



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 12, 2023

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MAYOR LORI E. LIGHTFOOT SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING THE YOUTH COMMISSION AS A FORMAL ADVISORY BODY TO ENSURE YOUTH VOICE REMAINS IN CITY GOVERNMENT

The Youth Commission, which commenced in 2019 under the leadership of Mayor Lightfoot has advised the administration and other City leaders for the last four years on key issue areas. The order coincides with the release of the 2022-2023 Youth Commission New Ideas project.

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today signed Executive Order [2023-2], which formally establishes the Mayor's Youth Commission as a formal advisory commission in connection with the City of Chicago Mayor's Office. The goal of this executive order is to ensure youth voice and guidance remain a cornerstone for Mayor's Office and City leaders for years to come.

"Chicago's teens deserve a forum to develop and share their concerns, hopes, and ideas with City leadership to improve the economic, social, and political quality of life for all young Chicagoans," said Mayor Lightfoot. "The Youth Commission will be a voice for all young people who aim to propose and implement solutions to citywide problems from the neighborhood level to the highest levels of municipal government."

The Youth Commission will consist of 32 "Youth Commissioners" between the ages of 14-19 who can serve up to two one-year terms. As part of the program, Youth Commissioners are provided a stipend for their work and attendance at monthly in-person meetings, where they meet with city leaders and advise on pivotal City projects. Commissioners are also responsible for communicating with their peers in their communities and schools to bring youth voice into city government.

Today, the Youth Commission also released their 2022-2023 New Ideas recommendations booklet to propose new City projects and policies moving forward. The booklet can be accessed on the My CHI. My Future. website homepage and [here](#)

The Youth Commission has advised the administration since the Fall of 2019. This year, Youth Commissioners represent 24 different communities on the South, West, and North sides of the city. They meet with guest speakers, consult on City projects, and work on policy ideas on a monthly basis. The Youth Commission has specifically advised the Mayor and relevant departments on issues affecting the health, education, neighborhood development, public safety, and welfare of the young people of Chicago.

“Being a part of Mayor Lightfoot's Mayor's Youth Commission has been a life-changing experience for me,” said Faith Townsell, a Youth Commissioner who represents North Lawndale. “This opportunity has allowed me to develop critical leadership and problem-solving skills, as well as a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our city. Overall, my time on the commission has been a truly transformative and empowering experience that I will always cherish.”

“The Mayor’s Youth Commission has given me the opportunity to express my opinions, impact Chicago’s youth, and make an overall change in our city for good,” said Anabelle Sanchez, who represents the West Elsdon neighborhood. “Youth voice has been underlooked in the past, and by codifying the Mayor’s Youth Commission, future young generations in Chicago will always have a place to make their voices heard. Chicago belongs to all its citizens, and this executive order will ensure that youth input in city matters will be here to stay.”

“The MYC allows be to use my voice to address big topics within the city like mental health resources,” said Samantha Lopez, who represents Gage Park. “This executive order will make sure future administrations listen to youth and make Chicago a better place to live in for generations to come.”

With this executive order, the sitting Mayor formally appoints a Commissioner after a competitive application process to fill vacancies left by Commissioners after their terms expire. A Commissioner appointed at the beginning of a cohort year or to fill an unexpired term may serve two full one-year terms, provided they are under 20 years of age at the start of a given term in September.

The current Youth Commissioners will complete their year-long term in August of this year. An application for the next year’s cohort is anticipated to be launched by May 2023. Information on the 2023 application will be posted on the My CHI. My Future. website (<https://explore.mychimymyfuture.org>) and app.

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