

Dear current and former City of Evanston staff, parents and caregivers, and Evanston residents,

Thank you to all the brave community members and employees who stepped forward to share your experiences with sexual harassment while employed by the City of Evanston. We believe your statements and we are committed to preventing the sexism, sexual harassment, assault, racism, and discrimination you experienced.

We apologize for a workplace culture that allowed sexual harassment to occur, and we're sorry that you had to experience oppressive, uncomfortable, and dangerous behavior. We apologize to your families, friends, and the community of Evanston, both for the harms City staff and policies allowed to happen and for our delay in issuing this apology. When you showed the courage to come forward, you were not treated with the prompt compassion and respect you deserved.

As these incidents have come to our attention, residents understandably have lost some faith in the ability of their government officials to handle delicate and serious situations. We take responsibility for this situation and will do everything in our power to right these wrongs. Moving forward we must do better.

We have begun by implementing mandatory sexual harassment training for seasonal staff and will expand this to include participants and employers in the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program. We have also commissioned an independent investigation which will help determine what actions and inactions led to this harm so we can take additional corrective measures. We will share the outcome of this investigation while protecting the identities of those who have experienced harm.

We are grateful to the organizations offering specialized resources for anyone who experienced harm and encourage any current or former employees in need of support to reach out to the contacts below.

It is our goal that the entire City of Evanston should be a welcoming environment for everyone, employees and residents alike. The City has fallen short of our expectations and we are grateful for the courage of those of you who persisted in seeking accountability and transparency. Thank you for speaking out.

The Evanston city government must, beyond everything else, keep our community safe, and we are committed to doing just that.

Signed,

Councilmember Clare Kelly

Councilmember Peter Braithwaite
Councilmember Melissa Wynne
Councilmember Jonathan Nieuwsma
Councilmember Bobby Burn
Councilmember Tom Suffredin
Councilmember Eleanor Revelle
Councilmember Devon Reid
Councilmember Cicely Fleming
Mayor Daniel Biss

Resources for additional support are available at no cost:

- Counseling Services: Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault (www.nwcasa.org)
Contact: Caryn Brauweiler, 847-806-6526 x180, or hotline: 888-802-8890
- Legal Services: Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (www.caase.org)
Contact: Kaethe Morris Hoffer, 773-244-2230 x202, kmh@caase.org

To report instances of sexual harassment at Evanston's lakefront or within the City of Evanston please contact the independent investigators:
Salvatore, Prescott, Porter & Porter, 312-283-5711, Katie Hill, hill@sppplaw.com