

Congratulations on your candidacy for Oklahoma County Sheriff. The ACLU of Oklahoma has sent a request to all Oklahoma County Sheriff candidates to complete this questionnaire.

The ACLU of Oklahoma does not endorse candidates for political office, however, as the preeminent defender of civil rights and civil liberties we believe it is important that voters have a clear understanding of candidates' positions on critical issues before ballots are cast.

Please help educate voters about your positions on the issues by responding to this questionnaire by August 14.

By submitting this questionnaire, you give permission for your responses to be made available to the public. Please mark Yes or No, and if you choose, complete the explanation section. Answers to these questions may be published online and distributed to voters.

Evictions

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to severe economic consequences, including massive job losses, furloughs and pay-cuts. In the face of staggering unemployment numbers, millions of tenants face the imminent threat of losing their homes or access to utility service due to the inability to pay. The ACLU is calling for the prevention of mass evictions in the midst of this global COVID-19 public health crisis.

1. Will you commit to using your authority as Oklahoma County Sheriff to implement a policy against enforcing eviction judgments during the COVID-19 pandemic, except where there is an imminent and direct threat to the safety of other tenants or the landlord?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

2. Will you commit to using your influence as Oklahoma County Sheriff to publicly call for the adoption of policies that are essential to preventing a wave of mass evictions in the county and throughout Oklahoma, including a moratorium on all evictions and emergency rental assistance for those who have lost jobs and otherwise been economically harmed because of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

Building Trust with Immigrant Communities

Currently, two ICE agents use office space in the Oklahoma County Detention Center. This voluntary arrangement with ICE puts people into the deportation pipeline, and undermines public safety by generating fear and mistrust of the sheriff's office among immigrant communities. The ACLU believes that county Sheriffs should focus on their local communities and responsibilities rather than federal immigration functions.

3. Will you commit to ending ICE's established presence in the jail?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

4. Will you commit to decline ICE detainer requests unless they are accompanied by a judicial criminal warrant?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

Revisioning the Criminal Justice System

The urgent need to address racism and violence in law enforcement has led to protests and demands for major change across the country. People have seen that while law enforcement budgets have steadily grown, critical community services have been cut. We believe that these changes should include prioritizing non-punitive responses and investments in communities that have been targeted by discriminatory practices.

5. Do you agree that mental health professionals, not police, should be first responders when someone is in a mental health crisis or requires substance use or addiction treatment? And will you commit to collaboration with the Diversion Hub and MAPS 4 Mental Health programming in pursuit of shifting response away from police in those situations?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

6. Given the discretion provided through State Question 788 and subsequent legislation, will you commit to not making marijuana-related arrests unless the amount exceeds the threshold for trafficking?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

7. Will you commit to not use the presence or smell of marijuana, alone, to conduct a search or justify a call to child protective services?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

8. Will you commit to holding officers accountable by creating a publicly accessible database that documents officers who faced internal investigations that resulted in loss of pay, suspension, demotion, or termination?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

9. Will you address unjust policing practices by enacting a use of force policy that directs officers to use de-escalation whenever possible, and prohibits them from using more force than necessary to accomplish a legitimate public safety or jail security objective?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

Combating Mass Incarceration

The Oklahoma County Detention Center continues to face issues of overcrowding. Serving the largest county in a state with one of the highest incarceration rates in the country, the Oklahoma County Sheriff should not only advocate for reform of the criminal legal system but also use their authorities to lower the county incarceration rate.

10. Will you commit to reducing the pre-trial population in the Oklahoma County Detention Center, including by directing fewer arrests for low-level offenses, and if yes, please indicate what percent reduction in incarceration you think is achievable by the end of your term in office and why?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Percent reduction: ____

Explanation:

11. Will you commit to work with the Oklahoma County Jail Trust to ensure at least one full time staffer, dedicated to addiction treatment and support in the jail, has been hired by the end of your term in 2024?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

12. Do you agree that money bail should only be used for serious felony offenses and will you support legislation like SB 252 to limit the use of money bail in favor of release on one's own recognizance?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

13. Will you commit to prohibiting officers within your department from working with for-profit bail companies as bounty hunters or enforcement officers?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

14. Will you commit to establishing an independent community advisory board including Oklahoma County residents and impacted community members that would meet regularly with the Sheriff's office, request and review data, inspect jail facilities, and make recommendations on enforcement and jail policies, practices, and responses to incidents?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

15. Will you refuse to detain any kids in your jail?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation:

16. Will you commit to prohibiting the use of solitary confinement?

Yes: ____ No: ____

Explanation: