

## **Proud Vote Questionnaire**

On Thursday, June 2nd, 2022, Canadians will vote in the 43rd Ontario general election, electing Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in 124 ridings, including 5 in Simcoe County.

The results of this election will have a significant impact on gender and sexually diverse communities in Simcoe County and Ontario as a whole. We are sending all candidates representing the main parties in Simcoe County ridings, a list of questions about issues important to our community. We will grade and share the candidate's response.

### Policy Questions

1. What do you believe are the main concerns of gender and sexually diverse people in Ontario? What specific actions will be taken to improve the lives and wellbeing of gender and sexually diverse communities?

**Ontario Greens know that 2SLGBTQIA+ people face systemic discrimination that leads to violence, hate crimes, poverty, homelessness and poor health outcomes in this province. That is unacceptable. In order to build a better future for 2SLGBTQI+ communities, we would support:**

- **Creating a Provincial 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat and Provincial 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**
  - **Expanding Coverage of and Access to Gender Affirming Healthcare**
  - **Creating a \$25M Annual Funding Program for 2SLGBTQI+ Services**
  - **Equality, equal access to care and treatment for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities within our healthcare system and long term care, and equal access to economic opportunities.**
  - **Expand and improve access to provincially funded healthcare services for 2SLGBTQIA+ Ontarians, including gender affirming procedures and transition medications.**
  - **Dedicate resources and funding to directly support 2SLGBTQIA+ youth groups.**
  - **Mandate standards to have safe, accessible, all-gender washrooms in all public spaces in Ontario.**
2. Many gender and sexually-diverse youth haven't seen themselves reflected in the curriculum. Where do you stand on the current elementary and secondary health and physical curriculum, and how will you ensure that youth get the information they need?

**Update the curriculum to include informed discussions of anti-Black racism, 2SLGBTQIA+ prejudice, and all forms of discrimination across subject areas.**

3. Trans and gender diverse people lack quality, accessible healthcare in Ontario. In what ways do you think the Government can better support access to medical services and specialists for trans patients in Ontario? In what ways will you bolster access to trans-inclusive healthcare?

**Immediately strike a task force to develop policies and initiatives that address the adverse effects of racism, homophobia, and transphobia on peoples' mental health and the barriers they face to accessing health care.**

**Create a comprehensive strategy to ensure equitable, inclusive and affirming access to care and treatment for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities within our healthcare system and long-term care.**

4. The gender and sexually diverse community are disproportionately affected by mental health and addictions due to various social and economic factors. What steps will you take to improve our community's overall mental health and wellness?
- **Phase in a Basic Income. Build Affordable housing. Double ODSP. Bring in Universal pharma care, and Universal Dental Care. Expand people's access to nature Tree Coverage, Trails and Parks. . Make Funding available for non-profit organisations that provide additional training and mentorship opportunities for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals who are considering running for political office.**
  - **Create a comprehensive strategy to ensure equitable inclusive and affirming access to care and treatment for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities within our healthcare system and long term care.**
  - **Expand and improve access to provincially funded healthcare services for 2SLGBTQIA+ Ontarians, including gender affirming procedures and transition medications.**
  - **Dedicate resources and funding to directly support 2SLGBTQIA+ youth groups.**
  - **Mandate standards to have safe, accessible, all-gender washrooms in all public spaces in Ontario**
  - **Immediately strike a task force to develop policies and initiatives that address the adverse effects of racism, homophobia, and transphobia on peoples' mental health and the barriers they face to accessing health care.**
  - **Expand OHIP to include regulated mental health care providers who are presently out of reach. Make them available in all regions of Ontario.**
  - **Fully integrate mental health and addictions services into expanded Family health Teams and walk-in clinics to improve early intervention. Include mental health and substance use as part of regular check-ups.**
  - **Make representation from our 2SLGBTQIA+ community at the Mental Health Addictions Centre of Excellence.**
  - **Work with the Federal Government to decriminalize drugs, and divert funds from the Criminal Justice system into Mental Health care services.**

- **Take a Housing First approach and build 60000 permanent supportive housing spaces with wrap-around services.**
  - **Increase the number of consumption and treatment sites throughout the province and expand the availability of harm reduction programs including safe supply.**
  - **Integrate paid peer support workers with lived experience into the planning and organisation of all substance use programming and create a significant role for people with lived experience as part of the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence.**
5. Gender and sexually diverse youth are overrepresented in the homeless youth population. What specific steps would you take to address the gender and sexually diverse youth homelessness crisis in Ontario?
- **Restore the goal of ending homelessness in Ontario within ten years.**
  - **Resume the homelessness census canceled by the Ford government.**
  - **Utilise a Housing First model to ensure that stable, permanent housing solutions are the first priority when helping those in need.**
  - **Engage communities who have lived experience with homelessness in program development, as well as communities that face disproportionate levels of homelessness.**
  - **Build 60000 permanent supportive housing units.**
  - **Deploy temporary and permanent supportive modular housing projects as quickly as possible.**
6. Many gender and sexually diverse people are concerned about moving into retirement communities, care facilities, or having at-home care out of fear of having to “go back into the closet” or because they fear they won’t receive sensitive, informed care. How will you ensure long-term care will competently accommodate and work with the gender and sexually diverse community? What steps will you take to improve long-term care for our community?
- **Implement an expanded choice, patient-centred long-term care framework that focuses on a continuum of care for seniors.**
  - **Strengthen obligations for long-term care licensees to respect and recognise residents’ gender identity, as well as their social, cultural, spiritual and language care needs.**
  - **Amend the Residents’ Bill of Rights to align with the prohibited ground for discrimination in the Ontario Human Rights Code**
  - **Amend the Residents’ Bill of Rights by adding the right of residents to have accommodations made for themselves and their spouse or life partner so they can continue to live together in long-term care.**
7. The repeal of the three-month MSM (“men who have sex with men”) blood ban has been replaced by another deferral policy that still primarily impacts men who have sex with other men.

The new deferral policy ignores advancements in HIV diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, while also disqualifying some straight donors. What steps will you take to make blood donation fairer and based on science instead of stereotypes?

**The Green Party bases policy on science & evidence. Our bias is objective truth. We will not allow discrimination to dictate our policy, which reflects the best available scientific consensus.**

8. Do you intend on increasing support to HIV/AIDS organizations in Ontario or access to healthcare? If so, what will you do to increase support or accessibility?

**The Green Party may not directly support HIV/AIDS NGOs, but our healthcare plan includes a proposed task force to address the adverse effects of racism, homophobia & transphobia.**

**We will also increase core funding for community-based supports for underserved communities, provide cultural responsiveness training rooted in equity & anti-racism, and mandate the collection of meaningful socio-demographic & race-based data to correct inequities, because you cannot correct what you do not see.**

9. What steps will you take to end invasive, and medically unnecessary operations on Intersex children?

**The Greens intend to ban and condemn medically unnecessary surgeries on intersex children and conversion therapy.**

10. In today's world, reproductive healthcare, such as abortion rights is being called into question. What will you do to ensure Ontarians have access to abortion services, birth control, and contraceptives?

**Make reproductive health accessible. Expand the number of and fully fund womens' clinics and abortion clinics in Ontario.**

11. Gender and sexually diverse people are less likely to be hired or secure stable employment, and experience wage disparity in comparison to their cisgender (non-trans) and heterosexual peers. What initiatives do you believe the Government can develop or support to reduce the rate of unemployment and underemployment in the gender and sexually diverse community?

**Equality under the law is a right in Ontario, but it is a constant struggle to achieve. Greens will increase the minimum wage, legislate 10 paid sick days, ban 'sick note' requirements, improve employee bargaining rights, provide equal access to employment rights and benefits (EI, CPP, WSIB) regardless of employment status (part-time, temp & gig workers)**

**Additionally, Greens will end poverty with a Basic Income that will be easily accessed and universal.**

12. Organizations working with or for the gender and sexually diverse community struggle to gain or maintain long-term, sustainable funding. How will you support organizations, specifically ones that provide important health and social services and ones that work in arts, culture, and heritage?

**The Green plan includes an increase in core funding for community-based, grassroots mental and physical health supports in racialized, newcomer, and other communities that have traditionally been underserved.**

13. The principles of Truth and Reconciliation are important to address the impact of colonialism on Two-Spirit/gender and sexually diverse Indigenous peoples. What does your plan for Truth and Reconciliation look like? Will you implement the Calls to Action that are relevant to the Province of Ontario?

- **Work in partnership with Indigenous communities to implement UNDRIP and land back (including land stewardship, fair revenue sharing, and recognition of Indigenous governance and knowledge systems)**
- **Enshrine free, prior, & informed consent in all government decision-making**
- **Work with the federal government to address the legacy of colonialism and residential schools through implementation of the recommendations of the TRCR**
- **Fix the healthcare gap by addressing systemic issues that result in disparities in health outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. This will have built-in accountability through annual progress reports on suicide, mental health, chronic illness, and equitable access.**
- **An Indigenous-led housing strategy that funds 22,000 Indigenous-owned & operated permanent homes.**
- **Support community rights to a healthy environment by cleaning up mercury contamination in Grassy Narrows, funding a FN Water Authority, and providing \$1 billion for Indigenous Protected & Conserved Areas in so-called Ontario**

14. The rights of sex workers are important to the gender and sexually diverse community, with our community being well represented within the workforce. What will you do to help end the criminalization of sex work in Ontario, ensuring full labour rights and protections?

**There is no mention of sex work in particular, but Greens will increase the minimum wage, legislate 10 paid sick days, ban 'sick note' requirements, improve employee bargaining rights, provide equal access to employment rights and benefits (EI, CPP, WSIB) regardless of employment status (part-time, temp & gig workers)**

**Additionally, Greens will end poverty with a Basic Income that will be easily accessed and universal.**

#### Party Questions

Does your party have any openly gender diverse and/or sexually diverse candidates? If comfortable answering: How many, and in what ridings? Also, what concrete steps will your party take to increase the representation of gender and sexually diverse people among candidates?

**The Green Party of Ontario requires that all Constituency Associations reach out to 'equity-seeking groups' in the search for potential candidates. Currently, the party has achieved gender parity through our full slate of candidates. You will find gender & sexual diversity among our candidates.**

Does your party have policies and practices that are affirming of gender and sexually diverse people? If so, what are they? If not, will you commit to adding them?

**We do have policies that specifically mention gender affirmation, with regard to access to healthcare and inclusive public washrooms.**

Have your staff and volunteers been through training on gender and sexually diverse topics and issues? If yes, please explain. If not, will you commit to participating in training on an ongoing basis?

**The Ontario Greens are taking concrete steps to combat systemic racism, sexism and antisemitism in our party, including:**

- Implementing a [Safe Spaces Policy](#) and [Member Code of Conduct](#) that will not tolerate racism, sexism, antisemitism or another form of hate.
- Creating a [Diversity & Inclusion Fund](#) that provides start up funding for equity-deserving candidates.
- Launching our [Take the Lead](#) candidate recruitment initiative to recruit equity-deserving candidates.
- Conducting a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) survey to provide an understanding of our current membership and how we can improve to better reflect the diverse voices of Ontario.
- Providing ongoing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training for Ontario Greens staff, Provincial Executive and riding associations.