



## ACLU Foundation of Oregon Planning a House Party for the ACLU

Thank you so much for your interest in organizing a house party for the ACLU Foundation of Oregon. Hosting a house party is a great way to help the ACLU reach out to new people and educate the community on the work that we do.

Your house party can be as simple or elaborate as you choose. Below you will find a list of issues you can focus on, a house party planning checklist, and some tips for planning your party. I've also included a sample list of action steps you can communicate to your guests. It is important that people walk away from your party feeling motivated and like they have the tools to get involved. Everything here is just for your information to help you during the planning process, please customize your house party as much as you would like. Remember the point is to help the organization broaden its support in the community and to have fun!

### GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING A HOUSE PARTY FOR THE ACLU

#### **You will:**

- Provide the house
- Provide the guest list and invite the guests
- Provide food, drink and any decoration you choose
- Follow up with invitees
- Communicate your plans to ACLU staff
- Day-of set-up
- Follow up thank yous to guests
- Complete the Evaluation and return to ACLU staff

#### **We provide:**

- The initial meeting to decide on the style and date of the event
- Some assistance and ideas during the planning
- ACLU literature
- Staff people to attend the event and speak on behalf of the organization

### PLANNING YOUR HOUSE PARTY – Picking your purpose, issue, and tone

Attached is a step-by-step party planning check list to help you along the way. Below are four central questions to establishing the purpose of your house party.

#### **1. Which topic(s) would you like to focus on?**

- Privacy and Technology
- National Security
- Police Practices
- Other (to be decided with staff)

#### **2. Pick the style of your house party:**

Please note that you can host a house party in a variety of ways, be creative and customize your approach to fit your group of friends/colleagues/family members.

The **formal approach** will include selecting a **Freedom Files Episode** to show to your guests. After watching the episode (about 30 minutes) the guests can break for refreshments and informal reactions to the episode. Then refocus the group using discussion questions provided by the ACLU.

The **informal approach** will allow you to customize your house party. Make sure in planning this approach to include ways to teach your guests about the ACLU. Ensure that the staff will have an opportunity to give a brief description of the ACLU and the topic you choose. If the organization

isn't represented in some way, it's just a party. That being said, make the party fun by catering to your group of friends and what they like.

### **3. Will your party be a fundraiser or a friend-raiser?**

**4. What types of Action Steps would you like to provide for your guests?** The best way to keep people involved and motivated is to give them tangible action steps. There is a sample list of action steps attached.

## **HOW TO HOST A HOUSE PARTY – Step-by-step instructions**

House parties are fairly simple to host, but a little bit of planning is the best way to make sure that your guests have a good time and are receptive to the ACLU's message.

### **#1 – Pick your topic** (see above)

### **#2 – Pick your style** (see above)

### **#3 – Pick a date**

When picking the date and time for your party, it's important to consider holidays and local events.

### **#4 – Pick a time**

You will need to decide what time you would like to hold your party. It doesn't have to be a dinner event. You could host a Sunday Bruch with the ACLU or a small gathering to watch a film in the middle of a weekend afternoon. (Hunker down with some friends, a movie and the ACLU on a rainy Saturday afternoon...)

## **HOUSE PARTY TO-DO LIST**

### **Four Weeks Out**

- Put together your invitation list
- Write your invitation (consult with ACLU staff if you need help)
- Decide your invitation method

### **Two Weeks Out**

- Plan the food and drinks you will serve (if you have decided to host a potluck or BYOB event, you will need to clearly state this in the invitation)
- Remind your invitees about the party
- Set the program with the ACLU staff (decide when food will be served, when the program will start, talk about any supplemental activities, what materials you will need from the ACLU, and if your party is a fundraiser – decide who will make “the ask”, etc.)

### **One Week Out**

- Buy the food and drinks
- Confirm with your guests and remind your invitees one more time
- Prepare and practice your introduction
- Read and highlight information provided by staff so you can help with answering questions

### **One Day Out**

- Arrange your house to accommodate your guests
- If you are showing an episode of the Freedom Files, make sure that your DVD player is working
- Prepare the food and drinks

### **TIPS FOR PUTTING TOGETHER YOUR INVITATION LIST**

Compile a list of friends, neighbors, colleagues, and family members to invite. A good rule of thumb is to invite 3-4 times more people than you expect to attend.

Example: If you would like 30 people to come to your house party, invite 90-120 people.

A great benefit of throwing a house party is the opportunity to reconnect with people you haven't seen for a while!

See next page for more tips

## **TIPS FOR CREATING YOUR HOUSE PARTY INVITATION:**

Your best bet is to use a combination of the following communication methods. You will need to follow-up with your invitees several different times.

Postal Mail formal invitation, simple note card, flyer, etc	Email/Electronic Evite, social networking sites, etc.	Phone calls
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### **Don't forget to include:**

Date, Time, Location

The reason you are hosting the house party

Type of food you will be serving (Potluck, BYOB)

Description of the topic that will be covered or the video you will be showing

Directions to your home (link to map)

Phone number

### **Things to consider when arranging your house for the party:**

- Is there plenty of parking?
- Is it easy to find your home?
- Are there enough chairs?
- Will your guest need places to set their food and drinks?
- Will it be easy of everyone to dispose of their plates and glasses?