Black Lives Matter Seattle King County 2020 endorsement opportunity and process

Black Lives Matter Seattle King County and the Washington Black Lives Matter Alliance congratulate you on your primary election and advancing to the general election.

We are writing to invite you to complete our short candidate questionnaire for the 2020 general election. We will be encouraging our community and allies to be voting for candidates who are supportive of advancing Black Liberation, an equal justice system for all, and community prosperity.

We are asking candidates to complete an online questionnaire, and as a backup, the questions are below. Only candidates who complete the questions will be eligible for endorsement.

The deadline for submitting your answers is Saturday, October 10, at 5:00 PM. For any questions and if you encounter technical difficulties, please contact [EMAIL REMOVED]

Endorsements will be announced on Wednesday, October 15.

About Black Lives Matter Seattle King County

Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County is a social advocacy organization fighting for the protection and liberation of Black Life through advocacy and direct action.

We believe that all Black Lives matter, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status, or location.

The Washington Black Lives Matter Alliance is a statewide collective of people and organizations using our voice, our vote, and our power to fight for Black Lives.

Black Lives Matter Seattle King County Political Demands
We demand that racism be declared a public health crisis in Washington state.
We demand a 50% defunding of the Seattle Police Department.
We demand some of the budget formerly devoted to policing be shifted to culturally responsive, community-centric mental health and wellness services.
We demand a justice system that delivers equal treatment under the law.
We demand King County fulfill its promise to, by 2025, transform into a community resource the youth jail unit at Judge Patricia H. Clark Children and Family Justice Center.
We demand fully funding education in Washington State with a capital gains tax by 2021.

Black Lives Matter Seattle King County Endorsement Questions

If elected, give examples of how your priorities will support the liberation and protection of Black Lives
locally and across the state?
Do you believe racism is a public health crisis? Explain your answer.
Do you support defunding the police? Explain your answer.
What is your position on charging officers with bodily harm-related crimes when excessive force is used?
Explain your answer.
How does your racial identity shape your perspective of public policy? Explain your answer.
Do you support the restoration of voting rights for Washingtonians who are incarcerated or have been previously incarcerated or owe fees and fines? Explain your answer.

Non-responses to the questionnaire will be evaluated as responses to the questionnaire.
Thank you for your participation in our candidate endorsement process, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Ebony Miranda, Chair
They | Them
Advocacy and Policy Committee
Black Lives Matter Seattle King County

If elected, give examples of how your priorities will support the liberation and protection of Black lives locally and across the state?

We must shape policies that not only address the need for equity and racial justice -- in our tax code, in how we fund schools, housing policy, our law enforcement and criminal justice systems, in climate mitigation and delivery of health care to name a few-- but also make sure we are doing so with a commitment to racial, social, and environmental justice, recognizing that the front line communities most impacted by threats ranging from corona virus to climate change, are those that have been historically marginalized or discriminated against.

I am committed to continue learning-- and acting -- to make Washington a more fair, equitable, and just place for all.
Do you believe racism is a public health crisis? Explain your answer.

Racism is a public health crisis. We have a long and tragic legacy of white supremacy and institutional racism in our country that permeates all of our institutions and systems.

From our justice system that is inherently unjust, to the war on drugs, to structures that have been set up with the intent to discriminate, to our system of mass incarceration that disproportionally incarcerates black and brown people, to exclusionary redlining restricting access to neighborhoods and home ownership, to the racial wealth gap, to the inequities within our healthcare system, to Covid-19 related infections and mortality, and the maternal mortality rate of black mothers.

Do you support defunding the police? Explain your answer.

I support divesting resources and revenue from law enforcement and investing in programs, services, and supports that cultivate actual community health and safety.

We must build upon the work of I-940, which improves police training in de-escalation tactics, mental health, and the rendering of first aid. It also removes Washington’s de facto immunity from prosecution for unjustified use of deadly force by police.

We must build accountability into every law enforcement agency by increasing accountability and transparency in police union contracts. We must create independent police oversight with subpoena and other investigative powers, implement body cameras, demilitarize the police by barring law enforcement from purchasing military equipment, and further limit the use of deadly force by police. Further, we need to end the system of mass incarceration and invest in restorative justice.

What is your position on charging officers with bodily harm-related crimes when excessive force is used? Explain your answer.

We must hold officers accountable for bodily harm-related crimes when excessive force is used. Without accountability and commensurate repercussions, officer related harm will continue.
How does your racial identity shape your perspective of public policy? Explain your answer. *

As a white woman, growing up in a single parent household, experiencing being unhoused in my youth, and working through community college as the first in my family to seek a degree shaped my perspective of equity and the need for all people to be provided the tools and opportunities to reach their potential-- not just the wealthy and well connected.

This lived experience has informed my approach to organizing for union jobs, fighting for affordable low-barrier housing, and delivering supports for the vulnerable as a community leader and on the Olympia City Council.

Applying these values to the larger principles of justice-- acknowledging and tackling the structural barriers to success experienced by Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ residents, and residents of America is core to my priorities as a public servant and will inform my work as your legislator.

Do you support the restoration of voting rights for Washingtonians who are incarcerated or have been previously incarcerated or owe fees and fines? Explain your answer. *

Absolutely. The criminal justice system has been designed with the intent to discriminate and IPOC are disproportionately impacted by its racist policies. Restricting voting rights for the formerly incarcerated further disenfranchises them and denies them the ability to have a voice in who represents them and the policies that impact them. People who serve their time should be entitled to vote regardless of debt they owe.