

# VID Candidate Survey for the Position of NYC District Attorney

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Name: \*

Diana Florence

District Attorney • Questions

Will you prosecute drug possession? Will you prosecute sex workers? What about sex purchasers or those who facilitate sex work? \*

I will decline to prosecute marijuana possession and use, as well as enforcement of sex work-related crimes.

If you don't charge crimes of poverty and other minor crimes, how will you help get services to those in need of them? \*

When someone commits a crime of poverty and they suffer from mental illness or addiction, I will work with public defenders and partner with community organizations and government agencies that can offer resources, such as residential and/or outpatient drug treatment. support and skills to become more self-sufficient.

What management experience do you have to prepare you to run an office of this size? \*

I created and directed the first of its kind Construction Fraud Task Force, a multi-governmental body, which tackled corruption and health and safety related-crimes across New York. I led lawyers, investigators, analysts, auditors, paralegals, and community liaisons from within the Manhattan District Attorney's Office as well as other prosecutor's offices across the state. I spearheaded statewide initiatives which brought together both law enforcement and non law enforcement governmental agencies and community partners.

What prosecutorial experience do you have, to understand the jobs of those you are supervising? What experience do you have with this office specifically? \*

I was a prosecutor in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office for nearly 25 years. I obtained landmark convictions against companies and individuals for defrauding 9/11 charities, terrorizing the elderly, domestic violence, wage theft, and deadly work conditions. I have held powerful interests accountable by prosecuting developers and construction companies for cheating workers and taxpayers. In a historic case against Harco Construction, I ultimately secured justice for the family of a 22 year-old construction worker, Carlos Moncayo, who was buried alive at work. From that case, I drafted and lobbied for legislation to close the loopholes that allow corporations and individuals to commit large scale crimes. Carlos' Law would establish higher fines for corporations who endanger their workers, and another bill would reclassify wage theft as the more serious crime of larceny.

How aggressively do you plan to prosecute police officers for excessive use of force? What about lying? If aggressively, how do you plan to turn around and work with them in your other cases? \*

I will create a fully-resourced Police Accountability Unit which will be staffed with lawyers, analysts and community liaisons who will proactively look for criminality by partnering the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) through a Memorandum of Understanding, ("DANY-CCRB MOU").

Under the DANY-CCRB MOU, the CCRB will refer potentially criminal conduct in the complaints it receives by the Manhattan DA's Office to ensure that officers are not only held accountable for misconduct, but also for any criminal acts.

This unit will also actively partner with community based organizations and legal service providers to ensure that no matter where victims share their stories of police criminality, the information gets to the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

In every criminal case, I will identify and disclose the following information to the defense: complete officer misconduct history with dispositions, including any related to dishonesty or fabrication and any judicial findings of a lack of credibility that the Office becomes aware of or that are memorialized in a fashion the office can review and disclose.

If it is determined that an officer lacks credibility and cannot be allowed to testify, the Office will not pursue cases resting solely on that officer's credibility, past cases resting solely on that officer's credibility will be reviewed, and the police department and other local and federal prosecutors will be notified.

If the officer's dishonesty could fall under the penal law, either for a lie made under oath or for false written entries in paperwork, the office will fully investigate any relevant criminal charges. I will also advocate for the City Council to create "50A.com," which will be a publicly available NYPD misconduct database, containing records from both the CCRB and NYPD.

While the legal and nonlegal staff assigned to the Unit will exclusively work on police corruption and excessive force cases, it is true that lawyers in the rest of the Office will still need to work with police. Holding police accountable who commit criminal acts does not mean that the Office cannot work well with the vast majority of police who honor their oath and the laws of New York. Unchecked corruption and excessive force hurts law enforcement's ability to do their job because it undermines trust in our system. Holding police accountable who abuse their power helps us do our jobs more effectively.

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What is your vision for using this office to make Manhattan a better place? \*

I am proposing a new PACT with Manhattan -- Power | Accountability | Community | Transparency as a practical and holistic vision of how to restructure the Manhattan DA's Office. This PACT will focus on prioritizing people over power by working in collaboration with community partners to determine what justice and accountability should look like. Together we can keep people safe at home, safe at work and safe on the street.

Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I have devoted my entire life to fighting for people who never thought they would win in the very Office I now seek to lead. I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power on people who never imagined the Criminal Justice system could work for them. When this happens, it has ripple effects beyond the case at hand and rebuilds trust in our government. I know the Manhattan DA's Office can be a place of opportunity and not obstacles for everyday New Yorkers.

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