges were recorded. Attempted murder was slightly more common, with 34 charges recorded.

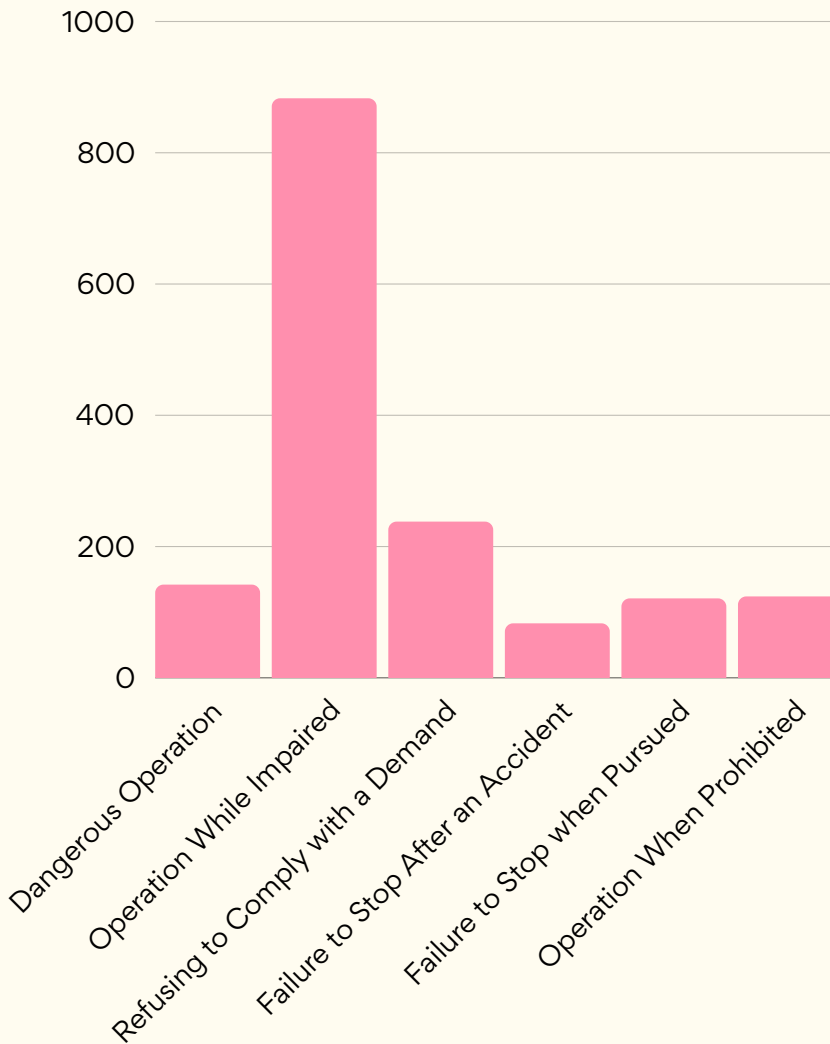
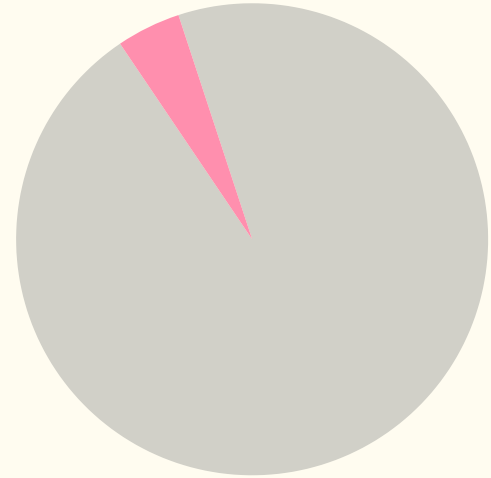
Weapons and Firearms Offences

Weapons and firearms offences accounted for **10.9%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of weapons and firearms offences recorded was **3,900**.



Driving Offences

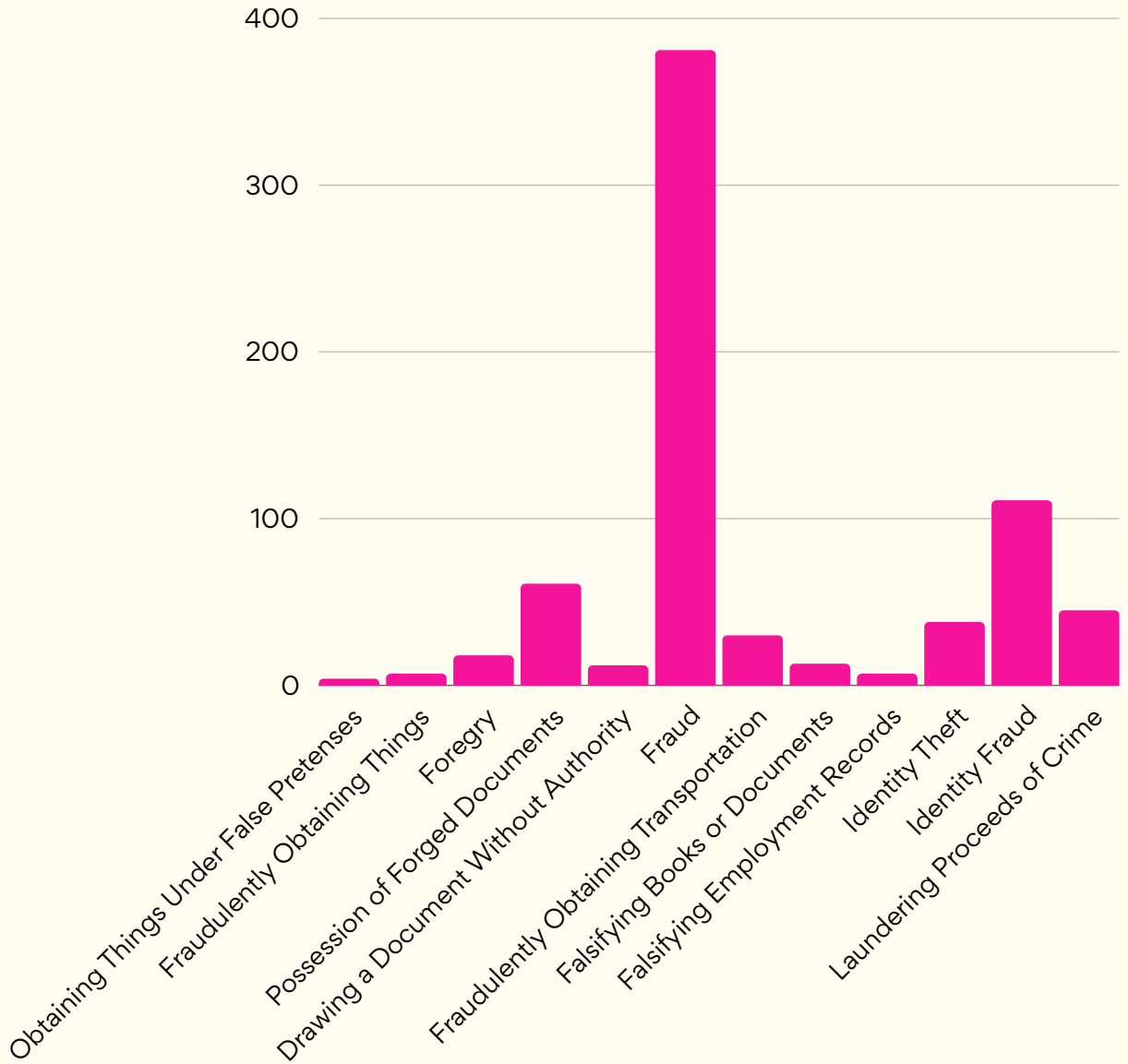
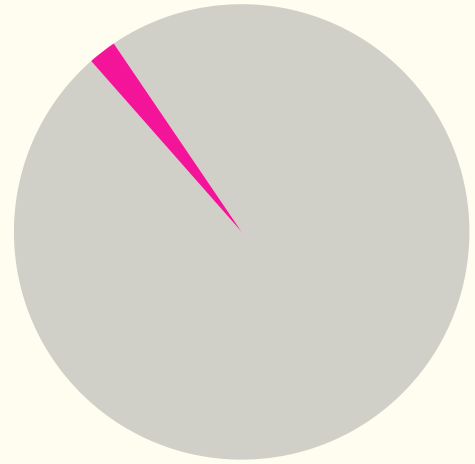
Driving offences accounted for **4.4%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of driving offences recorded was **1,591**.



The most common driving offence was **operation while impaired** (320.14) with 883 recorded charges. Most individuals charged with operation while impaired were charged with both 320.14(A) and (B) together.

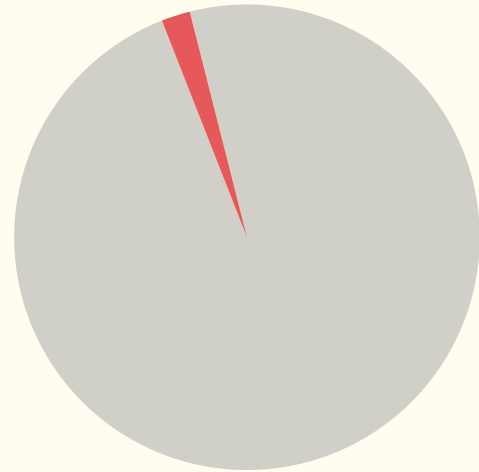
Fraudulent Transactions

Fraudulent transaction offences accounted for **2%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of fraudulent transaction offences was **727**.



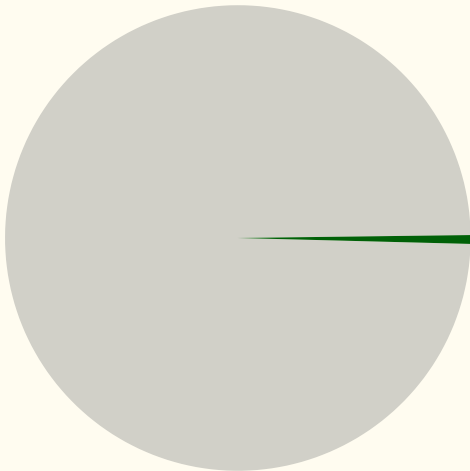
Drug Offences

Drug offences under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)* accounted for **2%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of drug offences was **717**.



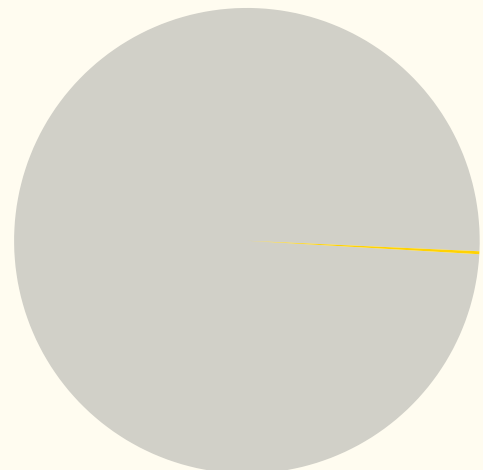
Disorderly Conduct Offences

Disorderly conduct offences accounted for **0.6%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender diverse people. The total number of disorderly conduct offences was **232**. This included 221 for **causing a disturbance** and 11 for **trespassing at night**.



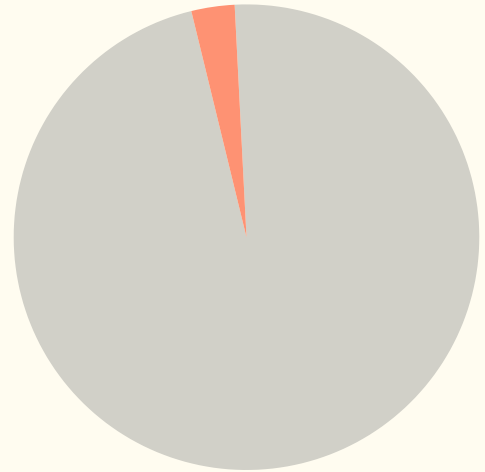
Sexual Offences

Sexual offences accounted for **0.2%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. The total number of sexual offences was **79**. The most common were sexual assault (32 charges), child pornography (14 charges) and human trafficking (8 charges).



Other Offences

Offences which did not fit into one of the above categories accounted for **3%** of all offences (allegedly) committed by women and gender-diverse people. There was a total of **1,066** offences which fell under the “other” category.



By McKinley Kelch - Access to Justice Coordinator

2023-2024