



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

August 14, 2025

Honorable Members of the City Council
c/o City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395

Honorable Members:

Subject to your confirmation, I have appointed Dr. Mara Cohen to the Innovation and Performance Commission for the term ending June 30, 2029.

I certify that in my opinion Dr. Cohen is especially qualified by reason of training and experience for the work which shall devolve upon her, and that I make the appointment solely in the interest of the City.

Dr. Cohen will fill the vacancy created by the departure of Laureen Lazarovici.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Bass".

KAREN BASS
Mayor

KB:lap

Attachment

COMMISSION APPOINTMENT FORM

Name: Mara Cohen
Commission: Innovation and Performance Commission
End of Term: June 30, 2029

Appointee Information

1. **Race:** Caucasian
2. **Gender:** female
3. **Council District and neighborhood of residence:** 5 - Central APC
4. **Are you a registered voter in the City of Los Angeles?** Yes
5. **Prior commission experience:**
6. **Highest level of education completed:** Ph.D., University of California Los Angeles, Political Science
7. **Occupation/profession:** Senior Fellow, Loyola Marymount University, Center for the Study of Los Angeles
8. **Experience(s) that qualifies person for appointment:** See attached resume
9. **Purpose of this appointment:** Appointment
10. **Current composition of the commission (excluding appointee):**

Commissioner	APC	CD	Race	Gender	Term End
Lazarovici, Laureen	South Valley	4	Caucasian	F	6/30/2025
Smith, Almuhtada "Al"	North Valley	12	African American	M	9/6/2026
Holland. Anthony	Central	5	Latinx	M	6/30/2027

Mara A. Cohen, Ph.D.

Education

Ph.D., University of California Los Angeles, Political Science (1999)

Dissertation: *Bureaucratic Politics and Redevelopment in Los Angeles, 1948-1998*.

B.A., Colorado College, Political Science, *magna cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa* (1990)

Honors Thesis: *The Just War Doctrine in the Nuclear Age*.

Loyola Marymount University

- Senior Fellow, Center for the Study of Los Angeles (2005-present)
- Assistant Professor, Urban Studies Program, Department of Sociology (2005-2009)
- Associate Director, Center for the Study of Los Angeles (2000-2005)
- Instructor, Political Science Department and American Cultures Program (2000-2005).

Co-created the Center for the Study of LA's acclaimed public opinion surveys and voter surveys.

Organized the Urban Issues Lecture Series which brings together expert practitioners, academics across disciplines and students to explore contemporary issues facing Los Angeles.

Engaged hundreds of undergraduate students in innovative research. Launched a study of LA County polling places, resulting in precinct-level reforms by the County Registrar Recorder. Created a stratified sampling polling place method to improve the accuracy of exit polling in diverse urban areas.

Community Service

Commissioner, City of Los Angeles Community and Family Services Commission
(2023-present)

Director, HIAS (2025-present)

Director, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County (2022-present)

Director, Southern California Educational Fund (2025-present)

Founding Member, Kids in Need of Defense, Los Angeles Advisory Board (2018-present)

Member, Office of the Vice President, Special Projects Advisory Committee (2022-2024)

Member, Mayor Karen Bass Transition Advisory Team (2022)

Director, One LA-IAF (2011-2017)

Director, Peace Over Violence (2007-2010)

Director, Hollywood Arts (2006-2008)

Publications (partial list)

Peer-reviewed journals: *Urban Affairs Review*, *Sociological Perspectives*, *Sociological Forum*, *Race and Justice*, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *National Civic Review*, *California History*, *Southern California Quarterly*, *Journal of Southern California Quarterly*, *Journal of California Politics and Policy*, *State Legislative Report*. Selected publications: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=4VpUx14AAAAJ&hl=en>

Book chapters: *The Development of Los Angeles City Government: An Institutional History, 1850-2000* (Sitton, ed); *Encyclopedia of American Government* (Genovese and Cox, eds); *Up Against the Sprawl* (Wolch, Pastor and Dreier, eds).

General Audience Publications: *Daily Journal*, *Los Angeles Daily News*, *Los Angeles Business Journal*, *New American Media*.



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

August 14, 2025

Dear Dr. Cohen:

I am pleased to inform you that I hereby appoint you to the Innovation and Performance Commission for the term ending June 30, 2029, subject to confirmation by the City Council.

To begin the appointment process, please review, sign, and return the enclosed Remuneration Form and undated Letters of Separation **within one week** of receiving this letter. These documents are necessary to ensure the most efficient, open, and accountable city government possible.

Mayor's Office policy requires all potential commissioners to be fingerprinted as part of the background check. The Commissions team will assist in connecting you with Personnel's Background Unit so that you may schedule an appointment to have this done. You must schedule the appointment **within one week** of receiving this letter.

Should this apply to your commission, you will be receiving a packet from the City Ethics Commission containing information about the City's conflict of interest laws, and a copy of the State Form 700/Statement of Economic Interests. You are required to complete and return this form **within 21 days** of your nomination to the City Ethics Commission via the California Fair Political Practices Commission's e-Disclosure website, or by mailing the forms to City Hall at 200 N. Spring Street, 24th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90012. Any inquiries regarding this form should be directed to Samantha Rodriguez at the City Ethics Commission by email at samantha.rodriguez@lacity.org.

As part of the appointment process, Katy Yaroslavsky, your Councilmember, and Councilmember Monica Rodriguez, the Chair of the Government Efficiency, Innovation, and Audits Committee, may wish to meet with you to answer any questions they have. Our office will assist with arranging these meetings.

Dr. Mara Cohen
August 14, 2025
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Additionally, you will be required to attend public meetings at City Hall where your appointment will be considered. You will be hearing from our office and a City Council Clerk who will let you know when your appointment will be considered by the Government Efficiency, Innovation, and Audits Committee. Sometime thereafter, you will be notified of the date when your appointment will be presented to the full City Council. Before you may begin serving, you will be required to take the Oath of Office in the City Clerk's Office located in Room 395 of City Hall. If you require parking for these meetings, please contact my Commissions team by email at myr-commissions@lacity.org.

Per the City Charter, most commissioners must be registered voters of the City of Los Angeles, and must therefore reside within Los Angeles. If you move at any point during your term, or your contact information changes, please contact my Commissions team immediately at the email address listed below. While we hope that you complete a successful term, if for some reason you intend to resign, please do so in writing to my Commissions team at myr-commissions@lacity.org.

Congratulations, and thank you for agreeing to serve the people of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Bass". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" and last name "Bass" clearly distinguishable.

KAREN BASS
Mayor

KB:lap

Attachment I
Dr. Mara Cohen
August 14, 2025

Nominee Check List

I. Within 7 days:

- ☐ Email the below completed documents, found on the last three pages of this letter, to: myr-commissions@lacity.org OR mail them to:
Office of the Mayor
Attn: Luz Portillo
200 N. Spring Street, Room 303
Los Angeles, CA 90012
 - Remuneration Form
 - Undated Separation Letters (2)
- Schedule an appointment to get fingerprinted to complete a background check. The Commissions team will assist in connecting you with the Personnel Background Unit.

II. Before your appointment is heard in committee or full council (you will be contacted by the Clerk's Office with this date):

- File the following forms with the City Ethics Commission. If you are required to file, you will receive these forms via email from that office. Be sure to take no more than 21 days to file, per City law.
 - Statement of Economic Interest ("Form 700")
IMPORTANT: The City Council will not consider your nomination until your completed form is reviewed by the Ethics Commission.
 - CEC Form 60

III. The Mayor's Office will notify the below Councilmembers of your nomination, so that they may reach out to schedule a meeting with you should they wish.

- ☐ Your City Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky
- ☐ Councilmember Monica Rodriguez, Chair of the Council Committee considering your nomination

IV. Public Meetings at City Hall:

- ☐ Government Efficiency, Innovation, and Audits Committee Hearing
- ☐ Full Council Hearing