

# Public Prosecutors Office



## Public prosecutor

In criminal cases, public prosecutors have the power to investigate any criminal offense, request proper application of law by courts and control and supervise the execution of judgement, and furthermore, as a representative of public interests, they are given additional authority by the Civil Code and other laws.



Badge of the  
public prosecutor

## Investigation

Public prosecutors interview suspects, victims, and eye-witnesses, carry out supplementary investigation by leading the police in matters for which evidence is insufficient to prove an offense, discover the truth of matters, and make a decision on whether or not to prosecute the suspect.

## Court proceedings

Public prosecutors attend the trial to prove that the defendant (person who has been indicted) has committed the offense by, e.g., submitting evidence to the court and conducting witness examinations, and make a recommendation as to the degree of punishment.

## Public prosecutor's assistant officer

Public prosecutor's assistant officers assist public prosecutors with investigations and court proceedings, and also conduct investigations as per public prosecutors' instructions. Based upon directions for enforcement from public prosecutors, they levy fines, detain those who are not yet imprisoned when a prison sentence, etc.(※) has been decided, and so forth. In addition, they are in charge of general affairs and accounting.



Badge of the public  
prosecutor's  
assistant officer

(※)From June 2025, "imprisonment with or without work" will be abolished and replaced with "imprisonment".

The Public Prosecutors Office is an administrative system in Japan, being an extraordinary organ of the Ministry of Justice, and consists of four types of offices, which are located corresponding to their respective courts.

### Supreme Public Prosecutors Office: 1 office

The Supreme Public Prosecutors Office corresponding to the Supreme Court is located in Tokyo. This handles the criminal cases subject to final appeals from judgement rendered by High Courts.

### High Public Prosecutors Offices: 8 offices

The High Public Prosecutors Offices corresponding to High Courts are located in 8 cities: Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Sendai, Sapporo and Takamatsu. These handle the criminal cases subject to appeals from judgement rendered by District Courts, Family Courts and Summary Courts.

### District Public Prosecutors Offices: 50 offices

The District Public Prosecutors Offices corresponding to District Courts and Family Courts are located in 50 cities: each prefectural capital of 47 prefectures and Hakodate, Asahikawa and Kushiro in Hokkaido. These handle the criminal cases governed by District Courts and Family Courts.

### Local Public Prosecutors Offices: 438 offices

The Local Public Prosecutors Offices correspond to Summary Courts.

## Public Prosecutors Office Website and X

For more details, please see this website:  
<https://www.kensatsu.go.jp>



Website

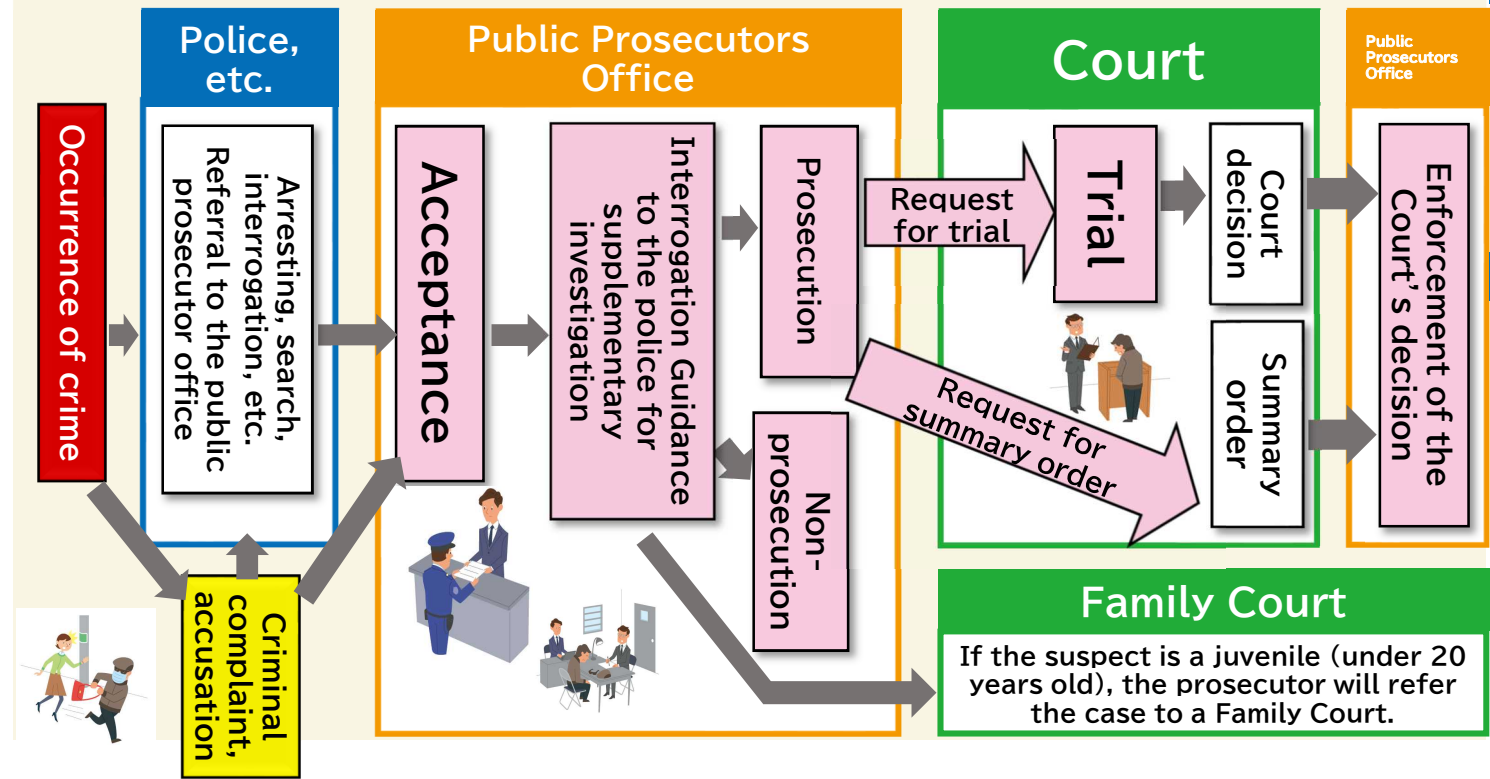


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(Issued by Supreme Public Prosecutors Office)

# Flow of Criminal Cases and the Involvement of the Public Prosecutors Office Staff

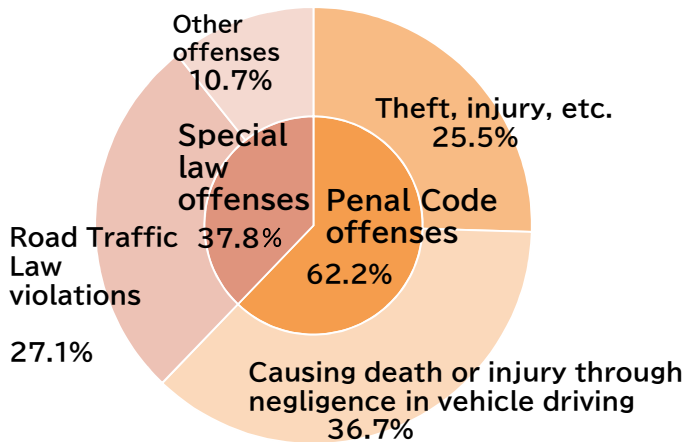
: This color corresponds to jobs of the Public Prosecutors Office.



(Figures are based on the 2023 Annual Prosecution Statistics Report)

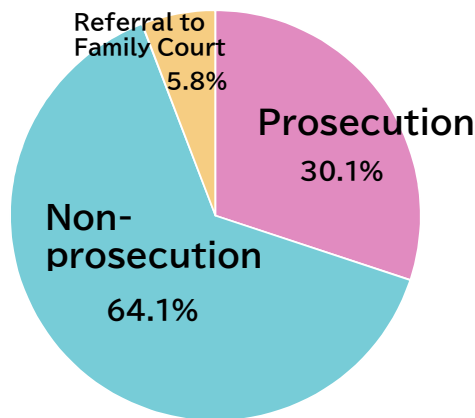
## Categories of Cases Handled

(Total 786,707 persons)



## Types of Dispositions

(Total: 791,457 persons)



## Q & A

What is the difference between the public prosecutor and the police?

**A** Both the public prosecutor and the police investigate a crime, but the public prosecutor reviews whether police investigations have been conducted properly. When the investigation is completed, the public prosecutor decides whether to prosecute the case. As just described, only public prosecutors have the power to decide whether or not to prosecute the suspect.

What are prosecution and non-prosecution?

**A** Prosecution means that the prosecutor requests a judgement for a criminal case. If a suspect is prosecuted, the court begins the trial. If there is a guilty verdict, the suspect is punished. Prosecution by the public prosecutor includes a request for trial, where the trial will be held in a courtroom, and a request for summary order, where the decision and sentencing are rendered through the examination of documentary evidence without a trial. Reasons for non-prosecution include "insufficient suspicion," where the evidence is insufficient to prove an offense, and "suspension of prosecution," where an offense is clearly provable, but prosecution is deemed unnecessary in light of the character, age, environment, gravity of the offense, circumstances or situation after the offense.

## Judgements

(Total: 201,990 persons)

