



# Citizens Union 2025 Candidate Questionnaire - New York City Mayor

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Candidate Info

Name	Adrienne E Adams
In which primary	Democratic
Age	64
Education	B.A. Spelman College
Current job, position, or occupation	Speaker of the New York City Council

### Other positions or offices

Council Member, 28th District (Queens)

### Previous jobs or positions

- Chair of Queens Community Board 12
- Co-Chair of the Jamaica NOW Leadership Council
- Member of the Local Planning Committee for the Jamaica Downtown Revitalization Initiative
- Board of Trustees Member for the Queens Public Library
- Corporate Trainer in Executive Training, Telecommunications Management, and Human Capital Management
- Childhood Development Associate Instructor
- Flight Attendant

## Campaign Contact Information

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1. What are your top three campaign promises or goals, and what action will you take to achieve them if elected?

Promise 1: First, I'll aggressively tackle the housing crisis as the greatest affordability issue for New Yorkers. That means creating more affordable housing and implementing the CityFHEPS reform laws I enacted through the Council to ensure more residents move quickly from shelters into permanent housing and fewer renters face eviction. I will also invest in creating greater pathways to homeownership for working-class families.

Promise 2: Second, I'll prioritize public safety by investing in solutions that prevent crime before it happens. I'll strengthen NYPD with better City Hall management and scale up trauma recovery centers to stop cycles of crime and violence. I'll deepen investments in violence prevention programs, mental health response teams, and other solutions proven to make neighborhoods safer.

Promise 3: Third, I'll expand programs I created to provide opportunities for economic stability and opportunity. The CUNY Reconnect program I established to provide working-age former CUNY student with the opportunity to return and earn their degree for greater earning power will be a priority to grow. It has re-enrolled nearly 50,000 New Yorkers, the majority of whom are women and people of color, and can help even more people. I will expand the City's first municipally-funded guaranteed income program I initiated to reduce homelessness and child poverty, in order to create the nation's largest-ever guaranteed basic income initiative aimed at ending child and youth homelessness while reducing poverty.

## 2. What experience have you had with good government and reform issues? (e.g., voting and election reform, campaign finance, ethics, police accountability, government transparency). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.

Throughout my career in public service, I have prioritized reforms to strengthen transparency, accountability, and local democracy to make government work better for New Yorkers.

I led the Council to pass and override a mayoral veto to enact the "How Many Stops Act," which enhances transparency of police investigative stops. This law can help promote greater accountability and oversight that increases the trust between communities and police necessary for improving public safety.

Under my leadership, the Council has enacted several laws to enhance transparency for the activities of many city agencies. I led the enactment of lobbying restrictions on former high-level government staffers in the mayor's office that prohibits them from lobbying city agencies they may have supervised or maintained authority over. I have also increased oversight of city contracting. Under my leadership, the Council has held rigorous oversight hearings, demanding accountability from city agencies and ensuring public dollars are spent responsibly.

Additionally, I have supported legislative reforms that enhance civic participation, including voting reforms like ranked-choice voting.

Most recently, I have led the Council to authorize a Charter Revision Commission, with representation for every city elected official, to strengthen local democracy and government oversight.

## ELECTIONS AND VOTING

**3. Do you support moving New York City's elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years, and will you publicly support efforts in Albany to implement this reform?**

Yes

Voter turnout in New York City elections is exceptionally low, as they are held “off-cycle” in odd-numbered years. To boost local voter turnout and reduce participation gaps, the Legislature passed, and Governor Hochul signed, a law that moves county and town elections to even-numbered years, and lawmakers are supporting a constitutional amendment that would do the same for city elections, including New York City’s. Citizens Union is [leading a coalition of groups advocating](#) to move New York City’s elections to even-numbered years, and the City Council is considering a [resolution in support](#) of that shift.

**4. The New York City Board of Elections (NYC BOE) has been a source of frustration for voters and candidates for years. How will you use your power as Mayor to improve the operations of the NYC BOE and ensure that its operations are transparent and accountable to the public?**

The Board of Elections must deliver reliable, transparent, and accessible elections for all New Yorkers. To achieve this, the BOE should adopt merit-based hiring practices and be transparent about its decision-making processes with the public. As Mayor, I'll actively collaborate with state legislators to advance reforms that modernize the BOE and reduce political influence in its operations, while ensuring the City’s funding incentivizes these outcomes.

I'll also advocate for enhanced transparency by pushing for detailed public reporting, accessible online resources, and clear, timely communication about any changes in voting procedures. Strengthening both City Hall’s and the BOE’s partnerships with civic organizations will help expand voter education efforts, ensuring New Yorkers always have accurate, up-to-date information about when, where, and how to vote.

**5. Do you support maintaining the use of Ranked Choice Voting in New York City elections?**

Yes

**Comments (optional)**

The City should explore this but I do not support making this change or other major procedural election changes at this time, as voters still must be adequately educated about ranked choice voting. I have concerns that making additional changes at this time would erode public trust in elections. I would support a charter revision commission that is solely dedicated to election reform and consists of democracy and election experts, with major and sustained public engagement.

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE

**7. Individuals with business ties to city government and registered lobbyists can bypass their donation limits by “bundling” donations from other people. Do you support limiting bundling by people on the “Doing Business with the City” database?**

Yes

**8. Are you a supporter of the City’s public campaign matching funds program, and do you commit to protecting the independence of the program and ensuring that the Campaign Finance Board has sufficient resources to run the program?**

Yes

**\* In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve New York City’s campaign finance system.**

Looking ahead, as Mayor, I will support additional reforms, including stricter limits on donation bundling by lobbyists and those doing business with the City, increased transparency in campaign spending, and stronger disclosure rules for independent expenditures. My administration will ensure the Campaign Finance Board remains fully independent, properly funded, and equipped to rigorously enforce campaign finance laws—protecting the integrity of our elections and maintaining public trust. I will never publicly or privately attack CFB in ways that undermine its credibility, as the current mayor has done. In fact, I called this out as wrong when the current mayor insinuated wrongdoing by the board for seeking to hold his campaign accountable.

## **ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT**

**9. The recent indictments and resignations surrounding City Hall has exposed serious ethical problems in City Government. Please describe how you will maintain the highest ethical standards in office.**

I believe strongly that public service is a privilege, not an entitlement, and it demands absolute integrity, transparency, and accountability. As Speaker of the City Council, I’ve led with these values, fostering a culture of the highest ethical standards. Under my leadership, the Council has engaged in rigorous oversight of ethical scandals and controversies by Mayor Eric Adams’ administration that could be conducted appropriately without interfering in law enforcement investigations and activities.

As Mayor, I’ll set an unequivocal ethical standard from day one. I’ll require comprehensive ethics training for all senior administration officials and strictly enforce clear conflict-of-interest guidelines. I’ll empower the Department of Investigation and the Conflicts of Interest Board, ensuring they have ample resources and genuine independence to proactively root out misconduct. As Speaker, I have vigorously advocated for DOI’s funding and independence. I believe there should be greater protections for the DOI Commissioner from political retribution and removal by the mayor. Our city also needs greater protections that leave it vulnerable when a mayor is compromised by undue influence, similar to the current officeholder.

Furthermore, transparency in my administration will be non-negotiable. Decisions will be made openly and information about city contracts and spending will be fully accessible to the public.

Restoring trust means not only clear standards but swift accountability. Under my leadership, ethical breaches will be addressed immediately and decisively. My administration will lead by example, fully committed to integrity, accountability, and public service.

**10. Incoming public servants must sever ties and divest from companies or other interests that have business dealing with the City; but they are not required to recuse themselves when working on matters involving their former business partners, clients, employer, etc. Do you support forbidding public servants to work on matters relating to their former business partners, clients, employers, and other interests for a set period of time?**

Yes

**11. Some campaign consultants also work as lobbyists. Do you support restricting campaign consultants from lobbying their former clients for a period of two years after their client has won elected office?**

Yes

**\* In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve ethics standards in New York City government.**

Too often, city government agencies and offices have been resistant to transparency. This is the wrong approach, and instead transparency should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen trust and performance.

Throughout my leadership as Speaker, this has been my approach. I've prioritized raising ethical standards in city government and increasing transparency. I have supported rigorous City Council oversight, including by holding hearings to address ethical lapses, potential misuse of public resources, and other issues that undermine public trust.

As Mayor, I'll further this commitment by enforcing clear standards of conduct for all city employees and appointees. I'll empower the Department of Investigation and Conflicts of Interest Board with increased independence, resources, and authority to proactively identify and swiftly address any unethical actions. City government must proactively and aggressively ensure ethical governance, free from scandal and focused solely on public service.

## **POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**

**12. Who do you think should have the final decision on discipline in the New York City Police Department? (i.e., Place the final decision with the Police Commissioner; the Civilian Complaint Review Board; Mayor or Deputy Mayor for Public Safety; or another individual or entity.)**

I believe the final decision on discipline for substantiated misconduct against civilians should rest with the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB). While there may be legal issues with codifying such a change, I will ensure adherence to this independent civilian oversight. It is essential to public safety that there is meaningful and timely accountability for misconduct, so community trust in law enforcement can help make New Yorkers safer. Consistent and reliable accountability is also in the best interest of rank-and-file officers, because it is critical that they have clear expectations and fairness.

**13. How do you view the role of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety?**

The Deputy Mayor for Public Safety should provide strategic oversight and coordination for the city's safety-related policies and agencies, ensuring alignment with broader citywide goals. Under my administration, this role would not usurp the police commissioner's authority within the department but play a strong role in supporting and coordinating with various agencies that are critical to public safety.

The deputy mayor would not only support effective management of agencies like the NYPD, FDNY, and Emergency Management, but also drive forward holistic approaches that include investments in violence prevention, mental health services, supportive housing, youth engagement, and restorative justice. The Deputy Mayor must consistently foster transparency, accountability, and collaboration between city agencies and communities, ensuring that safety strategies reflect and respond directly to the needs and priorities of New Yorkers.

14. Do you support making the appointment of the New York City Police Commissioner subject to the advice and consent of the City Council?

Yes

**\* In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve police accountability in New York City.**

As City Council Speaker, I've consistently prioritized stronger police accountability and transparency. I led the City Council's successful enactment of the landmark "How Many Stops Act," mandating that the NYPD report its investigative stops of New Yorkers. This increased transparency promotes greater accountability for any potential discriminatory policing practices and police activity in service to public safety.

I've also consistently advocated and supported adequate resources for the oversight agencies of the CCRB and DOI, despite resistance from the mayoral administration. In misconduct cases that resulted in findings recommending discipline for officers, like the killing of Allan Feliz and Eric Garner, I have publicly called for disciplinary action. I have also taken action to increase accountability by enacting the disciplinary matrix, which was unfortunately undermined by the current administration.

As Mayor, I would further this commitment by empowering civilian oversight bodies, increasing transparency in police decision-making, strengthening collaboration and trust with communities, and ensuring clear standards of conduct are enforced. Policing that is accountable to the public is the most effective way for it to improve safety.

## CHECKS AND BALANCES

15. The Mayor currently has the power to block charter revision ballot questions (proposed by the City Council, other charter commissions, and citizen petitions) by establishing their own Charter Revision Commission. Do you support removing this Mayoral power?

Yes

**16. Please provide your views about the New York City Council's "advice and consent" powers. In what cases, if any, should a mayor need the Council's approval for an appointment of a high ranking Mayoral official, such as an agency commissioner?**

I believe strongly in a robust role for "advice and consent" by the City Council in appointing key high-ranking officials, including agency commissioners. This practice is broadly used by local and state governments across the country, and deeply rooted in the foundations of U.S. democracy. It can advance transparency, democratic accountability, and representative government. Advice and consent is an important safeguard against individual political interests surpassing the public interest in top appointments. This collaborative process strengthens our democracy and relationships between government leaders. The commonly stated fear that has been expressed about this reform is similar to those surrounding increases to transparency, but we should not be fearful of stronger democracy.

**\* In the box below, you may provide any additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve the system of checks and balances in New York City**

**government.**

I have consistently sought to empower the checks-and-balances that promote the public's interest in government decisions and operations, as Speaker of the City Council, through robust oversight. I have also strengthened the Council's budget oversight by creating record numbers of new units of appropriation and terms and conditions for budget spending that increases transparency about spending.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Please provide any other info you would like us to know about you and your candidacy.**

I didn't enter public service aiming to be an elected official or mayor, but this moment demands leadership deeply committed to integrity, accountability, and genuine public service. As the first Black woman to lead the City Council, I've consistently prioritized government transparency and accountability, along with justice, equity, and community empowerment. I've demonstrated strength by standing up to the mayor on behalf of New Yorkers, fighting tirelessly for affordable housing, safer communities, economic fairness, and meaningful support for marginalized New Yorkers.

My campaign centers the people of New York City, not special interests or political insiders. My path to victory runs through the working families, women, tenants, and communities of color who've always driven our city forward. Together, we'll build a New York that's affordable, fair, safe, and responsive, one where everyone has the opportunities to thrive.

As Mayor, my commitment is clear: no drama, no scandals, just ethical, competent leadership laser-focused on delivering real results for everyday New Yorkers.

**Please review your answers by clicking PREVIEW ANSWERS below. You can submit the questionnaire at the bottom of the preview page by clicking SUBMIT.**

**Once you click SUBMIT, you will receive a confirmation email with a PDF file containing your responses. If you don't see the email, please check your spam box.**

If you have any further questions, you may contact us at [candidates@citizensunion.org](mailto:candidates@citizensunion.org).