

# Jenkins, Nevada equal rights leader, to run for Las Vegas mayor



Kara Jenkins (Kara Jenkins for Las Vegas Mayor)



By Shea Johnson Las Vegas Review-Journal

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Kara Jenkins, leader of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission, announced Monday that she will run for Las Vegas mayor, one of the most visible elected offices in the state.

Jenkins, 43, is at least the second candidate to formally declare intentions of replacing Mayor Carolyn Goodman when Goodman's third and final term expires in 2024. Councilman Cedric Crear said in March he will also seek the seat.

Either Crear or Jenkins would become the first Black mayor in the city's history, if elected. Jenkins' decision to launch an "accessible campaign" for the nonpartisan city council comes after she said she spent several months exploring the move and listening to workers and business owners "grappling with uncertainty surrounding COVID and navigating the intersection of worker safety and staying open."

In a statement, Jenkins vowed to be an inclusive figurehead on the seven-member council who is the right candidate to navigate tough issues such as fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and "to lead our city in a recovery that works for everyone."

"As we begin the process of creating a new normal, I've been told over and over by the beautiful people of this city — where I call home — that we desire to do it all with the support of results-oriented leadership," she said in the statement, which cited her experience as a public servant and mediator.

Jenkins had served as the Southern Nevada director of Access to Healthcare Network, a nonprofit that delivers resources to marginalized groups such as immigrant and low-income families, according to her biography.

She was appointed by then-Gov. Brian Sandoval, a Republican, as the state's ombudsman in 2011, assisting in disputes between homeowners and homeowners' association board members, and later named the administrator of the state's Equal Rights Commission.

Her role on the commission has continued under Democratic Gov. Steve Sisolak, who was elected to office in 2018. She also serves on a statewide task force to prevent sexual harassment.

Jenkins' statement said her experiences under two governors from different political parties is "evidence of her bipartisan pragmatic work ethic."

She earned a law degree from Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans and is an alumna of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, according to her biography, which also shows she is focused on increasing affordable housing for Las Vegas families.

"We have a long road ahead of us to new leadership; however, the path is clear," she said.

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