



Chicago Mayor 2019 Election Guide

Candidate: Susana A. Mendoza

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 (formerly Rape Victim Advocates), 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, a hybrid.

2. Do you support eliminating the rent control ban?

Yes, but not implementing rent control throughout the city.

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.

A comprehensive response to the epidemic of violence against women and girls begins by making Chicago and our services fully trauma-informed, from top to bottom. I would make it a priority to break down silos and work across departments to identify and implement

evidence-based practices for interrupting and mitigating the impact of trauma on these vulnerable populations.

That includes providing comprehensive education in Chicago Public Schools and teaching young boys and girls what a healthy—and unhealthy—relationship looks like. If young people witness or experience emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, they may think it's normal, and we want our youth to be equipped with the knowledge and the resources they need to report if they have experienced any form of abuse. We must then take those reports seriously and work with social service providers to deliver appropriate interventions.

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?

We will have a zero tolerance policy for gender-based violence in my administration. After reports of harassment and gender discrimination in Illinois politics, I was asked to lead a statewide discussion on the role of women in the Democratic Party of Illinois and develop a plan to work to change the culture of politics. After holding six listening sessions throughout the state, we produced a final report that included recommendations like a goal of making sure at least half the members of the General Assembly (and other state and local governments) are women. It also called for the state parties to each hire a "director of diversity" to recruit candidates and staff, invest in training women to run for office, and require racial and gender diversity in the pool of applicants for every political vacancy. I would continue that work as mayor.

I would also work with service providers such as Resilience, Mujeres Latinas en Accion, Apna Ghar, and others to ensure that survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence are linked to trauma-informed advocates as soon as they report. Additionally, I would support legislation that minimizes harm and re-traumatization throughout criminal proceedings, such as rape shield laws that prevent prosecutors from asking about prior sexual activity. I would also require that city vendors submit/make available their written policy on gender-based violence when responding to proposals.

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?

I've committed to a top-to-bottom overhaul of police training in Chicago and a critical piece

of that must be ensuring that police officers are trained to deal with trauma and how to handle sensitive situations like domestic and sexual violence. It's encouraging that Illinois has now passed a law requiring officers to undergo not only sensitivity training, but also classes on how victims react to trauma. We've also seen the Chicago Police Department receive training on campus sexual assault, which is a great step forward. It's now critical that training turns into adoption and best practices are reinforced throughout the city. I believe the city set a good example for how we should treat survivors with the protections that Mayor Emanuel and Alderman Matt O'Shea put in place to ensure that victims of domestic violence and sexual assault have the ability to get paid time off and city managers get training on how to recognize signs of domestic violence and sexual abuse. We should work to ensure that survivors in all walks of life see similar protections and get the time they need to recuperate.

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?

I strongly support the steps that CPS CEO Janice Jackson has taken in response to the crisis, including establishing a new "Office of Student Protections and Title IX," which will oversee investigations of student-on-student abuse and refer allegations of adult-on-student abuse to the Inspector General. I think we need to go further, by bringing intervention and crisis response services directly to the children. All school locations where abuse has occurred should have access sites for crisis response to make it easy for children to access services, and the mayor's office should provide technical assistance and funding to community organizations and health providers that can also bring crisis response services.

We also need to do more to prevent abuse from happening. I will work with Chicago Public Schools to develop a sexual health curriculum that emphasizes the importance of consent and respecting others. This curriculum will also educate students about their reporting options, if they were to experience any form of violence.

Organizations such as the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center provide training for Chicago Public School staff on preventing and reporting child abuse. I will leverage resources such as these throughout the City to equip staff and educators with the information they need to report incidences of child abuse and prevent other youth from experiencing the same.

Additionally, I will hire more social workers for Chicago Public Schools and create safe spaces where students feel they can go to ask questions about their sexual and mental health in confidence. I will build out mentoring programs and provide access to trauma

awareness training for all mentors, tutors, and volunteers that work directly with students so that they can better assist youth and understand their emotional needs.

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?

Chicago's "affordability gap" in rental housing continues to get worse. We now have a deficit of 120,000 affordable rental units compared to what residents need and nearly 40% of Chicago households spend more than a third of their income on their rent or mortgage. I would begin by reforming and strengthening the Affordable Requirements Ordinance to ensure that there is development of family units on site, and more funds are invested to create affordability in gentrifying neighborhoods and near transit. I would also advocate for more low income housing tax credits, including to nonprofit community development corporations. The next mayor also needs to have a strategy to access federal and state funds, and I would work with the Illinois congressional delegation to increase the amount of HOME funds allocated to the city. Finally, I've committed to supporting an increase in the real estate transfer tax that would create a dedicated \$150 million fund for affordable housing and addressing homelessness.

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?

I absolutely believe we need to create additional jobs in Chicago's neighborhoods. That's why my plan on economic growth begins with a strategy to get more investment in our neighborhoods. I also believe that we need to continue job growth downtown, and make the necessary investments to attract innovative companies and emerging industries, while providing viable transit options for people living outside of the Central Business District to access those jobs.

For too long, too many of our neighborhoods have suffered from disinvestment and disenfranchisement that cuts our working families off from opportunities to build true wealth and prosperity. We can reverse this disinvestment in part by intentionally leveraging our downtown success to build an inclusive economy that lifts up our working families. I believe we can put our neighborhoods first by expanding access to capital and support for small businesses and development in struggling neighborhoods through the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, setting our students up for success, from expanding universal pre-k to creating fair lending programs for student loans, and strengthening our working families by

fully enforcing our labor laws, increasing the minimum wage, and expanding access to the EITC.

I would also work to take advantage of the new federal Opportunity Zone tax credits. I've said that I would develop a program, linked to the city's other initiatives from its retail thrive zones to the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund and beyond, to take advantage of this tax credit. With our planning department having identified 133 census tracts for inclusion in the program, there are tremendous opportunities to attract investment to Chicago through this program.

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 these services. In fact, as Comptroller, I fought to get sexual assault service providers paid after Gov. Bruce Rauner had stalled payments during a 736-day budget crisis. I helped lead a bond offering that saved the state \$4 to 6 billion and prioritized payments to help the most vulnerable, including victims of sexual assault. I even visited the Women's Center in Carbondale to tell them their funds to help provide services to survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault would be placed on top of the pile of bills to be paid. The treasurer of the Center said that I "expedited payment to providers of sexual assault and domestic violence programs across the state" gave the Women's Center the financial footing to "focus on victims rather than making our payroll." You can absolutely count on my support for sexual assault services as mayor. While there may be numerous ways to find funding for this, what is essential is that we maximize the benefit of these public dollars by partnering with or expanding existing partnerships with existing non-profits that have the reach and expertise to make the greatest impact.

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?

This is an issue where I have been a leader and have a strong track record. In the state legislature, I was a key supporter of legislation allowing for revocation of a firearm owner's identity card for a parent or guardian who is unable to prevent their child from gaining access to firearms. I also voted in favor of a 30-day waiting period for handguns, and sponsored legislation allowing prosecution of illegal gun sellers for crimes committed with

that gun for one year after sale. As mayor, I will draw upon my extensive relationships and experience in Springfield to enact a national model for FOID card revocation and firearm confiscation of individuals arrested for domestic-related crimes.