



Thursday, April 29, 2021

**Citizens Union 2021 Candidate  
Questionnaire - New York City Mayor**

Dear Candidate,

In the following pages, you will find questions regarding your positions on various reform issues and your plans for office. The form includes four sections: the pandemic and city government, elections and voting, police accountability, and miscellaneous.

Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for city offices, and to issue our preference for the June primary. Read more about the method, principles, and criteria of the candidate evaluation process [here](#).

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**If you wish to be considered, please submit the questionnaire by April 17 and no later than 48 before your interview.**

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process.

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If you cannot complete the questionnaire in one sitting, you can click Save and Continue Later at the bottom of every page.

Once you submit the questionnaire, you will receive a confirmation email with a PDF file containing your responses. Citizens Union will not be able to see your answers unless you submit the form. We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).

For any questions, please email [candidates@citizensunion.org](mailto:candidates@citizensunion.org)

We thank you very much for your response.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Your Info**

#### **Name**

Eric Adams

#### **Running in what primary**

Democratic Primary for Mayor of NYC

#### **Age**

60

#### **Education**

Master's degree in public administration from Marist College, and a graduate of New York City Technical College and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

#### **Occupation/Employer**

Borough of Brooklyn

#### **Previous Oces, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement**

Eric joined the NYPD and during that time he co-founded the organization 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care to advocate for police reform from within. From the NYPD, he was elected to the State Senate, where he pushed through measures to protect tenants and workers, and advance human rights. As Brooklyn's first Black Borough President, he has worked tirelessly to grow the local economy, reduce inequality, improve public safety, and advocate for better government.

#### **Campaign Contact Information**

##### **Email**

[info@ericadams2021.com](mailto:info@ericadams2021.com)

##### **Campaign Manager Name**

Katie Moore

##### **Campaign Manager Email**

kmoore@ericadams2021.com

##### **Scheduler contact info (If relevant)**

##### **Phone Number**

##### **Website**

**Twitter**

**Facebook**

**Armations**

**Have you completed the required campaign  
finance filings?**

**Have you qualified to receive matching  
campaign finance funds from the CFB?**

Yes

**Are you willing to be interviewed by Citizens  
Union's Local Candidates Committee?**

Yes

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union's endorsements)

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**Signature**

**THEPANDEMICANDCITY  
GOVERNMENT**

**1. If elected, you will start your term as New York City (hopefully) begins to re-openings businesses, offices, and institutions. How will you utilize the mayor's office to help rebuild the Economic base of NYC?**

*To start, we must ensure that our City's recovery is more equitable as well. As I laid out in my **People Plan**, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the holes in New York City's safety net—but it also led to an opportunity for historic change. The next mayor and City Council will inherit billions of dollars in new funds from the federal and State governments that — if used wisely and morally — can fundamentally change our city. Most importantly, smarter, fairer, more effective government can reverse inequality.*

*That is why as mayor I will launch my "People's Plan", combining my NYC AID, Housing Voucher+ and UCare universal child care programs—all united by my MyCity platform to better deliver services and benefits efficiently and effectively to New Yorkers who need them.*

*This unprecedented effort will be my top priority to revolutionize the City's approach to caring for New Yorkers in need by providing assistance through automatic monthly cash assistance, free or subsidized child care, housing vouchers that actually pay the rent and more efficient delivery of City services.*

*At the center of the People's Plan will be a unified digital platform that connects all City agencies through a single portal. To receive the cash, credits, services and other assistance they need, New Yorkers will simply fill out one application and the City will do the rest. With the right set of data points, the City will be able to determine what each New Yorker needs, and then use its resources to assist them, whether that means putting cash into a bank account or placing their child at a local daycare center.*

*Then we also must adequately support our small businesses.*

*We must reduce tax burdens on small businesses to make them more competitive against out-of-town tech companies, such as Amazon, who have asserted market dominance in our city at the expense of small business owners—an existential problem for our small businesses that only deepened during the pandemic. This is why we will implement a weekly sales tax holiday, every Tuesday, on services and products that are more likely to be paid for in-person to incentivize New Yorkers to spend locally. We will offset the cost of this weekly holiday by more fairly taxing online transactions such as streaming services, which are not currently taxed.*

*Small businesses also pay huge fees just to launch and stay in business, and then face large fines for relatively small violations—many of which are due to lack of education about the law, not knowingly breaking it. We will make the permitting process easier and cheaper through our online system, and institute a warning system for violations that are not related to serious health or safety issues so that first-time offenders are given education in lieu of a fine. We will provide additional clarity to those who commit violations by categorizing every violation in a three level warning system: red, yellow and green. Each color corresponds to the number of days the owner has until the cure must be implemented.*

*We will also eliminate fees for starting, or restarting, a small business, in New York City. The last thing we want to do in an economic crisis is charge people to start a new business—and restart a closed one. All filing and registration fees will be eliminated.*

*In addition to providing building owners tax abatements so that their tenants—such as restaurants and bars—can remain open, the State should also share the cost of restaurants' workers for a period. Instead of simply paying unemployment to out-of-work food service workers, the State should be splitting the cost of their salaries with restaurant owners who commit to a certain level of employment, wages and hours while adhering to capacity limits and other health regulations. We will fight for this critical initiative to save our restaurant industry in Albany.*

*Finally, we have to provide our businesses with “back office” support. It is estimated that on average, small business owners spend 120 work days a year on all of the administrative tasks that come with owning a business. If the City offers “back office” assistance for these small businesses through local Chambers of Commerce, our mom and pop shops and entrepreneurs can save time and money on accounting and compliance needs, and focus on growing their businesses.*

**2. New York City is facing an economic and financial crisis. How Would You Ensure the Health and integrity of city spending, while Providing New Yorkers with valuable city services?**

*Believe it or not, nearly all City agencies currently operate wholly separately from one another, **not sharing data or metrics**. By combining all agency metrics onto a single platform similar to CompStat and using analytics to track performance in real time, we can go from a reactive approach to City management to being proactive and, eventually, predictive. The cost savings and improved performance will save billions of dollars and deliver far better services to New Yorkers.*

*My administration will make City agencies work together, the root of our City's inefficiency is in its agencies, which work in parallel, instead of in concert--and often in direct conflict with each other. By mandating inter-agency coordination and designating existing senior staff to a citywide council that meets regularly to align goals, we will institutionalize coordination to reduce inefficiency and inequality. That council will be tasked with three specific mandates:*

- *Define the mission of each agency*
- *Ensure the missions of the agencies meet the overall mission of the City government as defined by city leadership*
- *Evaluate agencies to ensure no agency's actions conflict with another agency*

*Next, we will coordinate public and non-profit delivery of services. New York City relies heavily on non-profits to provide critical services to New Yorkers that are funded by the City. But there is no central authority in City government that oversees and coordinates delivery of these services on a day-to-day basis. Because of this, we are not finding efficiencies and savings that can help us better deliver services to more New Yorkers. That is why we will create a real-time reporting system for the delivery of services across a unified network, overseen by the First Deputy Mayor.*

*In addition, we will mandate efficiency by instituting a standing Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG), we will reduce agency spending at least 3-5% by applying an efficiency mandate that eliminates ineffective programs and unnecessary spending, while utilizing an inequality impact test so that programs vital to lower-income New Yorkers are protected.*

*Lastly, efficiency mandates mean nothing without oversight and a leader dedicated to ensuring success. The Efficiency Czar will oversee the standing Program to Eliminate the Gap and conduct quarterly agency and department audits to continuously uncover inefficiency in the City government and make suggestions for changes. The Czar will also oversee the evaluation of large City contracts -- particularly related to recurring expenses such as utility bills -- and partner with companies that are incentivized to find cost savings.*

*We can identify inefficiencies, provide essential services to all New Yorkers and ensure a more just access to city services for marginalized New Yorkers.*

**3. In March 2020, Mayor de Blasio issued a State of emergency in NewYorkCity (as did Governor Cuomo in NYState) to remove any Legal and regulatory barriers to fight the Coronavirus pandemic. Do You Have Any Concerns regarding the use of emergency Powers by the Mayor during this crisis? How do you think city government can maintain public accountability standards at this time?**

*Government transparency and accountability is necessary for effective leadership. As Mayor, I will give New Yorkers a real-time score for government performance. By creating one data platform for all City operations, we can also create a continually updated public score for each agency going far beyond the Mayor's Management Report, based on the performance relative to its stated goals for the year. Boston already does this with its CityScore program.*

**4. The ability of citizens and advocates to make Their voices heard in City Hall has been severely Curtailed since city government shifted to work Remotely. The next Mayor will need to decide how to adapt to the new reality. How Would You propose to improve community engagement and public participation while using remote technology(in public hearings,meetings,etc.), particularly to ensure equity in participation?**

*I have said for a long time that we need to make government more accessible to all New Yorkers, especially those who are most marginalized. This means giving people multiple ways to participate in government and interact with city services. While going remote hasn't worked for some, for many it has opened up new possibilities. We have seen through the pandemic that we can make hearings and meetings accessible to a large group of people by using technology that is not costly. I am committed to continuing this accessibility even as we reopen and more New Yorkers are comfortable with in-person meetings. This will allow participation to people who might not be able to attend due to constraints in their work schedule, inaccessibility to transit, or if they live with a disability.*

*However that is not enough as long as we have significant broadband gaps in our city. We can increase community engagement and public participation through expanding access to high speed internet. We will finally close the broadband gap by using rezoning powers to require affordable Mandatory Inclusionary Internet, creating incentives for 5G providers to offer affordable access, and forcing cable providers to expand affordable internet offerings to every single low-income New Yorker using requirements for their City contracts that are already in place. For transparency, New Yorkers will also be able to track progress as companies lay fiber optics in our communities through real-time GIS mapping that will be made available online.*

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## **VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM**

**5. Do you consider yourself a supporter of Ranked Choice Voting? How will you work to Maintain this system and educate voters on how It works?**

*Yes, I support Ranked Choice Voting. History has shown that every new step you put in the process impacts seniors and marginalized people the most. We need a serious increase in voter education. That would include an investment of \$1 million in training that is in-person and online across the city. It is not enough to send postcards to voters.*

**6. Now that New York City has implemented Ranked Choice Voting, do you support moving to An Open primary system (eliminating party Primaries and establishing a non-partisan Election system)**

*No, I support the political party system in NYC.*

**7. How will you use your power as Mayor to Improve the operations of the NYC Board of Election And Its Accountability To The City?**

*We need to make it easier to register to vote by ensuring same day voter registration. And provide more*

*funding to go towards voter education so our communities are engaged in the electoral process.*

**8. The next mayor will appoint seven members to the city's redistricting commission. In Doing So, the next mayor will share the Responsibility for shaping a fair political map for the coming decade. If Elected, what objectives will you have in appointing commission members?**

*As with any agency, department, or team that I lead, my objective will be to appoint a diverse group of qualified New Yorkers to ensure equality and fairness in this process.*

**9. Mayor de Blasio created a Democracy NYC office, headed by a Chief Democracy Over, tasked with increasing voter registration, improving voter access, promoting youth participation, and advancing democratic reforms. The Campaign Finance Board, the Board of Elections, and Civic Engagement Commission share similar responsibilities. How would your administration organize its efforts to promote civic engagement and participation? How Would That fit in your overall vision for the city?**

*The root of our City's inefficiency is in its agencies, which work in parallel, instead of in concert--and often in direct conflict with each other. We need to make it easier and hassle-free to register to vote and vote. This is my vision and I will expect all three of these agencies to be guided by that as they determine their overall mission. By mandating inter-agency coordination we will institutionalize coordination to reduce inefficiency and inequality. That council will be tasked with three specific mandates:*

- *Define the mission of each agency*
- *Ensure the missions of the agencies meet the overall mission of the City government as defined by city leadership*
- *Evaluate agencies to ensure no agency's actions conflict with another agency*

**10. Do you support allowing the winner of a special election for a city force (except the mayor) to serve the remainder of the unexpired term, instead of only filling the position until the next general election?**

*We require additional clarity on this question. Thank you.*

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**11. The de Blasio administration launched a citywide civic education program, Civics for All, which included a new curriculum, training for teachers, and increased student voter registration drives. Do you support maintaining Civics for All and student voter registration drives at the same capacity?**

*Yes-- we need to create lifelong voters and that is done at an early age with Civics education and other programs.*

## **POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**

Citizens Union has been studying police accountability and performance in New York City for more than a decade. In our reports and advocacy efforts we have urged city government to strengthen the accountability of the New York Police Department to the public and create a more cohesive system of police oversight. Previous reports include: [2016 issue brief](#), [2013 position brief on Stop and Frisk](#), [2012 report on the CCRB](#), [2008 policy statement on police misconduct](#). Citizens Union's 2021 agenda for police reform, [published as a report](#) in March, calls for establishing a Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, allowing the CCRB to appeal the Police Commissioner's decisions, making the appointment of Police Commissioner subject to advice and consent of the City Council, consolidating agencies with oversight authority, ending qualified immunity, and



more.

**12. Do you support appointing a Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, with the expertise and authority to monitor and supervise the Police Department on the Mayor's behalf?**

*I support appointing a Police Chief committed to reform and implementing the strong Public Safety vision I have laid out in my 100+ Steps Forward for NYC. However, ultimately, the Mayor must take responsibility for the public safety of New Yorkers.*

**13. Do you support making the appointment of the Police Commissioner subject to the advice and consent of the City Council?**

*I would seek input from the Council but the final decision should lie with the Mayor*

**14. Who do you think should have the final say on discipline in the police department? How would you ensure penalties are imposed on police officers that commensurate with the gravity of their wrongdoing?**

*The police commissioner should not have the final say on discipline — the mayor should — and the timeline for determining punishment should be shortened significantly.*

**15. Do you support allowing the Civilian Complaint Review Board's (CCRB) to initiate an investigations without having to wait for an individual complaint?**

Yes

**16. Do you support granting the CCRB prompt and full access to footage from body-worn Cameras, police officers' employment history and disciplinary records and all other documents and materials in the possession of the NYPD relevant to its investigations?**

Yes

**17. Do you support consolidating the three Bodies that exercise oversight of the NYPD: the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), the Inspector General for the Police Department, the Mayor's Commission to Combat Police Corruption?**

*Yes I support this, as Mayor, I will seek to streamline processes and organizations so that cases of officers who are accused of wrongdoing are reviewed and adjudicated swiftly and judiciously.*

**18. Do you support moving the disciplinary hearings for police officers, like those for all Other City employees, to be conducted before the independent administrative law judges of OATH (Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings) rather than within the NYPD?**

*As part of my initial extensive internal review of the police department and oversight agencies, I would seriously consider this.*

**19. Feel free to add any other policy proposals You support in regards to police accountability, Misconduct, and oversight ,or to effective policing including functions, training, and community relations.**



*I believe we need to publicize the list of cops the NYPD is monitoring for bad behavior. The NYPD keeps its own "monitoring list" of cops with records of complaints and violent incidents. We will make it public to be transparent and build trust.*

*And we will make it easier for good cops to identify bad cops. Most police officers could tell you about a few bad cops they work with or have run in to—and most cops resent their behavior because it brings down their profession and makes it harder for them to do their job. At the same time, it is dangerous for cops to report those bad apples. So we will make it easier for cops to anonymously report bad behavior by their colleagues that results in swift action through an outside system overseen by the Department of Investigation, protecting whistleblowers and exposing problem police.*

*In addition, to be more proactive we will create a citywide law enforcement intelligence committee. To improve NYPD transparency and oversight over sensitive policing operations while still maintaining needed information security, we will create a citywide law enforcement intelligence committee. The NYPD will regularly report to and share information with the committee, which will include the mayor, council speaker, council public safety chair, public advocate and borough presidents. Each of these individuals will receive top secret clearance. The committee can also then vote to determine when and how information on operations is disclosed to the public, rather than relying on the NYPD to make proactive disclosures.*

*One reason the NYPD continues to be plagued by incidents of bias and brutality is that the department still needs to become much more diverse. We will address this by recruiting from the very same neighborhoods that are suffering from crime, which are mostly Black and Brown, and by allowing peace officers at City agencies -- who are not police officers and who are also more likely to be Black and Brown -- to be promoted to the NYPD.*

*In order to guarantee community relations, we will connect precincts to the community. To make precinct houses more accessible to the communities they serve, we will revamp them to be more welcoming; improve them with public high-speed internet and wi-fi access; and hire specialized outreach and public information staff to change the culture of the houses into places where residents can come to learn about and participate in social and NYPD services and programs, particularly for families, children and youth.*

*Community policing is just a slogan if the NYPD is not, in fact, acting on what a community wants and needs. We will empower community boards and precinct councils to play a role in approving and vetoing by supermajority any precinct commander candidates and community affairs officers within their respective areas.*

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**20. How would you utilize city-affiliated Non profit organizations such as the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City raising private Revenue to supplement city agencies and Programs? How Would You Ensure That There Is Sufficient transparency and accountability of Funding received through such entities?**

*There can certainly be value to NYC for nonprofits that promote the city and fund programs and initiatives which address critical issues in lower income communities and communities of color, but funds and funders for those entities must be disclosed and New Yorkers must have every confidence that there is no conflict of interest between such a nonprofit and the leaders of the city and their government work.*

**21. What experience have you had, if any, with good government and reform issues? (e.g.**

**voting and elections, campaign finance, ethics, police accountability, government transparency and oversight). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.**

*I have been a public servant for 35 uninterrupted years, I have a long record on many of these issues and being a strong supporter of the necessary reform. I also started as an activist who joined the NYPD to reform it from within.*

*I have also called for 100% publicly financed elections to allow candidates from all backgrounds to run for office. I have always been a supporter of early voting and same day registration to allow greater access to the ballot.*

**22. In light of everything we have discussed above, why do you want to be mayor?**

*I've lived in New York all my life. My single mom struggled to make ends meet for my five siblings and me. We didn't always know if we would come home to an eviction notice or food on the table. And that is why I've spent my entire adult life in public service. Because I lived the life of the people I want to help. I remember what it was like to live with crime. To be hungry. To be on the edge of homelessness. To be forgotten by the city you love.*

*That's why I put on a bulletproof vest as a police officer and walked the streets. That's why I fought racism in the department. That's why I stood up for human rights in Albany. And that's why I have spent my Borough Presidency making government work better for the people who need it the most.*

*And during my 35 years in public service, I have seen what works and what doesn't in New York. And the problems we face existed far before COVID hit. Because inefficiency leads to inequality. Mismanagement creates crises. We can't continue to run this city the way we have been.*

**Please feel free to attach any additional information such as resume, campaign brochures, or issues statements.**

**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). 7