

**Windy City Times Questionnaire**  
**Answers submitted by Rahm Emanuel**

YOUR NAME: **Rahm Emanuel**  
INCUMBENT? **Yes**  
OFFICE SOUGHT: **Mayor**

1) Do you have or would you install a written policy in your office regarding sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination?

**Yes.**

2) Have you started or would you start sensitivity training for your staff members regarding LGBT-related issues?

**Yes**

3) Have you taken or would you take any steps to further HIV/AIDS treatment and education programs? If so, what are those measures?

**Yes. The Department of Public Health has been working closely with the Chicago Area HIV Integrated Services Council (CAHISC) on identifying the best strategies to further HIV/AIDS treatment and education programs. Input of the community has been critical to ensure that dollars follow the epidemic and that people living with HIV are engaged in care. CAHISC plays a key role in crafting this strategy, and the results were made clear in a report we recently released:  
[http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/sti\\_hiv\\_aids/news/2014/jan/new-report-shows-progress-in-fight-against-hiv-aids-in-chicago.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/sti_hiv_aids/news/2014/jan/new-report-shows-progress-in-fight-against-hiv-aids-in-chicago.html)**

4) What is your position on abortion as it pertains to the law?

**I am pro-choice. My record on reproductive rights has earned me a 100% rating from NARAL. While in Congress, I co-sponsored a bill to expand access to preventative health care services to reduce unintended pregnancy and improve access to women's health care.**

5) What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education?

**Over the last 4 years, we have made it a priority to ensure that HIV/AIDS funding remained stable or increased in each budget. Corporate funding was never cut and we were able to secure additional federal money to support this work.**

6) Do you favor marriage equality (marriage between two people of the same gender)?

**Yes.**

7) Do you favor hate-crimes legislation that increases penalties for crimes committed based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the person attacked?

**Yes.**

8) Do you believe that LGBT individuals should become foster parents if they are qualified?

**Yes.**

9) Do you believe that LGBT individuals have the right to adopt children if they are qualified?

**Yes.**

10) Would you keep committees around such as the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues?

**My administration, which includes LGBT leadership at all levels, regularly seeks input from the community in many different ways. Though these commissions are important, I believe that integrating LGBT voices at all levels is much more critical to ensuring representation in major decisions.**

11) What are your thoughts on a school that would be designed specifically for LGBT students, much like the Harvey Milk School in New York City?

**Students need a safe place in which to learn. My priority is to ensure that every Chicago school respects each individual student and that LGBT students feel safe in their current neighborhood schools. I believe system-wide improvements are being made and must continue. But there is always room to do more, and I am open to further study and discussion of this important question.**

12) Would you advocate for mandatory anti-bullying policies/training in Chicago public schools?

**Yes.**

13) Would you advocate for mandatory LGBT-inclusive education in Chicago public schools starting in middle school?

**Yes.**

14) Would you advocate for mandatory comprehensive, LGBT-inclusive and age-appropriate sex education in Chicago public schools starting in middle school?

**Yes.**

15) What would you recommend to have a better relationship between police and the citizens they serve, including people of color and the transgender community?

**Yes.**

16) If you are an incumbent, did you vote for the recent increase in the city's minimum wage and, if a challenger, would you have? Also, what do you think is the ideal minimum wage for the city of Chicago?

**Yes. I was proud to pass the \$13 minimum wage ordinance that was drafted by the Minimum Wage Task Force I appointed.**

17) How do you propose to handle the crime rate in Chicago, especially in minority neighborhoods?

**My focus has been on transforming the police department, moving cops from behind their desks to the streets, significantly expanding prevention programs and cracking down on illegal guns. Despite the fact that we are experiencing the fewest murders than any year since 1965, and the lowest crime rate in decades, the measure of our success is whether a parent feels comfortable letting their child be outside. Until every parent in every community shares that same sense of security, we have more work to do. That is why I implemented a comprehensive crime reduction approach when I took office, incorporating the voices of law enforcement, community leaders and clergy to address the role of policing, prevention and the community in our common mission to reduce violence.**

**The Chicago Police Department has seen a dramatic change at all levels. At the top there is new leadership held accountable through CompStat, and among the ranks there are more than 1,100 new recruits adding new energy to the department for the first time in a decade. We have moved officers from behind desks to behind the wheel of a squad car – or the handlebars of a bike. At the same time, we are utilizing those resources more efficiently through intelligence-based policing. Operation Impact, which adds hundreds of officers on foot patrol in 20 areas that account for 3% of the city's population but 20% of its crime, has led to a dramatic decline in violence in those areas where officers are more visible and able to interact with community members. Through the Two Degrees of Association program, CPD has identified 500 individuals at highest risk of violence and has reached out to many of them to offer connections to services. In 2014, we formed a multi-agency task force on domestic violence and are piloting a program to help identify households at serious risk of injury or fatality. CPD has also shifted its focus away from low-level and non-violent drug crimes and towards preventing and stopping violent crime. As part of that strategy, the Mayor worked with City Council to pass a city law permitting civil citations for possession of small amounts of cannabis. That law has resulted in a nearly 40% decrease in arrests for small amounts of cannabis possession for the first half of 2014 compared to the same time period in 2012.**

**The strategy is not just about locking more people in jail, which has significant long-term costs to the City and County. In fact, citywide arrests for all crimes have declined by 11% while overall crime has declined by 27% and clearance rates have improved by 18% -- proving it is possible to reduce crime while arresting fewer people and fostering better cooperation with the communities we serve.**

**Developing higher levels of trust between communities and police has been a major priority for this administration. CPD created and implemented training for police officers to teach fairness and respect – also called “procedural justice.” To date, more than 9,500 Chicago police personnel have completed this training. When police misconduct does occur, we are committed to responding swiftly and fairly and providing a new level of transparency about the process. Over the last 18 months, the Independent Police Review Authority, which investigates all**

**serious police misconduct, has reduced its case backlog by 51% by streamlining its intake procedures, expanding the use of mediation, and holding personnel accountable for timely investigations. And, in a reversal of past practice, the City recently announced that it will make internal investigation files into alleged police misconduct open to public scrutiny.**

**While the Chicago Police Department plays a critical role in reducing crime in Chicago, we know cannot arrest our way out of the problem. Chicago's holistic, public health approach to violence reduction includes investments in prevention and intervention programs to help treat the root causes of violence, including poverty, trauma and disparities in education and workforce skills. Key prevention investments include, but are not limited to, universal Pre-K for families in poverty, an increase from 14,000 to 22,500 summer jobs through One Summer Chicago Plus, teen dating violence prevention, 150 refurbished basketball courts, 175 playground improvements, and 750 Night out in the Parks events. Intervention programs, which are designed to reach youth at higher risk of violence, include One Summer Chicago Plus, a summer jobs program specifically designed for justice-involved youth. Participants in the program were 43% less likely to be arrested for a crime than their peers – results that last for more than a year after the program ended, according to research published in Science Magazine. Other intervention efforts include replacing zero-tolerance school discipline with restorative practices, resulting in over 30% declines in out-of-school suspensions, referrals for expulsions and arrests of students.**

**To strengthen and build on the City's public health approach to violence prevention, earlier this year we formed the Mayor's Commission for a Safer Chicago. The Commission brings together over 130 City staff, community and faith leaders, practitioners, parents and youth to update the City's plan to address violence. United in a belief that violence is preventable and not inevitable, the Mayor's Commission for a Safer Chicago represents a new way of doing business: a model of shared vision, shared action and shared responsibility. In December 2014, the Commission will publish recommendations in youth employment, health, restorative practices in schools, safety and justice, and safe places and activities.**

18) What do you feel is the biggest financial problem facing Chicago? How do you propose to tackle that problem?

**Ensuring the city's pension funds are on a sustainable path to protect employee retirement savings and Chicago taxpayers is integral to getting the city's finances back on track. I have been clear that I reject the false choice of either bankrupting the retirement security of hard-working City employees, or making Chicago taxpayers bear the burden along by relying only on substantial tax increases. Over the last three years, my administration has worked collaboratively with the Municipal and Laborers Pension Funds to craft a long-term solution that achieves this goal. This reform will provide the retirement security that 61,000 workers and retirees have earned – all while respecting our taxpayers and protecting vital City services. We changed the compounding cost of living adjustments (COLA) to a simple adjustment, and implemented three COLA pauses in the next seven years to give the fund a chance to catch its breath. Active city employees will see a 2.5% increase in their contribution that is phased in over five years. And we raised the**

**multiplier that the City currently uses and moves it on a path to an actuarially-determined structure in the near future. We applied the same strategy to our successful solution to the Park District pension fund that was on a path to become insolvent in less than a decade. This collaborative approach can and should be applied to crafting the solution for Police and Fire Funds. To date, I am the only elected official to successfully pass pension reform legislation that was executed in collaboration with workers while incurring enough savings to protect taxpayers.**

19) Some studies show that 40 percent of homeless youth are LGBTQ. What would you do to provide more resources for prevention, education and services for the entire homeless youth population?

**Under the leadership of Commissioner Evelyn Diaz and Deputy Commissioner John Pfeiffer, my administration has made combatting LGBTQ youth homelessness a priority. Beginning in 2013, we invested \$2 million per year to expand the network of daytime support services and shelters tailored to the needs of homeless youth, including LGBTQ youth. This includes \$1 million annually to support four drop-in support centers that assist more than 1,500 homeless youth in our city annually, providing meals, laundry, showers, case management and family reunification assistance, mental health services, and referrals for housing, healthcare, employment, educational and social service needs. Another \$1 million is invested annually to create an additional 74 year-round shelter beds – boosting the total number of such beds in Chicago by more than one third.**

**In late 2013, we conducted Chicago’s first-ever count of homeless youth. A subcommittee of the Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth, comprised of youth-serving organizations, advocates, and DFSS designed a survey and methodology aligned with best practices identified by national youth count initiatives. The survey was conducted online and in person over the span of two weeks in the fall of 2013. Survey results provide critical information on the demographics, experiences accessing services, and service needs of young people facing housing instability in Chicago. The findings have helped us to better target programming and supports.**

20) New York City eliminated barriers to transgender people changing their birth certificates. They just need a letter from a doctor to do so. Would you support this for Chicago?

**Yes.**

21) Are any members of your current staff—either campaign or general office personnel—openly LGBT?

**Yes. Several members of my leadership team – including in the Mayor’s Office, on my campaign, and as commissioners in City departments – are openly LGBT.**

22) Please list any and all experience you have on LGBT-related issues.

**I've spent my career fighting for LGBT equality. As Mayor, my administration has pursued a wide-range of initiatives that target issues facing the LGBTQ**

**community including HIV/AIDS prevention, youth homelessness, employee diversity, and helping to pass historic LGBTQ Civil Union legislation.**

**As one of my first acts in office, we developed and launched the LGBT Community Action Plan, providing 22 strategies to improve the overall health of Chicago's LGBT community as a supplement to the Healthy Chicago plan. The plan was developed with LGBT health leaders, advocates and academics.**

**The Chicago Police Department issued a General Order establishing, for the first time, protocols for how officers interact with Transgender, intersex, and gender nonconforming individuals. The order requires officers to address individuals by their self-identified gender pronoun, established clear guidelines for searches of transgender individuals that respect post-operative gender re-assignment, and prohibits any discrimination based on an individual's gender-identity/gender-expression. As outlined above, we expanded homelessness services for LGBT youth and conducted the first-ever survey of this population.**

**As President Obama's chief of staff, I worked to get an executive order signed securing hospital visitation rights for gay and lesbian couples. The order, which resulted from a meeting between myself and members of the Chicago LGBT community, prohibits hospitals from continuing this form of discrimination. I also worked with the Obama Administration to lobby Congress for passage of the Matthew Shepard Act, and in the appointments of over 150 openly LGBT applicants to federal jobs.**

**While in Congress from 2002-2008, I earned a 100% rating on HRC's Congressional Scorecard and co-sponsored many significant LGBT legislative initiatives, such as the Matthew Shepard Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act. In addition, I secured a \$1.25 million federal grant for construction of the Center on Halsted, the then-largest federal grant to an LGBT organization.**

23) What do you feel is the biggest problem facing the LGBT community today?

**Though we have come a long way in the last four years, the issues that face all parts of the city – job creation, crime, and education – are also major issues impacting the LGBT community. However, vulnerable members of the LGBT community are disproportionately affected by issues such as discrimination, poverty, homelessness, HIV/AIDS and violence. In every decision we make, we work to ensure that LGBT voices are included in the dialogue so that all solutions account for the community's unique needs.**