

VIDEO: Brandon Johnson is "Ready"!!

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THE PLAN FOR SANCTUARY AND IMMIGRANT JUSTICE

Chicago has always been a place that immigrants, migrants and refugees have called home. It is a place where migrants and refugees from all over the world – from the Jim Crow South to the furthest reaches of the globe – have come to build lives and contribute to everything that makes our city great. For hundreds of years, regular Chicagoans have made our city a welcoming one by helping newly arriving migrants and immigrants make connections, and find jobs, housing and community, which is something we continue to do.

Chicago is a sanctuary city. As such, we must always resist attempts to pit communities against each other and extend this sanctuary promise to everyone who needs it in our city – both long-time residents and newcomers alike.

But too often now, the American Dream that once felt like a promise now feels like an illusion. Migrant families are being used as political pawns by heartless politicians across the country. Worst of all, it so often feels like no one is trying to help. It feels like those in seats of

power are not trying to make government work for all of the people, especially those communities that have been neglected and pushed to the margins.

From a lack of resources for multilingual learners to a lack of support for displaced immigrants, our city has not done everything it can to help families who have left everything they know and risked unthinkable danger and chaos to seek out better conditions in which to thrive. So we must work to expand our status as a sanctuary city and support a more accessible path to citizenship for all.

A better Chicago is one that supports our vibrant migrant heritage communities – Chinatown, Pilsen, Little Village, West Ridge, Brighton Park, Chicago Lawn, Hermosa, Humboldt Park, Belmont Cragin, Albany Park, Rogers Park, Uptown and so many others. Chicago is the world within a city because of the diversity of identities, races and cultures on our blocks. You can travel the world through our neighborhoods.

A better Chicago must invest in all of our people, including these communities, by changing the way our city works and prioritizing the needs of families instead of interests of the wealthy and uber-rich.

A Brandon Johnson administration will pursue the following to make sure that every migrant, immigrant and refugee in Chicago has the resources they need to thrive, and proudly call the city home.

A True Sanctuary City

Chicago must lead and live by its promise to be a sanctuary city and welcome immigrants, migrants and refugees – and treat them with dignity and respect. Sanctuary means that everyone is welcome here, and as a city we commit to take care of each other and provide all of our neighbors with the resources they need to thrive. This sanctuary promise must extend to everyone who needs it in our city, including residents who are indigenous, old and new.

Migrant families and their children have contributed culturally and economically to our great city since its founding. Those who migrate or come to our city as political refugees, asylum seekers or climate refugees deserve a dignified reception and equal access to programs and services at all levels of government – City, County and State.

Doing right by migrants requires good planning; it means being thoughtful and collaborative about our approach to integration. Previously, Chicago has bulldozed its way through difficult decisions about migrant resettlement without care or forethought – failing longtime residents and arriving migrant families. Even worse, welcoming migrants into our city with no real plan has left many stranded across Chicago, sleeping on trains and floors. We must partner with local communities, work with trusted advocates and community organizations, invest in infrastructure to support displaced immigrants and refugees, and coordinate efforts at all levels of government.

Chicago deserves a leader who will work with all communities to bring people together, make decisions collaboratively, and foster authentic and organic harmony between Chicago's diverse communities.

A Brandon Johnson administration will:

- Revamp and retool the failing Office of New Americans into the Office of Migrant Protection and Integration to coordinate efforts to support migrant families between the mayor's office, City Council and other city agencies.
- Adequately staff the Office of Migrant Protection and Integration with culturally competent bilingual/multilingual staff to coordinate between governmental agencies, conduct outreach designed to adapt city programs, benefits and services to the needs of migrants, and advise on the legal service needs of migrants and English Language Learners.
- Increase dedicated funding to immigrant protection and integration, including the Immigrant Legal Protection Fund.
- Leverage the collective braintrust of community groups, leaders, multiple city agencies to develop a comprehensive city plan for asylum seekers and other new arrivals.
- Build multilingual infrastructure for language access within every city agency, with a real enforcement process.

- Ensure law enforcement does not cooperate with ICE to arrest, detain or deport our migrant neighbors.
- End the use of all gang databases that punish Black and Brown communities without the right to due process.
- Strengthen Chicago's CityKey program with sensitivity around immigration status, and fully resource services that support displaced immigrants arriving in our city.
- Ensure CPD officers do not discriminate against people with special driver's licenses, CityKey or consular IDs, and advocate for statewide policy that would not require separate driver's licenses for undocumented residents.
- Ensure that equity, language access and non-discrimination are at the heart of services and benefits.
- Stop the practice of the Chicago Police Department denying hundreds of U visa certification and T visa declaration requests submitted by crime victims, and ensure that undocumented crime victims are heard and are able to continue their processes to become citizens without delay.
- Provide rental assistance or other semi-permanent housing for all, provided by the City.
- Build permanent housing for all unhoused, including asylum seekers, by passing the Bring Chicago Home ordinance and enacting other pieces of the \$1 billion Better Chicago Agenda.
- Protect Chicago's working families – including our migrant heritage communities – from displacement due to large-scale gentrification by forming partnerships with community land trusts, non-profit and mission-driven developers, and small landlords in communities threatened by gentrification-driven displacement.

Economic Development for All

City Hall must work to protect the social fabric of immigrant communities like Chinatown, Pilsen, Little Village, West Ridge, Brighton Park, Chicago Lawn, Hermosa, Humboldt Park, Belmont Cragin, Albany Park, Rogers Park, Uptown and others to continue to be ports of entry by protecting commercial corridors such as 18th Street, Division, Wentworth and Devon Avenues. We absolutely must invest in these communities and provide assistance to their hard-working residents and small businesses.

26th Street in Little Village, for example, is the second-highest revenue producing commercial district in the city, where there are 500 businesses along a two-mile stretch that generate \$900 million in revenue *annually*. Brandon Johnson will uplift and support the small businesses that are the economic engine of our city, like the numerous vendors inside the Discount Mall, and also:

- Offer lines of credit, finance cooperative models including incubators, and support small businesses – not just give money to mega-developers and large corporations like Lincoln Yards.
- Protect street vendors in Little Village and Pilsen from violence by engaging directly with vendors to understand their needs.
- Streamline the process for street vendors to obtain Business Affairs and Consumer Protection licenses.
- Expand access to financing and micro grants to vendors.
- Support commercial kitchens and worker-led co-ops so that street vendors can have safe and warm spaces to work.
- Target violence prevention programs in impacted communities and support community assets like the Discount Mall on 26th Street.
- Ensure that migrant and refugee residents have a voice in policing policy and public safety by seeking to appoint non-citizen representation to the seven-member Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability. Also work with community leaders to fill the positions on the Non-Citizen Advisory Council, which advises the commission.
- Expand and create new programs that allow for cultural and economic integration such as the Global Gardens Refugee Training Farm in Albany Park. These programs allow for conservation and sharing of cultural practices while providing economic opportunities and making the cultural capital of our communities richer and healthier.

We must preserve the cultural and social fabric of our neighborhoods, create sustainable jobs and build local economic power. Brandon Johnson will fully value and financially support the local businesses that make Chicago a global city.

Education

Black and Brown students and families in Chicago have been neglected by mayors, CPS CEOs and handpicked school boards for several decades. This includes our immigrant and migrant children. We must address the deep structural inequalities in the way we fund education, as well as prioritize repairing the harm done to our public school system by privatization, disinvestment and disrespect of educators, students and families. We must also correct the lack of focus and attention to the needs of diverse communities across our schools.

When there is a large influx of new students as we are experiencing now with the arrival of thousands of new migrants to our city, there

must also be a large increase in investment to support those students. As mayor, Brandon Johnson will work side-by-side with Governor J.B. Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly to overhaul the CPS school funding formula and make sure our school communities receive the state funding they need and deserve. We will create safe and thriving schools for all of our children, and stand intolerant to structural racism and neglect.

Immigrant communities will be treated as equal, and we will see immigrant children's education as equally important.

A Brandon Johnson administration will:

- Ensure that migrant and refugee parents and families have a voice in their children's education by appointing members to a Chicago Board of Education Non-Citizen Advisory Board.
- Work with Gov. J.B. Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly in Springfield to pass legislation that will allow all parents and taxpayers to vote in school board elections, regardless of citizenship status.
- Recruit and train enough teachers and clinicians to provide the capacity to support migrant and immigrant children, including bilingual professionals.
- Create a pipeline for multilingual educators, clinicians and other school support staff.
- Enact a new city funding formula that accounts for language needs and the needs of migrant and refugee students.
- Ensure all children have fully funded ethnic studies and bilingual education and dual language programs, where students learn their home country's histories and cultures, in addition to learning English.
- Ensure parents receive multilingual information about their children's education so they can be fully engaged.
- Coordinate with CPS, community partners and educators to identify schools with bilingual services and the resources to best support newly arriving families.
- Work to make sure the CPS Students in Temporary Living Situations status for unhoused students applies to migrant children as well, so they receive benefits like transcript waivers and microgrants.

Under a Johnson administration, every single student will receive a world-class education, regardless of the color of their skin or country of origin.



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