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

Email address *

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

The focus of my work in the Legislature has been to fight for clean air, clean water, and progress against climate change. Black communities are disproportionately harmed by air and water pollution and disproportionately exposed to harm from climate change. I will continue to fight for stronger policies protecting Washingtonians from pollution. I will also push for tax reform so Washington's tax policies rest less heavily on people with the least ability to pay and so we ask the wealthiest people in our state to pay for the social structures than enable Black families to advance economically, such as education and affordable housing. Finally I will support Black communities in the urgent work to reform policing. I will support a robust agenda informed by community stakeholders and families who have been impacted by police violence, including ensuring that police officers are held accountable by updating deadly force laws, reforms to law enforcement licensure and decertification, independent criminal investigations, and reinvesting police department dollars in community priorities.
Do you believe racism is a public health crisis? Explain your answer. *

Yes. The huge impacts of racism on Black communities is evidenced in the shorter average lifespans and lower average household income and wealth that Black communities experience. Black maternal mortality rates that are many times higher than white mortality rates are evidence of the public health crises driven by racism -- a JAMA article earlier this year also demonstrated higher infant mortality among Black infants caused by air pollution and climate change. High ambient carbon monoxide levels have also been linked to higher levels of maternal health complications and infant mortality and are closely associated with proximity to highways, where gasoline and diesel combustion are the primary contributors to carbon monoxide levels. Finally, intergenerational stress and trauma are closely linked with adverse health outcomes at all ages, and we must address root causes of this trauma if we are going to break the cycle of harms rooted in racism.

Do you support defunding the police? Explain your answer. *

Yes, I support reinvesting dollars currently allocated for police departments for community priorities that don't threaten Black lives, such as crisis response teams and affordable housing.

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

Yes. It is evident that our laws governing police use of deadly force need to be updated and we need independent criminal investigations to ensure accountability when police use deadly force. I will support the Washington Coalition for Police Accountability's legislative agenda in 2021 to both reduce the use of deadly force by law enforcement and to ensure that officers who use deadly force in situations where it is not called for are held accountable.

How does your racial identity shape your perspective of public policy? Explain your answer. *

As a white man, I recognize that I have benefited from white privilege at every step of my journey to the office I now hold. So I must pay particular attention to combatting privilege as well as identifying ways I can use my privilege to combat racism.
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. *

Yes - the right to vote is the right from which all other rights derive. No democratic society should deprive adults of the right to vote, even adults who are incarcerated or were previously incarcerated. I have worked to pass laws to expand voting rights, including legislation allowing same-day voter registration, allowing 16- and 17-year olds to pre-register to vote, and to count incarcerated individuals at their home addresses rather than the address of their prison or jail for purposes of redistricting. I will support legislative efforts in the future to allow all Washingtonians to vote, including those who are incarcerated.