Thank you for your interest in hosting a GLMA house party. Below are some guidelines you may find helpful in the planning and execution of your event. House Party objectives can include:

- Creating/ fostering a social network of LGBT healthcare professionals and other LGBT health equality advocates.
- Recruiting new (or welcoming back former) GLMA Members.
- Cultivating relationships with Major Donors and raising money.
- Building relationships with other LGBT groups and our partners in mission.

Start Planning Early
Invitations should be sent out 3-4 weeks in advance of the event to give your guests enough advance notice. This means that you will need to start planning 4-6 weeks in advance, if not more.

Secure Meeting Space & Time
There are a few options when choosing a location. This could be an individual’s home or a public place like a bar or restaurant.

- Make sure you can use the location for the necessary time.
- Ideally it is handicap accessible and large enough to accommodate the amount of people that are expected.
- It is important to remember that if you choose a public location, select a location where both men and women will feel comfortable.
- Visit the site to anticipate any issues and to familiarize yourself with the location.
- If the event is being held at a public venue, make sure you have a contact for opening doors, or addressing any other issues that may arise before or during the reception.

There are advantages and disadvantages to having an event at a private residence or public location, just determine which will fit your capabilities best.

Find Sponsors or Partners
If you are not able to cover the cost of the event personally, consider finding another person or organization to help pay for expenses. The party could even be co-branded with a local employee resource group, an insurance company or healthcare provider, or another LGBT organization, like HRC. The co-sponsor might also be able to help distribute invitations to their contacts.

Unfortunately, GLMA’s party planning budget is quite limited. We will, however, be glad to provide you with an acknowledgement of your in-kind donation.

Create & Send Invitations
Work with your local contacts to identify potential guests. GLMA staff can forward the content of your invitation to the local contacts already in our database. But one of our hopes is that your party will generate new contacts, members and donors. If you have mailing addresses you may want to send a hard copy, but oftentimes an electronic copy, or even an Evite, is easier to distribute. Ask your guests to RSVP so you know how to plan for snacks and beverages.
RSVPs & Name Tags
If you do not already have your guest’s name, collect it when they RSVP. Your invitation list may be primarily email addresses, but printing a name tag for becky@drbecky.com will not look as professional as a name tag for Rebecca Allison, MD.

You can collect the RSVP’s yourself, or within the Evite, but please advise GLMA staff at least a week in advance, so we can print name tags, and also help identify potential members and donors. You may find it helpful to know which of your guests are former members, or which guests are already major donors. This will allow you to tailor the “ask” to fit the person. People who are already giving might be invited to give a brief testimonial or to find a new donor.

Arrange Food and Beverage
If you are hosting a gathering of a more social nature, and want to minimize cost, consider asking attendees to bring a dish to pass. However, guests will be more willing to join or donate, if they did not have to bring their own dinner. With this in mind, there are a number of options to fit your budget. If you want an upscale event, consider a caterer. Ordering platters from Whole Foods is another option. Your menu could include fruits and vegetables, cheese and crackers, and a desert, or you might prefer to spend more on hor’dourves and a variety of adult beverages. The choice is yours.

Get Volunteers
Designate some one to take photos and greet guest as they arrive. Depending on the size of your party, you may want some help with tending bar, serving food, or cleaning up. Local student groups might be one option to consider.

Plan the Program
During the evening, near the mid point of the reception, plan a brief presentation (15 minutes) to promote the work of GLMA. The host may act as an emcee and introduce other speakers. Speakers should include but are not limited to local board members, local major donors, and local members who have nice things to say about GLMA. The emcee should also recognize special guests present but who will not be speaking. It may be helpful to “plant” someone who knows GLMA and is willing to give a short testimonial from the audience to affirm the points a speaker is making. Don’t let anyone speak for more than 3 minutes. Please don’t make the mistake of forgetting to ask your guests to join or to give. People are often willing, but need to be invited.

If one of your reception goals is to raise money for GLMA, consider asking a potential donor (prior to the reception) to make an offer to match the contributions of others. For example, “We are looking for new major donors, and Hank is willing to donate $1,000, if one other person will match his gift.”

Organize GLMA Promotional Materials
Please send the list of attendees to the GLMA office at least one week prior to the event. Staff will send the printed name tags, with some additional blanks name tags, to you at least 3 days prior to your event. Staff will also send GLMA membership forms and provider directory forms, along with GLMA membership brochures, a few hard copies of the most recent Health Care Equality Index, donation envelopes and a sign in sheet.

Staff will also send you at least one GLMA t-shirt and an LHF water bottle to be given away as door prizes. Depending on the size of your party, we may be able to send more gift items. You may also want to have a display board with a few GLMA posters. Included in this house party kit are pdf copies of Provider Directory marketing materials, and an LHF poster, and the Annual Conference Prospectus. Many of your guests may want to have a provider directory
listing, but some may be more interested in sponsoring the Provider Directory or a new online CME program. If you still have the most recent conference program, some of your guests may enjoy browsing through GLMA’s recent educational offerings.

You can have these posters printed professionally at a local copy shop. Mounting a poster to a foam core board will make it easy to display.

**Set-Up**

Set-up should be completed before any guests arrive. This means arranging the food in an attractive manner, setting up the wine bar, having a sign-in table close to the entrance with markers and ink pens, name tags, the sign-in sheet and GLMA literature, having a place for coats, having a greeter, playing some nice background music, and having a clear place for trash and recycling (if applicable). If the event is at a public venue, be sure to give yourself plenty of time to ensure your reserved space is ready for guests to arrive.

**During the reception**

- Make sure everybody signs in.
- Make sure everybody wears a name tag.
- Make sure the program goes smoothly and nobody speaks for longer than 3 minutes.
- Work the room and encourage people to become members or sign-up for the Provider Directory.
- Make sure everybody has food or drink.
- Keep donations and completed paperwork in a secure location.

**Money Handling Procedures**

All cash and checks received at an event for GLMA should be placed in a sealed envelope with the amount enclosed written on the outside of the envelope and signed by the person who collects the cash. If $1,000 or more is received at an event, two people should be involved in handling the cash. There needs to be a clear accounting of donor names and amount contributed as well as accurate data on all membership and Provider Directory forms. The person who collects the cash is responsible for making sure the checks get back to the GLMA office. It is preferred that cash not be mailed. If cash is collected, the responsible party should take the cash and write a personal check to GLMA.

**After the reception**

All paperwork, checks and extra GLMA literature should be returned to the GLMA office ASAP. If photos were taken, send copies to membership@glma.org for any articles or website stories and for archiving purposes. GLMA staff can arrange return shipping for these items if it is easiest for you.

Also, it is important to debrief with GLMA staff after the reception. Please let staff know of any details about the attendees and how the event went. Are there particular individuals that we should follow up with regarding sponsorship opportunities, or other possibilities for involvement or collaboration?

Tally up your expenses and send a copy of the receipts to the GLMA Office. Staff will send you an acknowledgement of your in-kind donation.

**Contact Event Attendees**

Staff will send welcome letters to new members and receipts to donors. However, the host may also want to write an email or card thanking those who came.