Mass incarceration is not just a national dilemma, it is a local epidemic that is crippling communities across Los Angeles. L.A. County is home to the nation's largest jail system and has an incarceration rate that is drastically higher than the state's average. Local and state prosecutors hold extraordinary power to stop mass incarceration and reform the criminal justice system. How they exercise discretion at each stage of criminal proceedings—from initial charging decisions to the sentences they seek—determines whether the local justice system is fair and just. They also wield significant influence as policymakers and civic leaders, and can work with legislators, judges, public defenders, law enforcement, and other community stakeholders to advance justice through policy reforms.

L.A. County's overreliance on incarceration is both costly and ineffective: it exacts enormous financial, emotional, and social costs on communities while exacerbating racial disparities and wasting finite resources. Harsh punishment does not improve public safety—the threat of increased sentences does not deter crime, either among the general public or convicted persons, and, because the experience of imprisonment is criminogenic, the imposition of longer terms of incarceration may actually heighten the likelihood that incarcerated individuals will reoffend upon release. Incarceration also entirely fails to address the underlying issues or needs that lead to criminal activity in the first instance.

Given the influence the L.A. County District Attorney wields as a policymaker and civic leader with the legislature, state and local officials, and other community stakeholders, this office should deploy its substantial power to advance justice through policy reforms. This questionnaire evaluates whether District Attorney candidates are committed to implementing the principles that will end mass incarceration and build a safer and more just America.

1. Poverty and the Criminal Justice System
2. The Prosecution and Sentencing of Juveniles
3. Recognizing Capacity for Change
4. Transparency and Accountability to the Community
5. Addressing Addiction
6. Immigration Considerations
7. Punishment and Public Safety

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Money Bail

As we await the fate of The California Money Bail Reform Act (SB 10), Los Angeles County remains home to the largest jail population in the country, with individuals being held pretrial making up almost half of the number of people behind bars. The detention of those who can’t afford bail is crippling our communities and making us all less safe. However, because of the flawed nature of pretrial risk assessments, there is a serious risk that SB 10, if implemented, will massively increase preventive detention, not lower pretrial incarceration rates.

What is your assessment of SB 10?

Cash bail is archaic, unethical, and has no connection to safety. In addition, 44% of our L.A. County Jail population are people detained pretrial, with no finding of guilt, and we must reduce that number because pretrial detention results in loss of jobs, homes, custody of children, and often coerces innocent people to plead guilty. Unfortunately, SB 10 replaced cash bail with a problematic risk assessment system that will likely result in racial disparities and may result in increase rates of pretrial detention, in addition to other problematic unintended consequences. There are efforts that our District Attorney can take to ameliorate potential negative outcomes of SB 10, including (1) advocating for intensive oversight of the risk assessment tool, including by outside independent persons with expertise in risk assessments, and potentially legally challenging the tool by the District Attorney if racial disparities result; (2) advocating that the pretrial services agency appointed by the court be an independent entity that is not law-enforcement or probation; (3) ensuring the local rules created by the Court to govern the pretrial release process include certain safeguards such as access to counsel prior to any interview with pretrial services; and (4) creation of an expansive pretrial release recommendation policy by the District Attorney's Office that seeks detention in limited circumstances. In addition, we must immediately begin advocating for legislative reforms to SB 10, and must track data on results, and build public awareness of the harms of risk assessments, to ensure reforms are successful.
If you believe the money bail system should be replaced, and you had a blank canvas, what is your ideal system for determining pretrial release?

Money bail must be abolished. The ideal system for determining pretrial release would include a true presumption of release that narrowly limits the types cases where detention is authorized pretrial, with a goal of releasing approximately 90% or more of the pretrial population, and with narrowed and reduced conditions of release imposed. The system must also ensure adequate resources for success pretrial, including text reminders of court dates and/or apps, video court appearance options, childcare or allowance of children in courtrooms, and the elimination of employer discrimination for missing work due to court appearances.

If SB 10 is implemented, will your office take a default position of release on recognizance for all defendants, unless there is a clearly articulated substantial risk of harm to the community or high likelihood of flight?

- Yes
- No

Will you advocate for individualized, adversarial bail hearings, at which the defendant is represented by counsel?

- Yes
- No

If SB 10 is not implemented, will you advocate for judges to consider non monetary conditions of release and a defendant’s ability to pay before requiring and setting money bail?

- Yes
- No
Will you oppose the imposition of bail in amounts greater than an individual defendant’s ability to pay?

○ Yes

○ No

Regardless of the decision by voters on SB 10, will you adopt a written bail policy where your deputy district attorneys advocate for release for all individuals unless there is clear and convincing evidence that the person has attempted to flee to evade prosecution or poses a substantial risk of harm to another person that can be clearly articulated?

○ Yes

○ No

If release on recognizance is insufficient to protect against willful flight or an identifiable risk safety risk, will you require that deputy district attorneys only seek the least restrictive conditions necessary to accomplish those goals?

○ Yes

○ No

Accessibility of Diversion Programs

Pretrial diversion creates opportunities for people charged with an offense to get the support and education necessary for rehabilitation, and allows successful individuals to avoid the collateral consequences of a conviction, which can be detrimental to future employment, housing, and education. Pretrial diversion should be available to anyone eligible to participate in the program, irrespective of an individual’s ability to pay a fine or fee.
What are the biggest flaws in L.A. County's current diversion programs?

Current diversion programs are only accessible to some in L.A. County. There are diversionary specialty courts, and statutory diversions, but each of these requires a person to fit certain requirements that do not consider all the situations of those entering the justice system who should not be incarcerated and should obtain diversion. For example, the veterans court, the pregnant women’s court, and the drug courts and statutory drug diversions are a great start, but are only accessible for narrowly defined groups of people.

How should the L.A. County DA handle the nearly 3,000 individuals who are currently detained, but eligible for release under the County’s new mental health diversion program?

The District Attorney must revise its police on recommending mental health diversion to expand acceptance in the program. The current policy focuses heavily on the alleged offense and prior criminal history, instead of the need for, and ability to succeed with mental health treatment. Some revisions I would consider are to: (1) require the input of a mental health treatment provider prior to making a recommendation for diversion, and if the mental health treatment provider recommends diversion, create a presumption to follow the advice of the provider that may only be rebutted with specific enumerated facts; and (2) remove the current factor in DA policy to consider whether the arresting officer “knows the arrestee” and whether that officer has had “previous contacts” with the him or her, as this factor very likely to include prejudicial and irrelevant information that cannot be challenged, especially when the person’s arrest history is already considered.

Will you eliminate all fees, costs, and fines associated with pretrial diversion programs?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
If fees cannot be eliminated in all cases, will you create a robust fee-waiver program?

- Yes
- No

Will you implement a policy that instructs deputy district attorneys to proactively seek to identify defendants with mental health issues who can be safely diverted to community based treatment centers?

- Yes
- No

Criminalization of Poverty

Local criminal justice systems disproportionately harm people living in poverty. Whether through the imposition of fines and fees as a condition to resolving cases, or through laws that effectively criminalize homelessness, local actors have imposed a poverty penalty on many people within our communities.

Will you presumptively decline to prosecute misdemeanor offenses when they are the byproduct of an individual’s homelessness or poverty, such as public urination, open container violations, theft of necessities, and trespass?

- Yes
- No

#2: THE PROSECUTION AND SENTENCING OF JUVENILES

Children’s brains continue developing until around the age of 25 and research supports their enhanced capacity for rehabilitation. As a result, children should not be prosecuted in adult court, nor should they be given punishments that preclude the opportunity for redemption. The overwhelming support for Proposition 57 underscored this notion by eliminating the practice of direct file by prosecutors. SB 1391, signed into law in 2018, also prohibits 14 and 15-year olds from being prosecuted in adult court.
Will you educate yourself and all members of your office who handle cases involving juveniles about the science relating to brain development and the many ways in which children are profoundly different from adults in their functioning, perception of risk and consequences, impulse control, and ability to resist peer pressure?

Yes, the District Attorney’s office must improve its training on the science and psychology of youth, and must improve office culture on the perspective of juvenile assignments. Juvenile assignments should not be seen as a “right of passage” on the road toward obtaining the coveted “serious crime” felony placement. Juvenile placement should be considered an opportunity to change lives, advocate for rehabilitation, and prevent future crime. Culture change can take place through incentives, rewards and promotions for Deputy District Attorneys that are based on rehabilitative outcomes and decarceration rather than rewarding convictions and long prison sentences.

How will you instruct your deputy district attorneys to apply the science related to brain development to their treatment of juvenile cases, particularly when evaluating the voluntariness and reliability of statements made by juveniles outside the presence of a guardian or attorney?

Prosecutors’ understanding of the science of brain development in children must shape the entirety of their approach in the juvenile system from arrest to disposition, by forming the basis of policies to divert kids away from the criminal legal system and incarceration wherever possible. Neurological development is still occurring through age 25, and most juveniles who commit crimes won’t do so in adulthood for that reason alone. Instead, studies have shown that introduction to the criminal legal system leads to adult criminal behavior, resulting in the exact opposite of the justice system’s purpose. Further, prosecutors must view statements made by juveniles outside the presence of a guardian or attorney with caution, because the vulnerability of a child coupled with the extremely coercive nature of any conversation with law enforcement can result in devastating outcomes, as shown by the wrongful convictions of the Central Park Five. District Attorneys must advocate to prevent the interrogation of kids absent the presence and advice of counsel and guardians, and must develop guardrails against the use of statements of juveniles, particularly in cases where there is no additional evidence beyond the statement.
Will you commit to implementing SB 1391 to keep 14 and 15 year olds out of adult court?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you support SB 439 by promptly determining the age of arrested juveniles and publicly encouraging the police department to develop protocol that limits the arrest of juveniles under the age of 12 years old, in accordance with the provisions of the Bill?

☐ Yes

☐ No

#3: RECOGNIZING CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Promote Proportionate Sentencing and Pathways to Second Chances

People are more than their worst acts, and even people who commit the most serious offenses often change their lives profoundly over time. To recognize the worth and potential for growth in all people, it is important for local prosecutors to consider the character and background of each person and the individualized circumstances surrounding the commission of the offense. It also is critical for elected prosecutors to promote opportunities for release, through parole or clemency, and to help remove barriers to reentering society for those who are released from incarceration.
What role, if any, do you believe a prosecutor should play in advocating for parole?

The District Attorney's website has troubling a posting, entitled “A Day in the Life: Parole Division Prosecutor,” which emphasizes that it is the parole division prosecutor’s job to (1) make sure what the person in a parole hearing says is consistent with case records and past statements (i.e. make sure the person is not lying), and to (2) “note if the inmate poses an unreasonable risk to reoffend if released.” This is troubling, because there is no reflection of the prosecutor’s responsibility to advocate for release on parole when proper. Some examples of when a prosecutor should advocate for release include when a parole-eligible person has shown remorse, rehabilitation and good conduct; when victims have been consulted and agree release is proper; or when the offense was very old or minor. Our current District Attorney's Office has established a misguided idea of a prosecutor’s role as the person who must always oppose the defendant, who must make arguments against the defense, who must promote incarceration, and who must argue against release and decarceral outcomes. This must change, as the prosecutor's role is to seek “justice,” which is often times release from incarceration.

Will you adopt a policy limiting the application of Three Strikes sentencing in your office, and require line prosecutors to obtain written approval from a supervising prosecutor before seeking enhanced sentences under the Three Strikes Law?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you establish an office-wide presumption that the least severe applicable charges apply, and that the lowest sentencing outcome is the correct recommendation?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Will you require prosecutors to justify upward departures to their supervisors, and require that a chief deputy district attorney who reports to you directly approve all maximum sentences sought?

- Yes
- No

Will you pledge to establish an office policy against increasing or threatening to increase the number or severity of charges in order to secure more favorable plea dispositions or waivers of rights?

- Yes
- No

Will you support second chances, even for those who commit serious offenses, by both limiting parole opposition to those cases in which there is a demonstrable and serious risk of future violence and committing to affirmatively advocate for parole on behalf of those who demonstrate growth and maturity during their incarceration?

- Yes
- No

Will you commit to never using “gang enhancements,” which seek to criminalize innocent behavior based on who a defendant is, not what he or she does?

- Yes
- No
#4: TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

Engage with the Community You Represent

Enhancing transparency and accountability within the District Attorney’s office is critical to ending the win-at-any-cost pursuit of high conviction rates that fails communities and to ensuring community accountability. Providing the community with information about arrest rates, charging decisions, and sentencing policies will help build and maintain trust between the office and the community it serves.

How do you intend to ensure the community can hold you accountable for fulfilling your campaign promises?

I will advocate for increased transparency, accountability, and oversight of the District Attorney’s Office both through internal policies and legislation. Some of these policies will include tracking and publishing of data, partnerships with outside agencies for audits and policy reform recommendations, and consistent meetings with community groups and stakeholders. In addition, I am running for District Attorney precisely because of this concern. As the first former public defender to run for District Attorney in Los Angeles, I am running as part of a movement based on a premise that we can more likely ensure accountability of prosecutors when they have had a career focused on seeking decarcelar outcomes.

Will you maintain and publish an electronic case management system to measure the overall effectiveness of the office—including the number of misdemeanor and felony cases filed each month, disposition statistics, pretrial incarceration rates and length of stay by offense category, and average bond for each class of offense—so that the community can determine the effectiveness of policies aimed at reform?

- Yes
- No
Will you commit to regular communication with community members and organizations, including regularly scheduled open sessions and regular meetings with civilian oversight boards to listen to and then address concerns over police-community relationships and allegations of police brutality?

- Yes
- No

Ensure Accountability for Police and Other Officials

The District Attorney must be committed to rigorously and independently investigating and prosecuting police and other official misconduct. Although charged with serving and protecting, some police officers have also engaged in misconduct and violence against our communities, especially communities of color. Relations between Angelenos and law enforcement are at a breaking point. Since 2013, more than 500 people have been killed by, or have died in the custody of, county law enforcement. However, criminal charges have only been brought against one officer. Ensuring law enforcement is held accountable is imperative for creating trust between law enforcement and the community.
What is the most effective way to address officer-involved shootings and officer misconduct?

As District Attorney, I would seek to appoint independent prosecutors in all cases of law enforcement use of force resulting in death, and potentially great bodily injury. In other cases, I would seek to enhance the independence and transparency of the existing Justice System Integrity Division (JSID) in the office, or create a new office to handle law enforcement misconduct specifically. The office must (1) be led by, and staffed with attorneys who have experience with civil rights law and the prosecution of law enforcement; (2) maintain physical and geographic separation from the main District Attorney's Office; (3) establish prohibitions against and sanctions for discussing investigations with, or access to information and files with attorneys, investigators or staff in the main office; (4) establish inability for attorneys to cycle through the new office and return to other main District Attorney Office divisions. Other methods to prevent law enforcement misconduct include creation of a do-not-call list; expanded provision of Brady information to the defense in all cases; refusal to charge cases where evidence or statements are obtained in violation of the Fourth Amendment; and use of the prosecutorial gatekeeping power to not charge cases to encourage reduced racially-disparate policing.

Will you commit to the creation of a special prosecution unit to investigate and charge allegations of police misconduct, including police-involved violence and corruption?

- Yes
- No

When legally able to do so, will you release to the public any dash-camera, body-camera, or other audio or video footage related to police-involved misconduct within 24 hours of any charging decision?

- Yes
- No
Will you commit to requiring a full investigation of any allegation involving police corruption or violence by the special prosecution unit, to include indictment?

- Yes
- No

Will you commit to developing and implementing a “Do Not Call” list, and require all prosecutors in your office to decline cases that rely on statements from officers with histories of misconduct, dishonesty, racism, or bias?

- Yes
- No

Will you commit to requiring a full investigation of any allegation involving police corruption or violence by the special prosecution unit, including presentation to the grand jury?

- Yes
- No

Will you use SB1421 to request police disciplinary files, expose law enforcement misconduct and build a list of all officers under investigation, and provide that list to defense counsel?

- Yes
- No
Develop Policies that Ensure the Integrity of Convictions

Law enforcement officials and prosecutors will inevitably make mistakes. The consequences of wrongful convictions are manifold; the innocent person spends years in prison for a crime s/he did not commit, and the person who committed the crime is not held accountable. Prosecutors must be vigorous in re-examining prior cases whenever there is credible evidence of innocence, and must develop policies that limit the possibility of future wrongful convictions. Despite being the largest prosecutorial office in the country, the L.A. County DAs office has only overturned three convictions since the Conviction Review Unit was established in 2015. By contrast, Baltimore has exonerated nine people in four years and Philadelphia has exonerated ten in one year.

Do you believe that the Conviction Review Unit can or should improve the speed, scope and number of its exonerations? If so, how would you do so?

A prosecutor should value the integrity of convictions as a priority. I would reform the Conviction Review Unit (CRU) to improve its evaluation of cases by re-allocating resources toward the CRU, rather than increased resources that have been placed in other areas. In addition, I would consider expanding the types of cases that qualify for review. For example, the division currently only reviews cases when there is “new credible evidence of innocence.” Expansion of review eligibility may include cases where there are credible claims of prosecutorial or law enforcement misconduct. I would also consider a second function for the CRU to create a "second-look," or secondary evaluation of all sentences imposed of a certain length, to ensure oversight and to reduce such long sentences.

Will you create a review process for all discretionary decisions, from charging through disposition, where senior staff examine whether there is sufficient evidence to support the charges and whether the decision is consistent with the office’s policy of seeking the least severe acceptable charges?

- Yes
- No
Will you develop clear office guidelines regarding the use of forensic evidence and instill respect for scientific methodology, evidence, and analysis?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Will you conduct regular Brady trainings, require prosecutors to turn over all evidence that arguably falls within the Brady rule, and discipline prosecutors who fail to comply with their Brady obligations?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

#5: ADDRESSING ADDICTION

Keep people out of jail for drug-related reasons

Years of experience with ineffective drug laws and the latest medical research on addiction suggest that treating drug use as a public health issue, as opposed to a criminal justice issue, is a more effective approach to reducing harm. With the passage of Propositions 47, 57, and 64, California voters have sent a clear message that they do not want people serving harsh sentences for drug crimes.

Will you pledge to oppose any legislation or ballot initiatives that roll back or weaken Propositions 47, 57, and 64?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
Will you adopt declination and/or diversion programs for all low-level drug offenses, including possession, possession for sale, and the sale or transport of controlled substances?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you publicly support legislation that reclassifies all drug possession offenses as misdemeanors?

☐ Yes

☐ No

#6: IMMIGRATION CONSIDERATIONS

California is home to a large and diverse immigrant population. In the last two years, undocumented communities have come under increasing attack because of vicious federal immigration laws. These policies not only allow for deportation because of minor allegations like possession of drugs, but they also make communities less safe, as undocumented victims fear going to court or speaking to law enforcement.

What, if any, is a deputy district attorney’s role in the enforcement of federal immigration laws?

The District Attorney should have no role in assisting federal law enforcement with the enforcement of immigration laws. Separately, the District Attorney should instead seek to prohibit ICE enforcement in county courthouses and at probation offices, to protect immigrants who serve as witnesses and report crimes, and to fully understand and consider adverse immigration consequences at all stages of the criminal legal process. This includes offering immigration-safe dispositions where necessary, which seek to mitigate against adverse consequences in immigration court or to prevent future federal illegal reentry charges.
Will you expand pre-plea diversion programs that allow individuals to obtain dismissals of their charges without entering a guilty plea? Please describe how you intend to expand these programs, including whether you intend to establish new programs, expand eligibility under existing programs, or otherwise.

I would create a Pretrial Diversion and Restorative Justice division in the office, which would facilitate awareness and access to existing diversion options, and which would also create a policy and spearhead efforts to expand options for case-specific pretrial and other diversions that do not fall cleanly into an existing court or statutory diversion program. The District Attorney has the option to craft any disposition that may be appropriate in a given case, other than incarceration, and should increase such dispositions. The District Attorney should be at the forefront of the decarceration movement by expanding access to alternatives to incarceration and restorative justice options wherever possible.

In light of Padilla and Cal. Penal Code §§ 1016.2-3, will you take into account the disproportionate impact of adverse immigration consequences when making policy, charging, negotiation, plea, and sentencing decisions, as required by both the letter and spirit of California law?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] Option 1

Will you implement an office-wide policy requiring prosecutors to consider immigration consequences in the charging, plea, and sentencing recommendation decisions?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
Will you publicly support local ordinances and statewide legislation that affirmatively limit law enforcement’s cooperation with ICE, and oppose any effort to enlist local law enforcement as federal immigration agents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you affirmatively support post-conviction litigation from non-citizens who pled guilty without being advised of the potential immigration consequences of their pleas?

☐ Yes

☐ No

#7: PUNISHMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

When is punishment productive or necessary?

Research reveals that, for minor offenses, prosecution and punishment decreases rather than increases public safety. Even misdemeanor convictions, short jail terms, or brief probationary sentences can weaken social ties, cause job or housing losses, and interfere with prosocial activities, which are critical to preventing recidivism. These effects, therefore, actually increase the likelihood that the individual will commit future offenses.
Prosecutors’ main goal should be to increase public safety, and as such, they can no longer ignore data that reveals incarceration has not done so. It is telling that as California’s legislative efforts have begun to slowly reduce incarceration in the State, our recidivism rates have also slowly declined. This trend is encouraging, but high rates of incarceration still reveal that more must be done to focus resources on data-driven methods to create public safety, and to depart from the archaic process of blind and widespread over-incarceration. Our office culture must be reformed to promote actual public safety by declining to prosecute, and utilizing rehabilitative prosecutorial dispositions, rather than simply seeking convictions and incarceration. We must increase diversionary and restorative justice options, and craft evidence-based policies that seek to increase public safety while reducing the filing of criminal cases in California.

How should a deputy district attorney respond to evidence showing that prosecuting and punishing individuals for minor offenses does not reduce offending among the public and actually increases, rather than decreases, the likelihood of reoffending among those prosecuted?

Will you presumptively decline to prosecute low-level misdemeanors, where evidence shows prosecution actually decreases, rather than increases, public safety?

- Yes
- No

Will the existence of monetary losses conclusively determine whether an offense is prosecuted or whether a certain penalty is sought?

- Yes
- No
Will you presumptively decline to prosecute prostitution-related offenses and publicly support the decriminalization of sex work?

- Yes
- No

Where declination is not possible or appropriate, will you establish and offer expansive pre-charge or pre-plea diversion programs for misdemeanor offenses?

- Yes
- No

Restraint in Charging and Fair Plea Bargaining

District Attorneys have nearly unchecked authority to set priorities and choose the criminal charges they file, with enormous leverage over guilty pleas and the final disposition of cases.

Would you consider declining to file or pursue charges where particular law enforcement practices (like equipment stops, for example) or arrests lead to significant racial disparities? Why or why not?

Yes. The prosecutor has influence over policing practices through its role as a gatekeeper in charging or not charging cases. The prosecutor is not a rubber stamp to file charges for all arrests, but by design has significant discretion in which charges it will file or decline to file. The prosecutor should first track and understand the data on racial disparities in policing and in charging of cases, should revise its own policies in response, and should communicate with law enforcement about practices that are resulting in disparities in arrest, or other unethical practices, to seek to reform policing and fight racial disparities. Charges should never be filed when Constitutional or violations of the law occur, and prosecutors must use their power to decline filing charges for arrests rooting from racial disparities or unethical law enforcement practices.
Will you commit to only charging offenses where they are clearly supported by sufficient evidence to prove the defendant’s guilt beyond a reasonable doubt on each charge?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you commit to never conditioning plea offers on the pursuit of pretrial motions to suppress premised on potential constitutional violations?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you refuse to prosecute broken-windows offenses such as criminal trespass, public urination, and metro-fare violations?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will you refuse to prosecute regulatory violations such as selling food without a license and driving a taxi without a license?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Do Not Seek the Death Penalty

California has more than twice as many people on death row than any other state. LA County alone has sent 22 people to death row over the past seven years, all of whom have been people of color. There is mounting evidence that the death penalty is fraught with error, provides no additional public safety benefit over other available sentences, and is routinely used against individuals with diminished culpability, including persons with intellectual disabilities and severe mental illness, youthful offenders under the age of 21, and those who have experienced extreme childhood trauma. The District Attorney must support the end of this barbaric, error-prone and expensive practice.

Do you support Governor Newsom’s moratorium on death penalty executions?

- Yes
- No

Will you commit to never seeking the death penalty?

- Yes
- No

Will you publicly support repeal of the death penalty?

- Yes
- No
Will you examine previously-imposed death sentences within your county and seek negotiated resolutions for sentences less than death, particularly when there is substantial evidence that the death-sentenced individual suffers from an intellectual disability or serious mental illness, or was under the age of 21 at the time of the offense, or experienced childhood trauma?

- Yes
- No

Lengthy Prison Sentences

Research reveals that extremely lengthy prison sentences do not promote public safety. They do nothing to deter criminal conduct; even for those who have committed acts of violence, they often incapacitate people for much longer than necessary to prevent future danger, and they break down familial ties and other social bonds that hinder an individual’s ability to rebuild his or her life once released.

What factors should a prosecutor consider in determining an appropriate sentence in a given case?

Prosecutors must change the longstanding practice of charging the most serious possible charges and enhancements, and seeking the longest possible sentence, as it has not related to public safety and has led to a mass incarceration crisis. Prosecutors should instead focus on public safety, which more often requires rehabilitate and restorative justice outcomes. This requires considering the history and characteristics of persons accused of crime through a lens that is trauma-informed, and that understands mental health, poverty, racial disparities, addiction, lack of access to employment and housing, and other experiences most commonly suffered by those impacted by the justice system. As District Attorney I would place a large emphasis on increased training utilizing outside experts, and would revise all prosecutorial policies to require consideration of these factors.
Will you commit to not seeking incarcerative sentences longer than 15 years, unless there is clear evidence that public safety, rather than retributive concerns, requires it?

- Yes
- No

Do you commit to reviewing sentencing data, determining what offenses and practices are disproportionally driving incarceration, and then implementing plea guidelines in your office to address areas of concern?

- Yes
- No

Mass Probation

Probation is a significant contributor to mass incarceration. Though it was originally intended to serve as an alternative to incarceration to help people stay in their communities while they engaged in rehabilitative interventions, it has transformed into a system geared towards surveillance. Probation has also skyrocketed since 1980: more people are being supervised, and they are being supervised for longer periods of time. Prison admissions because of probation violations have similarly ballooned.

Under what circumstances should a term of probation be revoked and an incarcerative sentence imposed?

The number one single-charge arrest offense for men in the Los Angeles County Jail is a violation of supervision. This means our probation and parole systems are failing, and are retributive instead of rehabilitative. I would never seek an incarcerative sentence for a “technical violation,” or a non-criminal violation of supervision. Further, as District Attorney I would advocate for reform of supervision such that it is less punitive, seek to increase access to resources to ensure those on supervision are successful, and revise policies to reduce time on supervision and to only seek incarcerative sentences for violations in rare circumstances.
Will you request and offer limited probation conditions in each case and seek only conditions that relate directly to the rehabilitative goal of the supervision?

- Yes
- No

Will you liberally offer early termination at sentencing, and support probationer requests for discretionary early termination, when the rehabilitative goal of probation has been fulfilled?

- Yes
- No

Will you publicly support legislation to limit incarcerative responses to technical violations of probation?

- Yes
- No