Columbia Justice Lab/JLUSA Release NYC Mayoral Candidate Survey on Urgent and Pivotal Criminal Justice Issues
Candidate survey details how the potential next mayor of New York City will lead on NYPD funding, police accountability, facial recognition technology and more

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Several candidates for New York City mayor outlined their priorities on key criminal justice issues in a survey released today by the Columbia University Justice Lab and JustLeadershipUSA.

Candidates who participated in the survey identified criminal justice reform opportunities and priorities that they would pursue during their administrations and spoke about their perspectives on defunding or shrinking the New York Police Department, community reinvestment, police accountability, facial recognition, and predictive policing technology. They also outlined their views on mass incarceration, closing Rikers, and drug legalization.

All of the candidates who responded to the survey committed to closing Rikers by 2027 and expressed broad support for New York State's recent legalization of recreational marijuana. The majority oppose collaboration between New York City agencies and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). **Dianne Morales** advocated for a ban on facial recognition technology and predictive policing, while **Shaun Donovan** called for more transparency and oversight on the use of police surveillance technologies.

Candidate **Dianne Morales** expressed support for the No New Jails movement, defunding the NYPD by at least $3 billion during her first year in office, and decriminalizing drug use and sex work.

> "The systems of policing, criminalization, incarceration, and surveillance that have governed our city for years are clearly rooted in systemic racism," **Morales** said. "Additionally, it is beyond clear that our city's investment in incarceration has separated families, cost thousands of lives, and led to an incredible amount of trauma for so many Black and Brown New Yorkers."

Regarding police accountability, candidate **Maya Wiley** called for an end to qualified immunity, vowed to cut at least $1 billion from the NYPD budget, and proposed using that money to fund investments in alternatives to policing — including the elimination of the vice squad, a community-based participatory justice fund to address gun violence, payment for low-income caregivers, and cuts associated with removing several functions from the NYPD and freezing incoming cadet classes for the next two years.

> "The policing of Black and Brown New Yorkers is inequitable and unsafe, and yet, after decades of attempts at reform, the NYPD is still largely accountable only to itself in setting the course of how it polices the country's largest city," **Wiley** said.

Candidate **Shaun Donovan** said he would invest in community-focused public safety and racial justice initiatives, as well as moving mental health responses away from law enforcement entirely. On community reinvestment, **Donovan** promised:

> "As a starting point, we will invest at least $500 million annually in these solutions, including community- and health-based anti-violence efforts, reentry and supportive housing programs, and other initiatives aimed at providing communities with the resources to build safe neighborhoods."

"The responses of these candidates demonstrates their commitment to making criminal justice reforms a priority in their administrations," said **DeAnna Hoskins, President and CEO of JustLeadershipUSA**. "The lack of response from other candidates speaks for itself."

"New York City voters have a lot at stake in this election as the next mayor will have to make significant policy decisions on approaches to NYPD, public safety, and jail reform," said **Bruce Western, Co-Executive Director of the Justice Lab**. "This survey allows each candidate to present their vision for safety and justice to New Yorkers and outline the concrete steps they will take to make this vision a reality."

To read the memo summarizing the responses, click HERE.

To read the full responses, click HERE.

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[JustLeadershipUSA](#) is led by directly impacted people and is dedicated to decarcerating the United States by educating, elevating and empowering the people and communities most impacted by systemic racism to drive meaningful and lasting policy reform.

** Columbia University and JustLeadershipUSA are 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations and do not support or oppose candidates for political office.