



CITY OF CHICAGO

COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR
PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Nicole Garcia

Nicole.Garcia@cityofchicago.org

**DISTRICT COUNCIL NOMINATING COMMITTEE SELECTS TWO CANDIDATES TO FILL
COMMISSION VACANCY**

On December 6, 2024, the District Council Nominating Committee held a special public meeting and voted to nominate two candidates to fill the vacancy on the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability. The nominees, listed in alphabetical order, are Shay T. Allen and Gina A. Piemonte.

Under the CCPSA ordinance, vacancies on the Commission trigger a formal selection process led by the Nominating Committee, which includes one member from each of Chicago's twenty-two District Councils. This vacancy arose following Commissioner Kelly Presley's resignation, effective, October 31, 2024, after moving out of Chicago. Commissioner Presley, who was randomly selected to serve a four-year term, fulfilled two key legal requirements for the Commission: at least ten years of experience as a practicing attorney, with significant experience in civil rights, civil liberties, or criminal law; and residency on Chicago's West Side. To qualify for this vacancy, nominees were required to meet both the attorney and geographic residency requirements.

The Nominating Committee launched a 30-day application period on October 7, 2024, and employed a rigorous, community-informed rubric to evaluate applicants. The rubric considered candidates' history of community engagement, commitment to police accountability, fairness and equity, transparency, creativity, subject matter expertise, collaboration skills, and professional credibility. To ensure an unbiased review, the Committee anonymized all applications during the initial screening. Three candidates were invited to interview, and two were ultimately selected for nomination to the Mayor.

"Having successfully completed a nomination process earlier this year that resulted in our current six Commissioners, we approached this task with confidence and purpose," said Elianne Bahena, 10th District Councilor. "Through extensive, targeted outreach to the West Side and legal community, we were able to recruit highly qualified applicants who not only bring robust legal expertise, but also a deep understanding of working with law enforcement and the communities most affected by policing in Chicago."

Both candidates bring decades of experience within the criminal justice system and a demonstrated commitment to both police accountability and public safety.



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Shay T. Allen is a West Side resident and seasoned legal professional with nearly 20 years of experience in criminal law, civil rights litigation, and public service. His career began as a Cook County prosecutor, where he handled thousands of cases, including high-profile trials, and honed his extensive expertise in legislative analysis, policy development, and courtroom advocacy. As the founder of S.T Allen Law, P.C., he leads a practice dedicated to civil rights, criminal defense, civil litigation, and personal injury. Mr. Allen is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated, the Illinois State Bar Association, and the Cook County Bar Association, holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Xavier University of Louisiana and a Juris Doctor from Howard University of Law.

Gina A. Piemonte is a West Side resident and accomplished legal professional with over three decades of experience in criminal defense, trial advocacy, and leadership within the Cook County Public Defender's Office. Starting her career in 1991, she served in various roles, including the Juvenile and Traffic divisions, before transferring to the Felony Trial Division and later the Homicide Taskforce, where she spent 15 years handling high-profile cases, including the first fully televised jury trial in Cook County. Promoted to management in 2019, Ms. Piemonte served as the Deputy Chief of the Felony Trial Division and Chief of the Professional Development Division before assuming her current role as Chief of the Felony Trial Division. She earned her Bachelors and Juris Doctor from DePaul University.

The Nominating Committee submitted both nominees to Mayor Brandon Johnson for consideration. By ordinance, the mayor has 30 days to review the candidates and select one nominee provided by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will continue to provide updates via the CCPSA website.

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