

Thank you for your willingness to host a House Party to benefit Give US Your Poor.

*Give US Your Poor: Homelessness & the United States*  
c/o UMass Boston  
100 Morrissey Blvd  
Boston, MA 02125  
Phone: 617-287-5532 - Fax: 617-287-5544  
[www.giveusyourpoor.org](http://www.giveusyourpoor.org)

**GIVE US**  
YOUR POOR  
HOMELESSNESS AND THE UNITED STATES

HOUSE  
PARTY  
CHECKLIST



BRINGING  
IT HOME



Thank you for hosting a House Party to benefit Give Us Your Poor. Your efforts are central to our mission and play a vital role in our fight to end homelessness.

We hope you find these suggestions helpful as you put together your event. For additional guidance, contact Alia Rieker at (617) 650-2217 at any time.

### HOUSE PARTY CHECKLIST

- Please e-mail us at [info@bringingithome.org](mailto:info@bringingithome.org) to let us know that you want to host a house party to benefit Give US Your Poor.
- Set a date for your House Party \_\_\_\_\_
- Consider asking a few close friends and family members to co-host with you and help you coordinate your House Party.
- Start thinking about the theme or feel of your party.  
Some variations to consider as you match your theme to your guests:
  - Brunch or lunch
  - Barbecue
  - Formal evening gathering
  - Cocktails & Hors d’oeuvres
  - Wine tasting with desert
  - Guest Speaker (successful executive or entrepreneur, celebrity, etc.)
  - Networking Night
  - Small raffle and/or silent auction included with evening
  - Contest (chili cook-off with an entry fee as part of the contribution)

### Put together a master “to-do” list.

Write everything you can think of that you will have to do to host your House Party. Then, prioritize your list by when things need to happen for your House Party to be a success and for you to keep your sanity. Here’s a sample of a House Party “to-do” list to guide you as you create your own.

Task	Ideas	Completion Date
Recruit co-hosts to help coordinate the evening and invite guests of their own	Amanda & John?	End of week 1
Design invitation, print and distribute to friends and family	Encourage guests to bring a friend	End of week 2
Plan the menu for cocktails & hors d’oeuvres and see who can help with cooking/serving	Kathy – loves to cook Jim – donate crackers & cheese	End of week 3
Call everyone on the guests list for RSVP	Have Amanda and John call their guests	End of week 4
Borrow chairs from church	Have John arrange	During week 5
Clean house and move furniture for seating, sign-in table, and presentation	Have friends that are interested help with set-up/clean-up	Day before House Party

### ❑ **Create a fundraising goal!**

Set a goal of how much money you would like raise from your House Party. The best way to do this is based on your guests – can your guests afford \$50, \$100 or more? Suggest a contribution amount in your invitation based on your goal and how many people you invite. Do you want to raise \$1000 by asking 20 people to contribute \$50 each? Remember - every dollar makes a difference. You can also share your goal with your guests and let them know that you have contributed \$XX amount to start things off.

### ❑ **Compile a list of potential guests.**

Inviting a variety of people means you can spread the word about your house party more effectively. Remember to ask each person who accepts your invitation to bring along a friend. You'll increase your guest list and potential contributors, and they'll feel more comfortable with a friend joining them.

People to include on your guest list:

- Family, friends, neighbors
- Co-workers and other associates
- People from church, school, or other social groups
- Anyone else you can think of or that your family and friends may want to invite.

### ❑ **Create your House Party invitation.**

You may choose a formal invitation, a postcard, or a letter or e-mail. Think about what kind of invitation will be the most effective with your potential guests, as well as what will match the theme of your event. Also, it's important to be up front with your guests from the beginning that your House Party is a fundraiser for Give US Your Poor.

Don't forget to include the following details:

- The date, time and location of your House Party
- The theme of your House Party (i.e. formal evening, barbecue, etc.)
- The reason you are hosting your House Party
- What to expect at your House Party. For example, will there be a presentation, will you have a door prize, a raffle, or ask each guest to make a contribution when they arrive.
- An RSVP date so you can prepare for the number of guests that will attend your house party. (The typical no-show percentage is 25%.)

### ❑ **Mail your invitations to your guest list.**

(Tip: keep all of your receipts for out-of-pocket expenses, as they are considered deductible as charitable contributions.)

### ❑ **Plan a time for follow-up calls.**

Set aside an afternoon to do follow-up calls and make sure your guests have all the details they need.

### ❑ **Create a House Party webpage at [www.bringingithome.org](http://www.bringingithome.org).**

Click the "Getting Started" link in the box on the left and follow the step-by-step instructions to sign-up and create a Host Page for your House Party. You can use your Host page to promote your event and also invite your guests to contribute on-line on this secure site before or during your House Party. We've also included a contribution form in the House Party Kit for those folks who prefer to give checks. We encourage you to ask guests to contribute online before the party. It's easier for them, and allows you to be a good host.

❑ **Arrange for food and beverage for your House Party.**

The food you serve should be appropriate to the theme of your House Party. Remember, you do not necessarily need to serve a full meal, just enough to keep people from being too hungry during your presentation.

Here are a couple suggestions to help you reduce this expense:

- Call local restaurants to see if they will donate a specialty dish
- Invite some of your family and friends to help you by preparing food
- Contact your local grocery store to see if they will donate some items
- Coordinate your house party with others and split the food expenses
- Challenge your guest to a chili cook-off and use the chili entries as your main dish

❑ **Prepare a rough agenda for your house party to share with your team.**

❑ **Put together some brief remarks to tell your guests why you are hosting this Dinner Party to benefit Give US Your Poor – and why you hope they should give to this worthy cause.**

A Talking Points sheet has been included in the fundraising kit to help you speak about Give US Your Poor.

❑ **Tips for the day before your house party:**

- Prepare or pick up your refreshments
- Decorate according to the theme of your house party – take pictures
- Finalize and practice your remarks for the house party
- Check-in with your team and make sure they know their responsibilities
- Arrange a space for refreshments and materials

❑ **Tips for the day of your house party:**

- Set up your sign-in table with plenty of sign-in sheets
- Make sure all contribution forms are fully completed and signed.
- Thank everyone for coming
- Relax and enjoy your house party – Have FUN!

❑ **After your party:**

- Send thank you notes or e-mails to everyone who attended
- Collect all donations and keep a record of who gave what amount
- Send any off-line contributions to Give US Your Poor. Make sure you include a record with the funds you have raised with the following information:
  - Your name, address, phone number, and e-mail
  - Record of all guests who attended, including: address, telephone number, and e-mail
  - Amount of guest's contribution to Give US Your Poor.

*Please be sure to remind your potential donors that donations to Give US Your Poor are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. They are a charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*