

## 20 Questions for Delaware General Assembly Candidates

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CANDIDATE DISTRICT: STATE REP. DISTRICT 12

The Coalition for Smart Justice is committed to cutting the number of prisoners in Delaware in half and eliminating racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Elected officials are essential to achieving those goals. We have launched a campaign to communicate with voters about candidates' positions on issues related to criminal justice reform. This questionnaire is the focus of that effort. If you choose not to respond, we will indicate that in our public communications.

### Scale Questions

1. Delaware sends too many people to prison with sentences that are too long.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

In most cases, I strongly agree. However, I have seen some cases where defendants did not receive sufficient (or any) prison sentences and those cases seemed to be with wealthy white defendants (i.e. Robert Richards IV).

2. Communities of color are over-policed and underserved.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

3. Prison time is an effective deterrent to crime. Longer sentences mean less crime.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

I'm a firm believer in restorative practices.

4. It is important to invest more state resources into diversion programs such as drug treatment and community supervision so that fewer people go to prison.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Having more effective diversion programs in place would not only lessen the number of people going to prison and help alleviate mass incarceration, but it would help reduce rates of recidivism and help those who have committed crimes become more productive and successful members of our community.

5. It is important to invest more state resources into services that will assist people coming out of prison to find a job and be successful as they re-enter the community.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

I'm very concerned with minimizing the collateral consequences of imprisonment.

6. When an especially egregious crime happens in Delaware, it is important to pass a law to make sentences harsher.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

7. The state should retain the power to seize people's assets under current civil asset forfeiture laws even though no crime has been proven.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

8. People of color are treated more harshly by the police and prosecutors than white people.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

9. Probation sentences are too long and there are too many obstacles to meeting the terms of probation.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

10. Delaware should reinstate the death penalty for murder.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

11. Delaware should reinstate the death penalty only for murder of a police officer, prison guard or other first responder.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

12. The state should establish a civilian oversight board that would review incidences such as serious police brutality or when a police officer kills someone while on duty.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

13. Bail reform is important so that a person's ability to access money does not determine who stays in prison awaiting trial and who goes home.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

14. Juveniles should not be tried as adults no matter what crime they are accused of.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

I am also strongly opposed to juveniles serving sentences in adult prisons.

15. People with a felony record should be able to have that record expunged by a judge, even for serious crimes, after a period of 5-10 years has elapsed with no further criminal activity.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

This depends on what the crime is.

## Open-Ended Questions

16. African Americans are 22 percent of Delaware's population and 51 percent of our prison population. What should the General Assembly do to reduce the racial disparities at various stages of our criminal process?

The General Assembly should pass bail reform laws that end cash bail. They should support efforts to rewrite the criminal code. The General Assembly also needs to fix school funding so that schools with a higher percentage of students of color have equitable funding. They also need to prioritize diversion and reentry programs and support trauma-informed practices for teachers, medical professionals, and emergency response personnel.

17. The average length of stay in prison in Delaware is 50 percent longer than the national average. Will you pledge to advocate for the elimination of all mandatory minimum sentences? Please give a yes or no answer and any explanation you think is necessary. If there are mandatory minimums you support, please identify them specifically.

Yes. I am absolutely opposed to mandatory minimums. Every situation is unique and should be treated as such.

18. Do you support legislation and appropriation of funds requiring the collection, analysis and publication of statistical data in order to track prosecutorial decisions, evaluate the effectiveness of policies and assess racial bias in the criminal justice system? Please give a yes or no answer and any explanation you think is necessary.

Yes. I would like to see that data and I think prosecutors need to be able to see that data so that they are aware of their own biases.

19. Other than gun control legislation, how can Delaware fight our gun violence problem? Are there specific proposals that you would offer as a member of the General Assembly to reduce gun violence in the state?

I believe that we can combat gun violence through providing sufficient social services and restorative justice programs. By helping people have lives that they value, the skills to be successful, and the ability to handle conflict, we can avoid some of the root causes of gun violence in Delaware.

20. Do you support diversion for people accused of some violent crimes such as offensive touching and assault in the third degree?

Yes, on a case-by-case basis.