



Dear Event Host,

Thank you for organizing a house party for Equality Works. Our goal is to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation in matters of employment, housing, education, and public accommodations in the Municipality of Anchorage. Your party will help produce the contributions and new volunteers we need to make Anchorage a safer and more equitable place to live.

Think of your house party as an opportunity to educate your friends, family, and neighbors about the importance of fairness and equality in Anchorage and to raise the funds necessary to ensure the success of Equality Works. We have created the House Party Toolkit to help you achieve your attendance and fundraising goals and to ensure that your party is a success.

Our kit includes:

- Goal-setting considerations
- Step-by-step planning checklist
- A suggested agenda
- Fundraising rules
- A sample invitation letter
- A sign-up sheet (you may want to make additional copies depending on the number of guests expected)
- A donation form (you will need to make additional copies)
- An event summary sheet

Thank you again for taking the time to support Equality Works. Your help will bring Alaska one giant step closer toward providing equal protection for all its citizens.

Sincerely,

Equality Works Coalition Members

**Setting Goals**

You should set specific goals in order to measure the success of your party. Don't be afraid to be ambitious. The higher you set your sights, the more successful you will be at raising funds and awareness for our cause. And remember: the more people who attend your event, the more money you'll likely raise.

*Sample goals:*

- Get at least 15-40 people to attend
- Get at least two people to commit to hosting their own party
- Raise \$500-\$1000 from your guests
- Get everyone in attendance to sign a contact list or pledge to answer a call to action

Feel free to choose a goal or goals that you are most comfortable with. If you think you can raise more than \$1,000 in an evening, go for it! If you think you need to set your sights a little lower, that's okay, too: no contribution is too small to make Equality Works a success.

**HOUSE PARTY PLANNING LOGISTICS**

*4-6 Weeks Before the Event:*

- 1) Choose a DATE: 4-6 weeks is generally enough time to contact guests and organize details. Make sure you notify Equality Works so that we can schedule a representative to attend. (Contact Tiffany McClain: 258-0044 ext.101)
- 2) Choose a TIME: Two-hour time slots tend to work best. Ideal times include 6-8 or 7-9 on a weekday evening. If you prefer a weekend party, afternoons from 2-4 or 3-5 work best.
- 3) Consider a THEME: Your house party doesn't need a theme, but it could make it more fun. Regardless of what you choose, make sure that you provide time enough to talk about the goals of the Equality Works coalition and what people can do to contribute. Possible themes:

- Cocktail party
- Brunch
- Happy Hour
- Potluck
- Concert
- Movie Night
- Art Exhibit

- 4) Organize your GUEST LIST: The more people you invite to your party, the more people that will show up. This is why you always want to invite slightly more people than you expect or want to attend. If you're having difficulty coming up with a substantial list of invitees, ask a friend or friends to co-host the party with you. Who to invite:

- Family....
- Friends....
- Social Acquaintances: classmates, old friends, former professors/teachers, former co-workers....
- Neighbors: from your apartment building or your block, your condo board or tenants association, your landlord, your tenants, your maintenance man, your babysitter, your carpool, the parents of your children's friends....
- Church, Temple, Mosque: Clergy person, minister, priest, rabbi, regular attendees....
- Labor Union: union leaders, activists, your co-workers....

-From work or community work: people who do the same work you do, other people in the office, your business partner, your clients, colleagues from community or charity work....

-Club members: from your block association, your political club, your community group, the PTA, the school board, the community board....

-People you've met while recreating: Members of your bowling league, hiking group, sports team, exercise class, book club, night classes, the gym....

-Professionals you know personally: lawyer, dentist, doctor, pharmacist, broker...

-From lists you've made in the past: invitation list from your last party, holiday card list, your rolodex, your Facebook or Myspace friends, your cell phone or e-mail address book....

-Interesting people you've met, but may not know well, who are active in their communities: Who do you know in the Alaska Native community, African-American community, Latino/a community, Asian-Pacific Islander community, immigrant communities? Who do you know who is involved with local women's groups? The lesbian & gay community? Teachers? The disabled community?

### *3 Weeks Before:*

5) Send INVITATIONS: Because some people are more responsive to e-mail, some to phones, and others to snail mail, it's best that you use a combination of methods to invite people to your house party. Whether you're using snail mail or e-mail it is important that you send out an invitation that gives people an idea of why it is important for them to attend and notifies them in advance that they will be asked to contribute. You can use our sample letter or invitation flyer as a guide, or create your own.

If you're using snail mail, be sure to include an RSVP card and envelope. If you send invitations by e-mail, ask people to RSVP by e-mail. Always include information about making a donation so that people can contribute even if they can't attend.

### *2 Weeks Before:*

6) Make Follow-Up PHONE CALLS: Making phone calls allows you to reach people who either missed your mail or e-mail or simply forgot about the invitation. Making personal contact with the people you invite will increase your attendance. Keep a list of who is coming.

*1 Week Before:*

- 7) Assign a “DOORPERSON” or two: They will help answer the door, take coats, sign people in, and collect donations
- 8) Decide who will introduce the Equality Works representative before s/he speaks.

*Week of the Event:*

- 9) Remind all party helpers of what time they need to arrive.
- 10) Make sure that all food and paper goods have been ordered and bought.

*During the Party*

- 11) Set up a check-in table at the door to sign people in and collect their contact information and donations. Make sure that donation forms are completely filled in.

*After the Party*

- 12) Send thank you letters to your guests. Send all contributions and donation forms within 24 hours of your event to:

Equality Works C/O American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska  
P.O. Box 201844  
Anchorage, AK 99520

Once Equality Works receives contributions, we will send you and your guests a thank you note.

*We appreciate your hard work!*

**Fundraising Rules: What You Need to Know**

-In case Equality Works funds are ever used for political action, we would like to have the name and address of all contributors in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Alaska Public Offices Commission. We would also like the contributor's occupation and employer—especially if the individual has contributed over \$100.00. **Please collect the names, addresses, occupations, & employers of all donors who attend your party.** If someone wants to donate to the cause anonymously, have them contact Tiffany McClain at 258-0044 ext.101 to arrange for their contributions to be used solely for public education or mail their donation in an envelope that is clearly marked **For Education Only**.

## **SUGGESTED AGENDA**

Remember that house parties are most successful when scheduled for a two-hour time slot. Below is a sample agenda, but if you want to be less formal, feel free to stray and be as creative as you want. As long as you remember that the primary goal is to develop our list of supporters, volunteers, and raise funds for Equality Works, we don't mind as much how you structure your agenda.

### *Sample Agenda*

The first hour is dedicated to the arrival of guests and conversation. Make sure that guests sign in as they arrive. Your invitation should have indicated that this is a fundraising event, so don't be shy about asking for donations at the sign-in table.

Your program begins at the start of the second hour. It has three parts:

1. **Introduction** (3-5 minutes): This is when the host usually thanks the guests for coming. Speak personally about what the campaign means to you, why you believe it is important, and why you decided to host the party.
2. Remarks by an Equality Works representative (10 minutes) with time for questions and answers (10-20 minutes).
3. **The Pitch** (5 minutes): Given by the host, a guest, or a campaign representative. This is when guests are asked to get directly involved. Offer specific recommendations about how they can help our cause, especially by making financial contributions. Don't be afraid to ask for a specific dollar amount or to announce your goal, for example, "I'd like this party to raise \$1,000 tonight. Will you join me in donating to reach that goal? There are 20 of us here, so that is just \$50 per person."

After the pitch, guests can go back to mingling or any other entertainment you might have planned. This is the time for volunteers to pass out donation envelopes for those who haven't contributed to the campaign yet.

**Sample Invitation Letter**

Dear [Name],

Do you believe Equality Works?

Do you believe that every Anchorage citizen deserves to be judged solely on the merits of their work? Do you think it's unfair that some people in our community have to deny who they are in order to keep a job or an apartment? Do you believe that every Alaskan should be protected from discrimination regardless of whether they are straight, gay, or transgender?

If so, I am writing to invite you to a house party to learn more about Equality Works, a coalition of organizations and individuals working to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the Municipality of Anchorage. Come and learn about what you can do to support equality in Anchorage!

When:

Where:

Time:

Feel free to bring a friend, and don't forget your checkbook! There's no obligation to contribute, but we hope you'll be inspired enough by the efforts of Equality Works to make a donation to the cause.

Help us secure basic civil rights protections for all Anchorage citizens!

Many thanks,

[your name]



**Please complete this form and fax or mail your donation to:**

Equality Works c/o ACLU of Alaska  
P.O. Box 201844  
Anchorage, AK 99520  
Fax: 907-258-0288

**Yes! I want to make a contribution to protect Anchorage citizens from discrimination and harassment.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check made payable to **ACLU of Alaska**, to support Equality Works.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to donate on my **Master Card** or **Visa**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Cardholder: \_\_\_\_\_

Three-digit number on back of credit card: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address (if different from home):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

State law requires political contributors to provide occupation and employer information:

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Donations to Equality Works could be used for political purposes and, therefore, your donation will not be tax-deductible.**

**If you need to make an anonymous and/or tax-deductible contribution, the opportunity exists for you to make a contribution to the ACLU of Alaska Foundation to be used for public education regarding the civil rights of LGBT Alaskans. Please contact Tiffany McClain at 258-0044 ext. 101 or [tmcclain@akclu.org](mailto:tmcclain@akclu.org) for more information.**

**Event Summary**

Host Name(s):

Date of Event:

Location of Event:

Number of People Invited:

Number of People in Attendance:

Number of Donors:

Total Donations:

Did any guests commit to having a house party themselves?

If yes, who? (please include contact information)

Return this form to:

Equality Works  
P.O. Box 201844  
Anchorage, AK 99520  
Fax: 907-258-0288