

# One-one-one with candidate Eddie Varela ahead of Albuquerque mayoral election

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Mayor				
Candidate	Required Petition Signatures	Verified Petition Signatures	Rejected Petition Signatures	Remaining Petition Signatures Needed
Daniel Chavez	3,000	3,424	2,336	0
Brian Fejer	3,000	69	0	2,931
Alpana Adair	3,000	14	11	2,986
Alexander Ubaldez	3,000	2,066	258	934
Adeo Herrick	3,000	35	28	2,965
Louie Sanchez	3,000	1,382	262	1,618
Mayling Armijo	3,000	699	182	2,301
Eddie Varela	3,000	1,562	347	1,438
<div>ONE-ON-ONE WITH EDDIE VARELA ALBUQUERQUE MAYORAL RACE</div> <div>COMMITMENT 2025</div> <div>KOAT 84° 5:02</div>				
Timothy Keller	3,000	2,634	410	366



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Faith Egbunu



Reporter

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. —** Retired fire chief Eddie Varela announced his run for mayor of Albuquerque on March 3, 2025. As of Friday, May 29, Varela has scored **more than half of the petition signatures** needed to qualify for the ballot before the deadline on June 21, with 1,562. Mayoral candidates need 3,000 petition signatures to qualify.

**Related: [\*Commitment 2025: First Albuquerque mayoral candidate to qualify for ballot\*](#)**

On Thursday, KOAT's Faith Egbuonu spoke with Eddie Varela in a one-on-one interview about why he believes it's time for new leadership, as well as his reasoning for withdrawing his bid for public financing to private funding.

"I've been walking the streets of Albuquerque, talking to small businesses and people for almost two years. So, getting the signatures was simply a matter of repeating that process, going back to people that are in business and asking for the signatures," Varela told KOAT.

"What's really incredible about my team is that we do this one-on-one. We actually talk to people and get the signature from them. We will make the 3,000. There's no doubt in our mind. We didn't buy our signatures. We didn't hire a consultant to do all of that," Varela said. "We're going to represent the youth, the seniors, and the taxpayers, so that we all understand where we're coming from here. And that's what made me run for mayor."

**Public Financing, Private Funding**

"I actually voted for public funding years ago. I thought it was a good deal for a regular person to run for mayor. I don't believe that anymore. I think it's a very flawed system. The \$5, first of all, it's very difficult to ask somebody for \$5. It just is. You walk up to a stranger, 'Hey, will you give me \$5?' And a lot of them say sure, other ones don't," Varela told KOAT.

"The system is flawed because the money that is collected does not go to the issues. In other words, a candidate who gets the funding and gets \$700,000, that isn't going to help solve crime. It's certainly not going to help the homeless. What it's going to do is help the candidate. Buy a bunch of literature drops and things of that nature, maybe hire political consultants—and that's not what our campaign is about," Varela said.

"We realized right away the priority is to get the signatures. If you don't have the signatures, you're not on the ballot, no matter how much money you pick. Now, who's going to finance my campaign? We have people that have offered sums of money to our campaign. Will that come? I hope so," Varela told KOAT.

**MORE: [One-one-one with candidate Darren White ahead of Albuquerque mayoral election](#)**

Crime, Juvenile Curfew, Homelessness

***Crime/Curfew***

"Day one, we're going to declare war on crime. The first thing we're going to do is install a curfew. Eighteen-year-olds and under will not be on the streets. We have 11, 12, 14, 15-year-old young people killing people on the street. We're going to put a quick stop to that, and we're going to hold parents responsible if we catch youth out there past 11 o'clock with guns and drugs," Varela said.

***Albuquerque Police Department***

"The second thing that we're doing, we will reorganize the police department from top to bottom. We are going to put together a very efficient, good police department. The problem with the police department right now is it's fractured, a lot of bad publicity, a lot of things going on, and we're going to fix that," Varela said. "I was asked by a peace officer the other day, 'How are you going to reorganize it?' I'm not, you are the police department. The fine men and women of the department are going to reorganize the department, and I will supervise it, of course, but they're going to tell me what needs to be done in the Albuquerque Police Department."

***Homelessness***

"If they want help, we're going to help them. If they don't, and a lot of them tell me we don't want help. They're going to be cited for their infractions. Whether it be defecating on the street, littering, burning, making little fires, whatever. They're going to be cited," Varela said. "When they're cited, those citations will go to a judge. The homeless person probably is not going to show up. When they get a warrant for their arrest, for violating these things, I'm going to go up to them. In groups, large numbers say, 'Do you want to go to jail, or would you like to go back to your hometown where you came from?'"

**Related: [One-one-one with former US attorney Alex Uballez ahead of Albuquerque mayoral election](#)**

## What's Next?

"If I don't win, I'm fine because I am a Christian man. I'm going to give it my best. I have a great team. We're going to try to make our city better. If I won't win, then I know deep in my heart that I tried. And that's good enough for me," Varela told KOAT.

As of Thursday, May 23, 2025, [11 candidates have officially filed](#) for the Albuquerque mayoral race, including Mayor Tim Keller. [Keller officially announced his run for reelection](#) on Thursday, March 13, 2025.

### 11 Albuquerque Mayoral Candidates

- Mayling Armijo
- Eddie Varela
- Patrick Sais
- Darren White
- Timothy Keller
- Louie Sanchez
- Alpana Adair
- Brian Fejer
- Alexander M.M. Uballez
- Daniel Chavez
- Adeo Herrick

The deadline to submit petition signatures is June 21, 2025. KOAT is profiling candidates closest to reaching the mark to qualify and/or leading the collection of private donors to qualify for public financing. In 2025, [City Council Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9](#) are also up for election on Nov. 4.

<https://www.koat.com/article/new-mexico-albuquerque-mayoral-election/64920419>