



# Chicago Mayor 2019 Election Guide

## Candidate: Amara Enyia

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,

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

Yes.

**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.**

Our city's violence, including violence against women and girls, is not just a public safety issue, but an investment issue. Public policy failings exacerbate gender-based violence; failings my inclusive and equitable platform will address head on. How that translates to staffing priorities to curb violence against women and girls is clear. One of my first priorities will be to establish an Equity Office and conduct equity audits of all City of Chicago

departments. This act alone is a marked difference than past administrations and will consider equity in the broadest sense. Another top priority of my administration will be an empowered Inspector General to ensure equity, transparency, accountability, inclusiveness. Many of my proposals, such as a public bank, and creating an inclusive economy will provide the resources to adequately staff and address this important issue.

Comprehensive community based approaches are more effective than limited interventions. The over-arching question should center on how the City of Chicago will counter violence through actual investments in communities that address economic distress, housing instability, lack of access to healthcare, and lack of quality education. These interventions could be spurred by specific allocations of resources to the entities on the frontline doing this work. Scaling up working models must be a priority. The way violence is addressed is through investment in human capital and community resources in all city departments.

**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 need to do something different to achieve better results. Leveraging the power of the mayor's office to pass legislation that gives the Mayor and City Inspector General power to investigate any all branches of city government. In 2016, the City Council gave the Inspector General new power to investigate alleged illegal and unethical activity by aldermen and their staff. However, this law was watered down from the original proposal to give the Inspector General the authority to audit all City Council committees. City Council needs to pass the original ordinance so the Inspector General can investigate all committees, departments, agencies and independent partners involved.

**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?**

There has been an excessive lack of law enforcement accountability exposed by the USDOJ's scathing report. I was part of several efforts citywide connected to the DOJ's report, where they sought community input on what should happen and an understanding of the conditions related to police reforms. The consent decree is vitally necessary as we have proven time and time again, and evidenced by the \$1.7B penalties related to police misconduct cases that we cannot rely on the police department, on its own, to implement

the reforms that communities have been demanding for decades. So it is necessary to have another layer of accountability to oversee police department conduct and an enhanced model of police training that continues to modernize and take into account type, consistency, and frequency. It's also why it's important that we continue to push back when the president and the attorney general deem the consent decree unnecessary.

We must demand that police be just, honest, transparent, and accountable with their actions and intentions. This mandate be would reflected in the FOP contract with explicit penalties for actions incongruent with supports, services, and personnel in line with addressing gendered based 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?**

Like many of the differentiators of our platform, we need a holistic approach to this issue. We need increased transparency to end CPS' culture of corruption and we need to provide the most resources to the schools who would benefit the most. This includes survivor-centered, trauma-informed policies district-wide and trained professionals in every school.

Media coverage related to CPS' failings revealed the subpar level of seriousness law enforcement employed was far less than what one would expect or should be the case. There were instances where members of the students were sexually assaulted and CPS turned an egregiously jaundiced eye. Advocacy, in this context is so crucial, because it makes sure that those who are overlooked and most marginalized in our communities get the services and attention they deserve.

There is still concern about the safety and security of being able to utilize and access CPS safe spaces. We must amplify the voices of individuals who have been denied services, who feel unsafe, and who have had issues with providers, with law enforcement. We must increase on-site access to public and mental health resources in the schools. Several years ago, the city closed 6 mental health centers. Many of the mental health providers have experienced steep funding cuts in the wake of local and state resource reallocation efforts. CDBG funding from that city that is supposed to go to community based organizations on the front lines of this work are being financially hamstrunged by funding decreases or stagnancy. Who then is in place to provide the types of counselling, support, and social services for CPS students? An equity lens when it comes to our most vulnerable populations is in order

**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?**

The real issue is not affordable housing but housing affordability. When we talk about housing affordability, we must confront the issues of transportation inequities, limited mobility, and income. I will revisit the transfer tax on high-end real estate transactions to create a dedicated source of funding for transitional and long-term housing. Ending Aldermanic prerogative will ensure we make decisions in the interest of all Chicagoans and not knee-jerk NIMBYism. We need more thorough oversight of the Chicago Housing Authority and we need to reduce barriers to the creation and preservation of affordable housing. These could include regulatory and zoning changes such as accessory dwelling units, co-operative housing, decoupling parking from housing, and making some group homes a "by right" use instead of a conditional use.

**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?**

Much of the wealth generated downtown flows to those neighborhoods and residents of the city who already have wealth and access to opportunity. In order to cut into the cycle of poverty, we have to not only divert resources to the South and West sides of the city, but also make sure that jobs are not just centralized in the downtown area. City disparities in employment, income levels, and financial security are the result of public policy failings across the board. Chicago is not "broke", but if funds, investments, and development projects are intentionally kept away from those most in need, overlooked neighborhoods will reflect their lack of investment.

I would expand the Blue 1647 model of workforce training for the jobs of the 21st-century and high value add sectors of the economy. I've worked this model for several years. This model trains people from childhood to adulthood in key skill areas that are necessary for the economy of the future. The model should be expanded citywide. A public bank for the city of Chicago would fund infrastructure upgrades where savings on interest cost would be redirected to job training and placement models. Additionally, the issuance of small business loans will expand the small business sector by creating more jobs and increase entrepreneurial opportunities. I would institute worker-owned cooperatives and land trust models where communities own the land in the neighborhood and can preserve affordability. These pillars go beyond just calling for more jobs. They would equip citizens with the skills that enable them to compete in the 21st-century economy in industries including but not limited to: information technology, manufacturing, coding, and

transportation and logistics.

We deserve and have the chance to build a Chicago that is equity and growth forward, a Chicago that actively rejects the idea that citizens should be punished for being poor, a Chicago that protects its people and provides a workforce that allows us all to thrive.

**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?**

I do support allocating city resources, including direct funding, to sexual assault service providers. We will expand the safety net for individuals and communities facing trauma including expanded access to quality transportation, wage and time off regulations, and expanded access to mental health and other supportive services. I will also advocate on behalf of Chicago for increased federal and state dollars and reduce the bureaucratic hurdles to receiving funding. We will rebuild trust between residents and city agencies with a focus on the Chicago Police Department, with better training and enhanced community policing efforts.

**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?**

Neighborhoods with chronic disinvestment also experience high rates of gun violence. We have to address the conditions that disregard humanity and leads to violence, particularly domestic violence. There is a dearth of resources in underserved communities including but not limited to trauma-informed services in CPS, accessible mental health services, hazard-free air, water and soil. and investments in those already doing the work, like block clubs. We need sincere and targeted investment in individuals, families, and organizations.

Violence reduction demands that we enforce the police consent decree and stricter requirements for gun ownership, including but not limited to: license registration, training, and record of purchase; mandatory background checks for private sales; restriction of multiple purchases; banning military rifle purchases; eliminating "conceal and carry"; barring at-risk citizens from buying firearms; adopting technological protocols to minimize violence; and eliminating legal immunity for gun manufacturers. We must expand funding for

violence prevention enrichment programming through community based and driven youth employment, mentorship and reentry programming. We must expand restorative justice models of community engagement. We must restore funding to sustainable block clubs. We must establish an administrative bridge between the Chicago Police department and the Department of Public Health specific to de-escalation protocols during law enforcement encounters with the mental disability population. We must support and ignite economic growth in ALL neighborhoods, while putting a stop to policies that cost taxpayers way more to get far less.

I will work with Governor Pritzker, and the Cook County State's Attorney's office in implementing the Firearms Restraining Order Act and expand protections for domestic violence victims and potential victims.

The way violence is addressed is through investment in human capital and community resources.