



GENERAL INFORMATION

Candidate info

Name	Shahana Hanif
City Council District #	39
In which primary	Democratic
Age	34
Education	BA
Current job, position, or occupation	Council Member, District 39

Campaign contact information

Website	https://www.shahanafrombk.com/
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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: Affordable Housing: I will increase funding for affordable housing projects, streamline zoning laws, and offer incentives for developers to build low-income housing to address the housing crisis.

Promise 2: Education Reform: I will invest in public education, increase teacher pay, expand access to early childhood education, and ensure affordable higher education options for all students.

Promise 3: Lower Cost of Living: I will work to reduce healthcare costs, lower energy prices, and provide tax breaks for middle-class families to ease the financial burden and make living more affordable for everyone.

2. If elected, what is the first piece of legislation you would introduce? Why is that your top priority? If you are an incumbent, please also state what legislation you have passed which you are most proud of.

In my first year as a Council Member, I took significant steps to advance reproductive health and gender equity for New Yorkers. As part of the NYC Abortion Rights Act, I proudly passed landmark legislation, including a law that allows individuals who seek abortions in New York City to have a civil right of action if they face unjust lawsuits in their anti-choice home states (Local Law 76 of 2022). Additionally, I launched a public information campaign to ensure that New Yorkers are fully aware of their reproductive rights (Local Law 75 of 2022). This initiative included billboards in abortion-restrictive states like Georgia and Texas, directing patients to seek care in NYC, which successfully increased the number of out-of-state patients served by our City.

To further support access to care, I led a budget campaign for \$1 million in funding for the New York Abortion Access Fund and The Brigid Alliance, helping cover the procedural and logistical costs for individuals seeking abortions in our City.

I also authored Local Law 45 of 2024, Home+, which establishes a pilot program in neighborhoods most affected by domestic violence to cover the costs of lock changes for survivors. While many nonprofits already provide this service, this city-run initiative will formalize support for low-income individuals, ensuring they receive essential assistance. The two-year pilot program will be administered by community-based organizations and will include wrap-around services to connect survivors with a broader network of support, reinforcing their safety and well-being.

3. In your view, what are the major needs of your district's constituents?

The major need of my district's constituents is affordable housing. Many families struggle with rising rent prices and limited availability of affordable homes. I have focused on increasing the supply of affordable housing, expanding rent control measures, and offering support for first-time homebuyers to ensure that everyone has access to a safe and stable place to live.

4. How long have you lived in the district in which you are running, and do you have any achievements or involvement in your neighborhood you are particularly proud of?

I have lived in my district for 34 years, and throughout that time, I've been a strong advocate for universal 3K and pre-K. I've also worked tirelessly to expand access to affordable, high-quality childcare and early education programs. One of my proudest achievements is helping to establish Promise NYC, a childcare initiative specifically for undocumented families. This program has played a critical role in supporting

newly arrived migrant families. What started with \$10 million has grown to \$25 million in just three years, providing essential childcare and helping families secure stable housing and employment.

5. 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.

Ethics reform is essential to ensuring transparency and accountability in our government. I'm proud to have been a sponsor of Int 0077, which passed earlier this year. This critical piece of legislation will reform the current system that allows former city employees and public servants to lobby city government after they have left city service. Under this bill, several key former city officials—including the Chief of Staff to the Mayor, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Mayor, Chief Counsel to the Mayor, Chief Advisor to the Mayor, Senior Advisor to the Mayor, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Communications Director, Press Secretary, and any public servant who directly reports to the Mayor—would be prohibited from lobbying any city agency for two years after leaving city service. Additionally, Chiefs of Staff to a Deputy Mayor and Deputy Chiefs of Staff to the Mayor would be barred from lobbying for one year. This legislation helps close the revolving door and ensures that public servants remain focused on the people they serve, not special interests.

6. What do you think the role of the City Council is in city government this upcoming term?

In the upcoming term, the City Council will play a key role in defending local values while advocating for a budget that prioritizes the needs of the people.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

7. Do you support moving New York City's elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years, and will you co-sponsor a Council Resolution supporting that measure?

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.

8. The New York City Board of Elections (NYC BOE) has been a source of frustration for voters and candidates for years. The City Council appoints NYC BOE members and has the power to appoint commissioners who are committed to reform, but the most recent commissioners have been appointed behind closed doors. Do you commit to request a public hearing for BOE nominees, and to only vote for individuals who are publicly committed to reducing party-based patronage and supporting open hiring practices?

Yes

9. Do you support maintaining the use of Ranked Choice Voting in New York City's elections?

Yes

10. New York City is one of the few cities that maintains a closed primary system, in which only registered party members can vote in the primary election. Do you believe New York City should shift to a form of completely open primaries, allowing all registered voters to vote in one primary where the top two candidates, regardless of party, move on to the general election?

Yes

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

In the past, I have worked to expand access to voting by advocating for early voting and greater accessibility at polling stations, ensuring that every eligible voter has a chance to participate. Going forward, I plan to push for initiatives that streamline the voting process, such as expanding online voter registration, increasing multilingual support at polling sites, and improving outreach to underrepresented communities. I also support reforms that make voting more inclusive, such as automatic voter registration and efforts to remove barriers for formerly incarcerated individuals.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

11. 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

12. 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.**

N/A

ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT

13. The recent pattern of 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 will prioritize transparency, accountability, and integrity in all aspects of my work. I will implement strict

ethical guidelines, ensure regular audits, and foster a culture of openness to prevent any conflicts of interest. By maintaining clear communication with constituents and adhering to the highest standards of conduct, I will work to rebuild trust in city government.

14. Incoming public servants must sever ties and divest from companies or other interests that have business dealings 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

15. Some campaign consultants also work as lobbyists. Do you support restricting campaign consultants from lobbying the candidates they served for two years after the candidate won elected office?

Yes

16. Do you support moving lobbying oversight and enforcement from the City Clerk’s Office to another agency charged with ethics issues, like the Conflicts of Interest Board?

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.**

N/A

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Discipline within the New York Police Department should ultimately rest with an independent body, such as the Civilian Complaint Review Board, to ensure transparency and accountability. While the Police Commissioner plays an important role in overseeing the department, having an independent civilian entity involved helps to build trust within the community and ensures that disciplinary actions are fair and impartial.

*** 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.**

I supported the How Many Stops Act, which aims to increase police transparency by requiring officers to report data on each stop they make. This legislation helps hold the police accountable, provides important insights into law enforcement practices, and ensures that our communities are treated fairly and respectfully. It’s a step toward building trust between law enforcement and the public while promoting greater accountability.

CHECKS AND BALANCES

18. 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

19. Do you support allowing bills with strong support to go through the committee process and be put to a vote on the floor without needing the permission of the speaker?

Yes

20. 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 the New York City Council's "advice and consent" powers are crucial for maintaining checks and balances within the city government. The Council should have a role in approving key Mayoral appointments, especially for high-ranking officials like agency commissioners, to ensure that these individuals are qualified, transparent, and aligned with the values of the city's residents.

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

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFO