



Candidate Survey for Los Angeles City Attorney Responses for Candidate: Sherri Onica Valle Cole

About this survey: The ACLU of Southern California invited candidates for Los Angeles City Attorney, to participate in a survey about their positions on some of the most pressing issues facing LA. This document is the full response of one candidate: Sherri Onica Valle Cole.

For the full survey results, go to <https://www.aclusocal.org/en/la-city-attorney-candidate-survey> to see each candidate's unedited responses to the policy questions and unedited candidate statement on why they will be a champion on ACLU issues.

Our candidate questionnaire does not endorse any candidate. ACLU SoCal is a nonprofit that does not endorse or oppose any candidates for elected public office.

Question 1: Would you agree to decline to charge people with consensual sex work related offenses, including prostitution (buying and selling) and loitering with intent to commit prostitution?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

None provided.

Question 2: Contact with the criminal legal system, even for the adjudication of misdemeanor offenses, produces long-term, harmful consequences. Research has shown that diverting or declining to charge low-level misdemeanor offenses reduces the likelihood of future involvement with the criminal legal system. Are there certain categories of misdemeanors, including those that arise from poverty, drug dependence or mental health issues, that the City Attorney's Office is currently prosecuting that you would decline to prosecute or prioritize for diversion? If so, please explain.

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

VC 12500, MJ drug offenses, 647(b) 653.22, illegal vendor carts, etc...

Question 3: For cases that are not declined or diverted, will you implement an office-wide policy that the least severe applicable charges be applied, and that the lowest sentencing outcome is the correct recommendation?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

Prosecutorial discretion needs to be maintained and exercised.

Question 4. Will you create a “Do Not Call” list of officers with histories of misconduct, dishonesty, racism or bias and issue an office-wide policy instructing Deputy and Assistant City Attorneys to reject officers on the “Do Not Call” list as potential witnesses and to decline to prosecute cases involving these officers?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

None provided.

Question 5: California law requires that prosecutors shall, in the interests of justice, consider the avoidance of adverse immigration consequences in the plea negotiation process. Cal. Pen. Code § 1016.3(b). A conviction for even a minor offense may lead to detention and deportation, inhibit a lawful permanent resident's application for citizenship or prevent someone from securing permanent legal status. Appropriate resolutions of offenses are highly fact-specific but prosecutors must consider the consequences to all defendants from any proposed disposition. Prosecutors should also consider the immigration consequences of prosecutorial policies—as *any* conviction exponentially increases the risks of immigration enforcement.

If elected, will you commit to (1) actively working with defense counsel in individual cases to avoid immigration consequences of criminal charges, prosecutions or convictions, and (2) recommending dispositions that limit negative immigration consequences, including pre-plea diversion programs?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

None provided.

Question 6: Even short durations of detention can have destabilizing effects on an individual's life and those around them, drive up populations of LA County jails, and increase the risk of immigration enforcement.

If elected, will you commit to (1) revising filing guidelines and guidance to LAPD to avoid unnecessary arrests, consistent with state law; and (2) enact guidelines for your prosecutors to limit use of pre-trial detention?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

None provided.

Question 7: Enforcement of ordinances that make it a crime to be unhoused is not a solution to housing displacement. Enforcement does nothing to address housing unaffordability—the root cause of housing displacement—and only makes life more difficult for our most economically deprived community members by burdening them with criminal records, heavy fines and fees, and jail time. Additionally, law enforcement “sweeps” result in people losing all of their belongings -- including medication, blankets, clothing, and important paperwork. Instead of harmful “sweeps,” municipalities can provide services and trash collection to people who are living in unsheltered encampments.

If elected, would you end or limit prosecution of laws that criminalize houselessness (including sleeping/sitting in public, possession of bulky items, camping in public, sleeping in vehicles, loitering, possession of shopping carts, panhandling, and public urination)?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

None provided.

Question 8: Would you support amnesty and dismissal for past citations, fines, and fees for low-level quality of life offenses?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

None provided.

Question 9: The LA City Attorney’s office has been criticized for its “Citywide Nuisance Abatement Project” which works to evict tenants and place them under surveillance. As the LA Times reported in 2020, and a UCLA report confirmed this year, this City Attorney-driven housing displacement primarily targets Black and Latino renters in Los Angeles. Will you commit to dismantling the discriminatory CNAP project and ending 47.50 evictions, which exacerbate the homelessness crisis in LA?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

Some landlords need assistance to remove narcotics activity from their property.

Question 10: In Los Angeles County, criminal conduct involving law enforcement officers—in their personal or professional capacity-- is often investigated primarily by the District Attorney's Justice System Integrity Division (JSID), which issues public memos of its charging decisions in use of force cases. But both law enforcement agencies and the District Attorneys' office can and sometimes do refer criminal cases involving peace officers to city prosecutors for misdemeanor prosecution. The Los Angeles City Attorney's Office has not tracked nor publicly reported on its consideration of or charging decisions in cases involving law enforcement officers. If elected, would you commit to creating a system for tracking criminal referrals in cases involving peace officers and publicly reporting information about all charging decisions?

Candidate Answer:

YES NO

Candidate Explanation:

We must abolish police brutality and excessive force.

Candidate Statement

I am a mother of beautiful little black boy with special needs, running to abolish policies that brutalize black and brown people. We can not criminalize poverty, mental health or the unsheltered.