



Chicago Mayor 2019 Election Guide

Candidate: Lori Lightfoot

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.

All responses are posted as submitted on January 22, 2019.

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?

Yes. My mother was an elected school board member, so I understand the importance of giving parents and stakeholders a voice in how schools operate. That is why I support a fully independent, elected school board.

Creating a fully-elected school board will require a change in state law, so I will draft and help introduce legislation in Springfield to give Chicagoans the right to elect an independent school board. Until this legislation becomes law, I will appoint individuals to serve on the school board based on their merit and backgrounds, not on their loyalty to the mayor. This will include CPS parents, academics and individuals from the non-profit world with deep backgrounds in education. These individuals will be selected as part of a transparent process that includes public input.

2. Do you support eliminating the rent control ban?

We are in an affordable housing crisis. Conservative estimates are that the city is short 120,000 affordable units. I share the great concern that renters are being priced out of the city by escalating rents. I believe that it is imperative that we address this crisis by aggressively ensuring that more affordable housing units are built all over the city, as discussed in my affordable housing plan

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.

I absolutely believe that ending violence against women and girls is critical, and we can do our part as a City by increasing funding to staff teams to work on this issue. In my public safety plan I have committed to the creation of a Mayor's Office of Public Safety (MOPS) that will look at violence in our city as the public health crisis that it is. In my plan, I commit to hiring public health and social service experts with a dedicated funding stream.

The MOPS will include a victim and witness support program, an initiative that will work with community-based groups to more systematically address the needs of victims of violence, including domestic and gender-based violence, and those who witness violence in their communities.

In addition, I have called for increased staffing in the Mayor's office related to LGBTQ+ issues, including issues related to violence against LGBTQ+ Chicagoans. My proposed policy would put liaisons across the city to deal with LGBTQ+ issues, and calls for mandatory training and increased investigation for the CPD related to hate crimes, including gender-based violence. We must hold CPD accountable for addressing gender-based violence. This can be done with the Public Safety Oversight Board, a part of my public safety plan, which will have oversight authority over the CPD and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability.

The Mayor's Office of Public Safety, increased coordination with CPD, the Chicago Department of Public Health, and the Department of Family and Support Services, and public oversight over all of our violence prevention goals will move us forward in creating a Chicago that is safe for everyone.

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?

Strengthening efforts to curb violence against women will be a significant legislative priority for my administration. Every year, without fail, the biggest call for service over the 911 system is domestic violence calls. This dark point alone means that violence against women continues and there must be a government response. At a minimum, we must:

1. Continue our efforts to educate women and girls about their rights and how to seek help and protection from abusive relationships.
2. When women are victimized, we need to make sure that the responders are well-trained so that they do not re-victimize women and girls calling for help.
3. Ensure that sexual and other assaults against women and girls are investigated thoroughly and prosecuted rigorously.
4. Continue speaking to mean about respectful and healthy relationships, and teaching that "no means no."

I look forward to working with organizations doing policy and advocacy around issues of domestic violence. I applaud the outstanding achievements of CAASE's End Demand campaign. By helping to pass laws that focus efforts on stopping sex traffickers and protecting victims of trafficking, Illinois has taken a significant step forward in ending sexual exploitation. Making sure that the State of Illinois follows through on the promises it has made and laws it has passed may require advocacy work, like ensuring enforcement of the FOID laws regarding domestic violence offenders.

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?

Rebuilding trust between police officers and communities across Chicago will require years of work. Regarding domestic violence and trafficking, there are a few things we can do. First, ensuring that Chicago Police focus their efforts on traffickers and working with advocates to protect victims of trafficking will help demonstrate Chicago's commitment to survivors. Second, we must make certain that domestic violence allegations all receive the full investigation they deserve. By doing so, and by following our FOID laws, we will help ensure that guns are not in the hands of domestic violence offenders.

Additionally, we must strengthen our Welcoming City ordinance. When residents in our immigrant community are afraid to report crimes like domestic violence out of fear of arrest or deportation themselves, we are doing all victims of domestic and gender-based violence a massive disservice. I support amending the Welcoming City Ordinance to remove the four exceptions to the general rule not to arrest or hold anyone based solely on an ICE warrant or hold request. Making commitments like these to our immigrant communities can embolden people to speak up when they know a crime has been committed.

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?

Failures in the sex abuse crisis underscore the need for wholesale changes at CPS, and that starts with an elected school board. The mayor and his hand-picked school board, with its revolving door of CEOs, have failed our kids again and again, from refusing to address root causes of this sexual abuse crisis to neglecting special education and janitorial services. If we had an elected, representative school board, Chicagoans could hold schools and administrators accountable in moments like these.

Additionally, to further ensure that students feel safe at school, we must facilitate trauma screenings, provide trauma-informed instruction for students who have experienced trauma, and create a culture in schools that cares about students and their emotional and intellectual needs. Leaders and administrators in CPS must provide resources and training to teachers to meet those needs. A wealth of community organizations are already doing some of this work. To meet the needs of all students across Chicago, CPS must collaborate with community-based social service providers.

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?

Regarding housing, we can increase the number of affordable housing units and the geographic distribution of such units by passing the Affordable Home Equity Ordinance ("AHEO") and amending the Affordable Requirements Ordinance ("ARO"). The AHEO will limit the aldermanic prerogative in wards where less than 10% of the rental housing stock is affordable by removing an alderman's veto power over affordable housing proposals. Similarly, amending the ARO to increase the number of affordable units that must be built, requiring units to be built within the market rate development, and requiring construction of family-sized units will increase the amount and geographic distribution of housing that is affordable.

It is estimated that the graduated RETT would generate between \$80 million to \$150 million in additional revenues, proceeds of which would be used to pay for services such as addressing homelessness, supporting affordable rental and homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income Chicagoans and rehabilitation of naturally occurring affordable housing.

We also need to work the the Chicago Housing Authority to build on partnerships with state and federal agencies with the funding to develop and renovate CHA land. In doing so, we can explore innovative proposals in the works in other cities facing housing crises, like Austin and Portland. Social housing, or publicly-owned, mixed-income, revenue generating housing developments can put affordable units online while generating the much-needed revenue to build new units and renovate dilapidated properties.

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?

This is a matter of priorities. I commit to refocus the priorities of city hall toward equitable investment in the economic development of our neighborhoods.

City hall invests heavily in the downtown business districts, but it does not invest in our neighborhood economies. As mayor, I will also focus on building up economic activity in our neighborhoods by increasing access to capital for small businesses; offering small businesses planning advice and technical support; making it easier to open and operate businesses in Chicago; growing white collar apprenticeship programs for City College students; moving municipal offices into neighborhoods; using local supply chains; and expanding opportunities for minority-and women-owned businesses.

Regarding housing, the recommendations I make above can help to distribute affordable housing to underserved neighborhoods.

It is unconscionable that Mayor Emanuel closed so many mental health service centers across the city, and it is clear that the people were opposed to it, as demonstrated by the numerous wards that voted for property-tax increases to fund new mental health service centers in 2018. My administration will allocate new funding created by a graduated RETT to assist those who are at-risk of homelessness and people who are homeless but fall shy of HUD's definition of chronic homelessness. The new funding will complement existing funding, allowing providers to meet the needs of individuals and families earlier. Flexible funding allows money to be spent on housing needs, and wraparound services like mental health services, family counseling and other resources to help address the root causes of issues that lead to homelessness.

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?

Yes, I support funding for community social service organizations, and through my planned Mayor's Office of Public Safety. I have already called for expansion of services related to public safety and the LGBTQ+ community. Finding the funding for these kinds of services is simply a matter of prioritization: throughout Chicago's history, we have never had a mayor that prioritizes funding for social services that get at the roots of violence. Under a Lightfoot administration, that will change.

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?

We already have laws on the books to prevent domestic violence offenders from acquiring FOID cards. However, our illegal gun trade clearly allows many to bypass this. To address any form of gun violence, we must be much more proactive in stopping the flow of illegal guns that fuel violence. This requires a proactive, coordinated response from law enforcement that must be led by the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, in coordination with the ATF, FBI, DEA, the CPD and state and county law enforcement, as well as federal counterparts in states like Indiana, Wisconsin and Mississippi, from which large sources of illegal guns flow. We must target the traffickers, felons in possession and straw purchasers with an effective carrot (social service support and jobs for those who leave the criminal life) and stick (stepped up prosecutions for serious offenders) approach. In addition, the U.S. Attorney's office must significantly increase the number of illegal gun cases prosecuted in Chicago.

FOID cards are issued by the Illinois State Police, so the city cannot unilaterally remove FOID cards from domestic violence offenders. Nevertheless, the city can lead on this front by lobbying Springfield to ensure that the Illinois State Police take all reasonable steps to revoke FOID cards from, and remove guns from the homes of, individuals who have pled guilty to, or been convicted of, domestic violence offenses, or have an order of protection against them.