

Dear Friend,

Thank you for volunteering to host a house party to support Progressive Maryland. House parties are crucial to our success. They broaden our base of support, educate individuals about our issues, and encourage people to stand up for Maryland's working families.

Your goal as a host is to attract 20-30 people—or even more if you have a large home—to your house or other location to bring together individuals from all walks of life who you think support the goals of Progressive Maryland. Attendees will learn how they can support our election finance reform campaign, our health care initiatives, and other issues impacting working families. At the house party, a PM staffer will brief guests on our current projects and campaigns. We will ask you and your guests to take concrete actions to improve the lives of working families in our state. Guests are asked to financially support Progressive Maryland and our efforts.

We will help you meet your attendance goals by providing advice and technical assistance every step of the way. This packet will help you through all of the steps needed to make your house party a success.

In the kit, please find:

- A. HOSTING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT
- B. WAYS TO RECRUIT: STEPS TO MAKING YOUR PARTY A SUCCESS
- C. SAMPLE HOUSE PARTY AGENDA & THEME IDEAS
- D. HOUSE PARTY PLANNING TIPS
- E. FUNDRAISING GOALS AND GUIDELINES

For questions [about this house party packet](#), please call Kate Planco at 301-495-7004 ext. 17 or email Kate@progressivemaryland.org.

Thanks again for your commitment to Progressive Maryland.

Sincerely,

Rion Dennis
Executive Director

Kate Planco
Deputy Director

P.S. Why not host a house party in the late Spring or Summer? We'll bring our latest Legislator Scorecard and tell you how your lawmakers voted on issues that concern working families.

A. HOSTING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Getting Started

Thank you for taking the first step and agreeing to host a gathering for our organization. This kit includes everything you need to know to host your own event. Please take a moment to read through this packet. Whether your event is a gathering of all your friends for a backyard barbecue, or a cocktail party at your house, every event has the ability to help sustain this organization. At each event, there are several ways that you can help Progressive Maryland.

Deliver Our Message

It is important that we spread the word about Progressive Maryland. Every time we communicate our message, we grow our organization. Someone from the organization can speak about the mission at your party. You can follow by giving your comments on the importance of our current issues and why you support Progressive Maryland in general.

Raise Funds Needed for the Organization

In order to continue winning for Maryland's working families, we must raise enough money to get our message out and educate the public on how their legislators are representing them.

Identify Supporters

In order to be successful, we must talk to as many people as possible. During your event, please ask each participant to pledge their support to improve the lives of working families.

Inspire Others to Get Involved

During your event, many people will be excited about our efforts and want to become involved. Our mission is driven by volunteers such as you. We want to reach out to all communities in Maryland. Be sure to sign interested people up to volunteer and then turn in the volunteer cards after your party. A member of our staff will contact them.

Identify Leaders

By hosting an event, you are taking on an important leadership role in our organization. During your event, please try to identify two other dedicated and energized people who would also be interested in hosting their own event.

Contact the Office

After reviewing your packet, please contact us! You can reach Kate Planco, Development Director, 301-495-7004 ext. 17. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have and get you started on your way to hosting a successful event.

B. WAYS TO RECRUIT: STEPS TO MAKING YOUR PARTY A SUCCESS

Step One: CREATE YOUR INVITATION LIST

How can you make sure your house party will be well-attended? The first step is to create a list of people to invite. Not sure who to invite? Here are some ideas:

- **FAMILY:** Consider including your parents, children, aunts, uncles, and cousins
- **FRIENDS:** And don't forget friends of your spouse/ partner/boyfriend/girlfriend
- **SOCIAL ACQUAINTANCES:** Old friends you see on occasion. Friends from your old job. Or from college/school, your old teachers. Or from the charity/community group where you used to volunteer.
- **NEIGHBORS:** Next door, upstairs, downstairs, the whole block! People who you always run into when you go jogging, or when you walk the dog. Your neighborhood association. Your landlord or tenants. The parents of your children's friends. Frequently, we know a neighbor but do not have their email address. The best way to invite neighbors is to drop by their house.
- **FROM CHURCH OR TEMPLE:** Your pastor, minister, priest, rabbi; Church leaders; Justice Committee members, regular attendees; friends who are not-so-regular; people you always share high holidays with.
- **FROM YOUR LABOR UNION:** Union leaders. Activists. People who stand up to the boss. Your steward. Your business agent. Your co-workers.
- **FROM WORK OR COMMUNITY WORK:** Everyone in the office. Your associates, your boss, your clients. Old partners. Old clients. People who recently left. Colleagues from community work or from charity work.
- **FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS:** Members of the PTA. Members of your political club, community group, or local peace or environmental group.
- **PEOPLE YOU'VE MET WHILE SOCIALIZING:** Members of your bowling league. Volleyball team. Cooking group. Pick-up basketball folks. The bridge club. Your poker buddies. Night classes. Lamaze class. Aerobics class. At the gym. From ski weekends, beach trips, camping trips, vacations. From traveling together. People you sing with. Choir. Jamming. Going caroling with. People you shop with. Garden with.
- **PROFESSIONALS YOU KNOW PERSONALLY:** Your lawyer, dentist, doctor, pharmacist, broker, dry cleaner, hairdresser, masseuse.
- **PULL OUT LISTS YOU'VE MADE IN THE PAST:** The invitation list to your last party; holiday card list; your last reunion program; your rolodex, at work and at home; your personal phone book or cell phone list.
- **WHO DO YOU KNOW:** In town; in your neighborhood or county; teachers, seniors, and retirees; college and high school students; newcomers to the area.
- After all of this, if you still don't have enough people to invite, what do you do? Ask a friend to co-host the party with you – they invite half the people, you invite half the people, and together you'll have a good invitation list.

Step Two: SEND OUT YOUR INVITATIONS

Invitations should be sent out 4 to 6 weeks in advance of your house party. You can send out traditional invitations, postcards, or a green option, evites. Your invitations should correspond with the theme you have chosen and contain certain key points. It should include the date, time, place, directions, our organizations name, and a phrase that emphasizes that this is a fundraiser. Please send a copy of any invite to the office before officially sending them out, so as to ensure that they are in line with fundraising laws and guidelines.

For those not acquainted with evites, they are an internet based invitation that can be emailed out to your whole list. Below are some steps to using this service, followed by some examples.

1. You begin by going to www.evite.com.
2. You click on the invitations tab
3. Choose the design that fits best with your theme; options include: cocktail party, house parties, brunch/lunch, dinner party, happy hour
4. Enter the event details in the fields provided
5. Include a link to our donate page on your evite. The link is http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/o/5206/t/3915/shop/custom.jsp?donate_page_KEY=2193 .
6. At this point you can save a draft, preview the invite , or add contacts
 - a. Contacts can be entered manually or imported from an alternate address book
7. Once you add contacts, you can add an email message that will be sent to all your guests and set your reply style
 - a. The reply style can be left as default or changed to reflect your theme
8. If you are happy with your evite, click send now
 - a. If you are not registered with evite, you will be brought to a registration form

Example Evite:

Host: Joe Smith

Location: 12 Main St. Silver Spring, MD 20910

When: Sunday, May 4, 3:00PM to 5:00PM

Phone: 301-495-7004

Please join Amy and me for a house party in support of Progressive Maryland. As some of you may know, I am a supporter of Progressive Maryland and I am thrilled to share with you how PM fights for working families and creates opportunity for all in our state. A representative from PM will also be here to give a legislative update and fill us all in on their current issues. We will be serving drinks and appetizers, and of course all contributions will be voluntary. So we hope you can join us for a casual night out on our deck. If you have any questions, you can reach me at the office at 301-495-7004.

To Learn More About Progressive Maryland

Click Here: www.progressivemaryland.org

As a political contribution to a 501 (c) (4) organization, your gift to Progressive Maryland, Inc. is not tax-deductible and not subject to any fiscal limitations.

It is important to track all responses you receive. After sending out evites, it is crucial to do some follow up calls for all those who have either not responded or have responded with a maybe the week or two before the event. The following is a sample script:

Hi, this is _____. Can I speak to _____, please?

Great. I'm calling to remind you about the House Party I'm hosting for Progressive Maryland next (day) at my home at (time). Will you be attending?

If yes: Well great, my address is _____. I will see you there!

If no: Sorry to hear that. Other things you could do is to donate to Progressive Maryland to support their efforts, and possibly contact their office about volunteer opportunities. Would you like more information about this?

Thank you for your time, and I'm excited to see you _____.

C. SAMPLE HOUSE PARTY AGENDA & THEME IDEAS

Possible Agenda –

6:00	Guests arrive, sign-in, make a name tag, mingle, eat
7:00	Program starts – Host(s) welcomes guests, opens program Introduces Progressive Maryland Representative
7:05	Legislative Update
7:10	Host or facilitator makes a final pitch for: Progressive Maryland Support Monetary Contributions Getting more involved: calling legislators, hosting a house party, volunteering for the organization, filling out postcards to local lawmakers
7:20	Close out the program
7:20	Guests mingle and begin to depart
8:00	Done

Theme Ideas –

Hosting a house party should be a fun event. Below are some suggestions for hosting an event, but feel free to develop your own. Got a great idea? Let the office know, and we will post it on our website. Get creative. Whether you host a formal black-tie event, or just a gathering of your friends at a neighborhood pizza place; you are making a valuable contribution to the organization.

Create a theme for the party. Your event can be anything from some snacks to a sit-down dinner. Make the party fun! Most importantly, tailor the event with your guests in mind.

Theme ideas – backyard barbeque, holiday party, wine tasting, brunch, coffee hour, a traditional tea, a dessert gathering, or an ice cream social

D. HOUSE PARTY TIPS CHECKLIST

There are plenty of details to keep track of when hosting an event. Here is a checklist to help keep track everything.

4-5 Weeks before your event

- Pick a date: _____
- Set your goals: Attendance _____ New Volunteers _____ Money Raised _____
- Notify the office
- Compile your guest list

4 weeks before

- Decide on a theme: _____
- Review guest list and add names if necessary
- Mail Invitations

2 weeks before

- Decide on decorations
- Decide on food/drinks
- Call your guest list

1 week before

- Pick up materials from office or arrange for materials to be brought with a staff member
 - Materials Needed: Sign-In Sheets, Contribution Envelopes, Name Tags, Sharpies, Pens, Pledge Cards
- Reminder Email

Day of Event

- Set up sign-in table with sign-in sheets , name tags, and some information on the organization
- Set up food
- Greet all the guests
- Introduce speaker
- Give personal pitch
- Enjoy yourself

Day After

- Deliver to office or arrange pickup: Contributions, Signed Post Cards, Pledge Cards, left over materials
- Copy list of guests who attended. Keep one copy for yourself for future events and submit one copy to the office.

Week After

- Send thank you notes to the guests

E. FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

We need your help to raise the funds necessary to sustain the mission of Progressive Maryland. By planning and hosting a house party or other fundraising event, you are providing valuable assistance to Progressive Maryland. Following these guidelines will help to ensure that we don't miss any of the legal requirements.

Campaign Finance Law Requirements:

1. If invitations are produced by a computer, copier, or other machine please include the following disclaimer: "As a political contribution to a 501 (c) (4) organization, your gift to Progressive Maryland, Inc. is not tax-deductible and not subject to any fiscal limitations." Our executive director should sign off on the text of all printed material prior to printing.
2. Contributions should be check or credit card. Cash contributions will be accepted but are not preferred. Business checks are fine. There is no dollar limit on contributions.
3. The name, street address, phone number, and email address of each donor is requested.
4. Please keep track of all in-kind contributions (the cost of invitations, postage, food, beverage, and any other expenses related to hosting the event).
5. Although priceless, the value of donated time is not counted as an in-kind contribution

As coordinator of an event, you are volunteering your time and efforts, but are not considered an agent or representative of the organization. You should not represent yourself as affiliated with or an official of Progressive Maryland. You should not issue press releases or otherwise contact the media)although if the media contacts you, feel free to talk to the press about your own views as long as you make it clear that you are a volunteer and not speaking on behalf of Progressive Maryland). You also agree to bear all costs associated with hosting the event.

If you have any questions, you may contact the office at any time.

We need talented and reliable volunteers to work more closely with in other activities as well.

We would welcome your involvement. Thank you so much for your support!