



# Chicago Mayor 2019 Election Guide

## Candidate: Gery Chico

The Office of the Mayor has many responsibilities that impact those who have experienced domestic abuse, human trafficking and sexual violence, including drafting and managing a \$8 billion-plus annual budget, appointing nominees to lead Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Police Department (among other entities), and advocating for the needs of city residents. With this in mind, anti-violence experts from five Chicago-based organizations - Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network, Life Span, Resilience, and Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law asked mayoral candidates to complete a questionnaire regarding their plans for addressing gender violence in Chicago. Municipal governments like Chicago have the unique opportunity to step in and support those at risk of domestic abuse, human trafficking, and sexual violence particularly because of the gridlock and divisiveness in federal government and state government systems that can directly harm those we serve.

*All of these organizations are 501(c)(3) nonprofits, and are nonpartisan entities that do not support or oppose individual candidates or political parties.*

***This candidate's response was received past the Jan. 22 deadline.***

*No part of this Election Guide may be construed to be an endorsement of either candidate's campaign or views by the five organizations listed above.*

## Questions

*Please answer the following questions with a Yes or No response.*

**1. Do you support an elected school board?**

Hybrid.

**2. Do you support eliminating the rent control ban?**

No.

**3. Have you asked an employee, supervisee, colleague, consultant, contractor (or similar) to sign a non-disclosure agreement after learning of claims of sexual harassment or gender or race discrimination against you or someone on your staff?**

No.

**4. Will you continue or /expand the new Office of Violence Prevention approved for 2019 budget?**

Yes.

**5. Will you prioritize a response to violence against women and girls by creating a high level, policy position in your office that specifically focuses on domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking?**

Yes.

*Please answer the following questions in 300 words or less.*

**1. Violence against women and girls is an epidemic in our community and requires a comprehensive public health and safety response. Please describe your staffing priorities as it relates to violence against women and girls, including level of response in the Office on Public Safety, Department of Family and Support Services and any other departments you believe are important.**

Changing the culture of gender-based violence in Chicago requires leadership from the top. As Mayor, I will create a senior level position within the mayor's office to coordinate the activities of the Chicago Human Rights Commission and all city departments. I'll also prioritize stable funding for programs that work to address violence against women and girls.

As mayor, I will not tolerate a culture of sexual harassment and assault in the City of Chicago. What's more, this is a vital moment for our city, as Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle has failed to help survivors and victims. She lied about when she knew about her own chief of staff's harassment, hired a man under indictment for drunkenly shooting his fiancée, and has contributed to politicians with evidence of domestic violence against their spouses. I will take steps to increase protections for survivors of gender-based workplace violence in the City, including harassment and assault, and will require that mid and upper-level managers undergo ongoing training to ensure they are aware of proper protocol for receiving reports and supporting survivors. I will also ensure all staff of the City of Chicago undergo a training that provides clear examples of sexual harassment and prohibited retaliation, clear reporting protocols, and includes bystander intervention that can keep a survivor safe during an incident of harassment.

**2. The Mayor's office has been in the position to both defeat and support critical legislative efforts in the past. What would be your legislative efforts to address gender-based violence?**

As mayor, I will work with the federal and state government to advocate for the timely reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and its grants, and for a state budget that fully funds the network of services that help survivors of gender-based violence rebuild their lives.

**3. Historically survivors of domestic and sexual violence hesitate to report the violence to law enforcement because of distrust on how they will be treated. How will you work to restore trust between Chicago communities, specifically survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking and CPD, taking into consideration the findings and recommendations from the Department of Justice Investigation on police accountability and mishandling of these investigations? Are there any recent Aldermanic proposals that you support?**

As Mayor, I will work with Aldermen, communities, and survivors to create a culture of support for those who come forward to report domestic and sexual violence. Survivors of domestic and sexual violence should have faith that law enforcement will respect and support them. Law enforcement must receive trauma-informed training that gives them the tools they need to support and feel compassion for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

**4. Chicago Public Schools has failed student-survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual harm. Recent media coverage has brought these failures to light and spurred some movement to address this failure. How will you ensure that CPS takes the necessary steps so that student-survivors are able to stay in school, stay**

**safe, and succeed academically, regardless of who the perpetrator is, where or when the violence occurred, and whether or not criminal remedies are pursued?**

Students in our public schools deserve a learning environment that supports them and encourages their academic growth, and safety in the classroom is vital to achieving that goal. Failure to support and protect students should not be tolerated and as Mayor, I'll work with CPS, LSCs, and parents to ensure teachers and administrators are receiving trauma-informed training that they can use to properly respond to and protect students who experience domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual harm.

**5. A top priority for survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking is stable and affordable housing. Housing stability is an important component of strong neighborhoods. Excluding the rent control ban, what ideas do you have to improve the affordable housing stock in Chicago, including transitional and long-term housing options?**

I will work with alderman and stakeholders to remove existing barriers and make investments to ensure safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, and stable housing for every Chicagoan, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, returning citizen status, criminal record, disability status, immigrant status, family status, source of income, employment status, or sexual orientation.

**6. Chicago has large number of underserved neighborhoods which lack housing stability, access to supportive services and economic investment from the city. What are your specific plans to invest in these neighborhoods to balance these inequalities?**

As mayor, I will dedicate revenue from one of the many new revenue sources I have proposed to go specifically to minority wards, directed to all necessary projects including affordable housing, water service line replacements and school renovation. Let's call segregation what it is: theft of resources and potential from vulnerable communities. We can't change the past, but we must repair the present.

**7. Since 1982, the state of Illinois began funding for sexual assault services. In more recent years, Cook County also began to provide funding for these services. The City of Chicago has never provided funding for sexual assault services. Do you support allocating funding to sexual assault service providers? If so, how would you generate that funding?**

The unfortunate reality is that the rise in reported criminal sexual assaults is a positive development: before, assaults went without being reported at all. The Chicago Police Department must establish a department to coordinate with Cook

County to ensure trauma-informed training for CPD and delivery of effective services to victims.

**8. Between January 1, 2018 and November 30, 2018 Chicago has experienced 34 homicides related to domestic violence. Analysis of past data show that domestic violence homicides generally account for ten percent of the overall homicide rate. In 2018, a large number of domestic violence related homicides were committed with a firearm. What steps will your office take, if any, to address domestic violence related gun violence? How will you address the removal of FOID cards from domestic violence offenders?**

As Mayor, I will be committed to end the tragic loss of life resulting from domestic violence, including deaths resulting from use of a firearm. I support red flag laws, and I will work with law enforcement and community stakeholders to address domestic violence related gun violence to ensure that abusers do not have access to guns. Additionally, if we cannot work with Wisconsin and Indiana to curtail the illegal guns coming in from out of state, I will take the fight to the courts.