

# San Francisco District 11 Democratic Club Questionnaire for Candidates - General Election 2022

This questionnaire is for all candidates in the November 2022 general election. The questionnaire is due on Saturday, August 20, 2022, by 11:55pm.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** Your answers will help the SF D11 Democratic Club Executive Board with their recommendations to the membership at our official membership endorsement meeting on Saturday, August 27, 2022. Once you submit the questionnaire, we will schedule a time to interview you. The District 11 Town Hall will be on September 10th where our membership will make the final decision on the official D11 Democratic Club endorsement. All candidates are welcome to attend the District 11 Town Hall.

Our eboard recommendations will be posted on our website by 11:55 pm on or before Tuesday, August 30, 2022, and our official SF D11 Democratic Club endorsements will be posted by 11:55 pm on September 12, 2022.

**PLEASE NOTE THE SECTIONS REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED FOR A RECOMMENDATION:**

Candidates for School Board: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 5

Candidates for College Board: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 6

Candidates for BART Board: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 7

Candidates for District Attorney: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 8

Candidates for Public Defender: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 9

Candidates for U.S. Congressional District 15: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 10

Candidates for Assembly District 17: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 11

Candidates for Assembly District 19: In addition to Sections 1 through 3, please fill out Section 12

Propositions and Measures: In addition to Section 1, please fill out Section 13.

Email \*

m.raju111@gmail.com

Name of Candidate

Mano Raju

Campaign Email Address

yasmeekhan@votemano.com

Campaign Phone Number (do you prefer text or call)

3108631432

What office do you seek?

Public Defender

What is your website URL?

votemano.com

Name and contact info for your Campaign Manager/Consultant:

Yasmeen Khan, yasmeenkhan@votemano.com, 310-863-1432

Are you a registered Democrat?

Yes

No

If yes, to the above answer, how long have you been a Democrat?

Over 20 years

How much campaign funding have you raised so far?

\$139,164

How long have you lived in San Francisco?

3 years

What is your position on recalls? Did you vote for June 7th Prop C (Recall Timelines and Vacancy Appointments)? Please explain.

I believe recalls undermine democracy & allow special interests to influence the outcome through unchecked spending. They also disrupt the work leaders have been elected to perform, as they have to spend time & resources organizing an opposition to the recall rather than performing the duties they were elected to fulfill.

### Candidacy Questions

All candidates must answer the basic candidacy questions below

Why are you running and what are your qualifications for this office?

I've given my heart and soul to defending San Franciscan's constitutional rights and have initiated many programs furthering criminal legal system reform in the city. Based on my record as a line deputy in court, Jeff Adachi promoted me to the Director of Training and then the Felony Manager prior to his passing. I have lectured state and nationwide on different aspects of public defender practice. I am seeking to be reelected as Public Defender to continue my commitment to fighting tooth & nail to zealously defend some of the most vulnerable members of our society because every wrongful conviction and prolonged detention impacts individuals, families, and subsequent generations. The last two budget cycles under my leadership have lead to the biggest increases to our offices's budget in the modern era. I plan to continue aggressively advocating for a bigger public defense budget, as the need for strong public defense is critical to the city's post-pandemic recovery. At this critical juncture, the Public Defender's Office is a powerful generator of criminal justice reform in the city. I have the vision, community support, and political will to lead my office in spearheading innovative new policies that promote healthy communities. As Public Defender, my record reflects my commitment to delivering the critical services necessary to achieve a healthier & more sustainable society. If re-elected I will continue to mobilize my office to connect with community-based organizations in order to provide our clients with the best services in the country so that they can succeed and contribute to the health and wellness of our city.

Identify the three most important issues for the position you seek? What are the solutions you see for these specific issue areas or how will you work to tackle them?

The top 3 issues I will address are inequity in the legal system, racialized inequality & economic instability. Our clients are deeply impacted by all of these issues, and therefore our office must play a pivotal role in dismantling the conditions that contribute to the crisis. To address these issues, our office must provide strong & aggressive public defense to keep clients out of jail & connect them with critical services like stable employment, secure housing & healthcare. I am obsessed with raising the level of defense in the courtroom and plan to grow our training and management techniques so that we can continue to raise the level of defense that we provide. Further, under my leadership, my office has tackled the issues leading to inequality and instability head-on. The Clean Slate & End the Cycle programs in my office connect clients with social workers & provide linkages to critical services like employment, housing and healthcare to unchain them from a life of constant precarity. Further, we plan to build out and lead "circle" practices that can lead to restorative justice opportunities, and deepen our youth engagement through our MAGIC programs based in the Bayview and the Fillmore. If re-elected, I plan to build on this work and expand our services in these areas.

D11 Related Questions

All candidates must answer the District 11 questions

District 11 has significant numbers of school age children, community college students, ethnic diversity, homeowners, and working-class families compared to other other districts in San Francisco. These are just a few of the unique features of this district. If elected, how will your office address the particular needs and concerns of District 11?

As a resident of District 11, I have spent countless hours canvassing in my district, speaking with voters to firsthand how they are uniquely impacted. To address these needs and concerns, I'm redefining how public defenders serve their community by extending our reach beyond the walls of the courtroom towards pathways that enact reforms through policymaking and community empowerment programs. To uplift the youth in my district, I invest in youth empowerment rather than criminalization of youth. I have demonstrated this commitments as Public Defender through the creation of the Youth Defender Program, which offers paid internships to high school students. We also continue to develop Mobilization for Adolescent Growth in our Communities (MAGIC), neighborhood nonprofits started by the San Francisco Public Defender to convene community-based organizations that provide health, educational, and recreational opportunities for youth. If elected I will continue to deeply invest in our youth community empowerment programs to ensure that all youth have dozens of people and community organizations available to support them.

I will ensure that the community empowerment programs and services that the PublicDefender's Office offers are accessible and address the unique concerns of District 11 residents. This includes The Clean Slate & End the Cycle programs in my office, which connect our vulnerable clients with social workers & provide linkages to critical services like employment, housing and healthcare to unchain them from a life of constant precarity.

What is your favorite food spot/coffee shop/hangout in District 11? What is unique or memorable about this location?

Roxie's! Great sandwiches, nice mural, diverse crowd, wonderful staff, and beautiful history depicted with the photos.

Click on the office you are seeking to move to the next set of questions.

Please fill out the following only if you are a candidate for Public Defender.

**PUBLIC DEFENDER: What are the top issues in San Francisco related to public safety?**

The top 3 issues I will address are inequity in the legal system, racialized inequality & economic instability. Our clients are deeply impacted by all of these issues, and therefore our office must play a pivotal role in dismantling the conditions that contribute to the crisis. To address these issues, our office must provide strong & aggressive public defense to keep clients out of jail & connect them with critical services like stable employment, secure housing & healthcare. I am obsessed with raising the level of defense in the courtroom and plan to grow our training and management techniques so that we can continue to raise the level of defense that we provide. Further, under my leadership, my office has tackled the issues leading to inequality and instability head-on. The Clean Slate & End the Cycle programs in my office connect clients with social workers & provide linkages to critical services like employment, housing and healthcare to unchain them from a life of constant precarity. Further, we plan to build out and lead "circle" practices that can lead to restorative justice opportunities, and deepen our youth engagement through our MAGIC programs based in the Bayview and the Fillmore. If re-elected, I plan to build on this work and expand our services in these areas.

**PUBLIC DEFENDER: What have you done to address systemic racism, sexism, economic inequality and discrimination in SF, and how will you address it as Public Defender?**

I plan to implement creative programs to dismantle inequities fueled by systemic racism, sexism, economic inequality and all forms of discrimination, which Public Defenders can replicate across the nation. I've already laid the groundwork to implement my vision by expanding our budget the last two budget cycles. This includes directing resources to expand the End the Cycle program I've created that provides comprehensive wraparound services to our clients. I plan to hire more culturally competent social workers and paralegals to expand programs like the Clean Slate Program & the Immigration Unit. We cannot improve public safety without dismantling the unfair & racist societal conditions that bring clients to our door. This is why I've planned to launch pilot programs that help alleviate economic, educational & health disparities that trap our clients in a vicious cycle of poverty and carcerality. I've already implemented pilot programs like the Youth Defender Program that provides paid internships to public school youth, the Integrity Unit that spotlights police misconduct and the Freedom Project that challenges excessive sentences & wrongful convictions.

**PUBLIC DEFENDER:** There are currently 20 + youth in Juvenile Hall, even though a few years ago we agreed to close it down. How will you champion to protect children from the school to prison pipeline that is exasperated by the SF Juvenile Hall?

I invest in youth empowerment rather than the criminalization of youth. I have demonstrated this commitment through the creation of the Youth Defender Program to offer paid internships to high school students. I will continue to develop Mobilization for Adolescent Growth in our Communities (MAGIC), neighborhood nonprofits started by the San Francisco Public Defender to convene community-based organizations that provide health, educational, and recreational opportunities for youth. I'm proud to have worked with former Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer, the Board of Supervisors, and Mayor London Breed to shut down County Jail 4 located in the Hall of Justice where incarcerated individuals were subjected to horrific unsanitary and unsafe living conditions. If re-elected I will continue to deeply invest in our youth empowerment community programs to ensure that all youth have access to dozens of people and community organizations available to support them.

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**PUBLIC DEFENDER:** Why are you running for Public Defender?

I've given my heart and soul to defending San Franciscan's constitutional rights and have initiated many programs furthering criminal legal system reform in the city. Based on my record as a line deputy in court, Jeff Adachi promoted me to the Director of Training and then the Felony Manager prior to his passing. I have lectured state and nationwide on different aspects of public defender practice. I am seeking to be reelected as Public Defender to continue my commitment to fighting tooth & nail to zealously defend some of the most vulnerable members of our society because every wrongful conviction and prolonged detention impacts individuals, families, and subsequent generations. The last two budget cycles under my leadership have lead to the biggest increases to our offices's budget in the modern era. I plan to continue aggressively advocating for a bigger public defense budget, as the need for strong public defense is critical to the city's post-pandemic recovery. At this critical juncture, the Public Defender's Office is a powerful generator of criminal justice reform in the city. I have the vision, community support, and political will to lead my office in spearheading innovative new policies that promote healthy communities. As Public Defender, my record reflects my commitment to delivering the critical services necessary to achieve a healthier & more sustainable society. If re-elected I will continue to mobilize my office to connect with community-based organizations in order to provide our clients with the best services in the country so that they can succeed and contribute to the health and wellness of our city.

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**PUBLIC DEFENDER: How will you address high case loads?**

Appropriately funding the Public Defender’s Office will increase our capacity to better serve our clients and alleviate the burdensome caseloads our defenders carry to the detriment of their own well-being. We spend exponentially more on the departments that arrest, confine, incarcerate, and monitor than we do on the one department that fights for the most marginalized. It is past time for a different approach. I have availed every opportunity to ask the City and County leadership and elected officials to properly fund defenders. I have already expanded the budget in the last two budget cycles. If re-elected I will continue to aggressively advocate for a bigger budget, as the need for strong public defense in our city is especially important now.

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**PUBLIC DEFENDER: What does Criminal Justice Reform mean to you?**

Criminal justice reform means prioritizing opportunities for prevention and intervention over criminalization and incarceration to help minimize the harm that spirals into our communities and families when a loved one becomes entangled with the legal system. We know, from decades of misguided policies and budget priorities that have targeted communities of color for criminalization and created mass incarceration, that real public safety for all communities comes from when we invest in people not punishment. As trusted advocates of our clients, public defenders are the best positioned out of all justice and safety agencies to help community members transition out of the criminal legal system for good. Criminal justice reform means appropriately funding the Public Defender's office to increase our capacity to better serve our clients and alleviate the burdensome caseloads our defenders carry to the detriment of their own well-being.

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**PUBLIC DEFENDER: What would you do if your office was assigned a case that you were morally opposed to? How would your office reconcile the conflict between your own personal beliefs and the case?**

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U.S. Congressional District 15

Please fill out the following only if you are a candidate for US Congressional District 15.