



RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HOST

Whether you are planning to host a function in the privacy of your home, on your property or elsewhere, you are responsible for the premises and guests.

That means that you may be held liable for the actions of your guests. This includes guests who may leave your function intoxicated and cause harm to themselves or others. As a host you are responsible for ensuring that guests consume beverage alcohol in a safe environment. The best way to do that is to ensure your guests are not overserved to the point of intoxication and that all of your guests have a safe ride home.

If you are planning a larger gathering in your home, you may want to consult an insurance agent about third-party liability insurance. An insurance agent can help you better understand your legal risks as a host.

THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

Like other drugs, alcohol produces a wide range of physical and mental effects that vary from individual to individual. Even at low levels, alcohol affects perception, judgment, coordination and decision-making, long before there are obvious signs of impairment.

DO I NEED A PERMIT TO SERVE LIQUOR AT MY PARTY?

You do not need a liquor permit for a private function at your residence. If you're planning on selling alcohol or inviting guests to a location other than your home, you may need a permit. Talk to staff at any SLGA liquor store for more information or visit the 'Permits' page at: www.slga.com.

PLANNING A PARTY?

A Guide To Social Hosting



RESPONSIBLE HOSTING GUIDE

Are you planning a get together with friends and family such as a backyard barbecue, dinner party, birthday or other private function? Will your function include alcohol? As the host, there are many things that you need to do to create a comfortable and safe atmosphere for your guests. Planning and preparing ahead of time will help ensure that your function goes smoothly and prevent the potential for an alcohol related accident.

This guide suggests some hosting tips to ensure your function is a success and provides some ideas that will help protect your guests from the potential harms that can be caused by alcohol.



THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING YOUR FUNCTION

- Before your function begins, have a plan as to how your guests will be going home. Promote the use of designated drivers and have telephone numbers on hand for taxis. A good host knows who the designated drivers will be and ensures a wide selection of non-alcoholic beverages are available.
- Have a plan before the function begins about how you're going to deal with guests who may drink too much. It might be a good idea to ask someone reliable before the function begins to help keep things under control.
- As the host, plan to drink minimally or not at all so you can think clearly, stay in control of your function and look after your guests.
- When the function begins, personally greet your guests as they arrive. While that may seem obvious, it's a good way to prevent unwanted guests and allows you to keep track of how many people are at your function. If your premise becomes overcrowded it could put the health and safety of guests at risk.
- Serve drinks yourself or designate a bartender instead of having an open bar. Guests will typically drink more when they serve themselves. Avoid serving doubles and keep a shot glass near the bottles to prevent overpouring.
- Don't serve alcohol to minors.
- Offer a selection of non-alcoholic beverages. Fruit juices, pop, mocktails and non-alcoholic punches are proven favourites.
- If you do not plan to serve a meal, have plenty of high-protein and carbohydrate foods to offer such as cheese, meats, nuts and breads. High-moisture content foods such as raw vegetables and fruits, served with low-calorie dips, are also good choices. Avoid salty and greasy snacks which will tend to make your guests thirstier.
- Plan activities for your guests. It's a good idea to focus your function on activities other than drinking. So maybe introduce some party games or dancing to keep your guests interested and occupied. Drinking games and activities or sports that may cause physical injuries or accidents should be discouraged.
- If someone is drinking too much, engage them in a conversation, offer them something to eat or provide them with a non-alcoholic drink.
- As the function winds down, stop serving alcohol at least an hour before its conclusion. Make the transition by serving food, desserts, coffee, tea or other non-alcoholic drinks. But remember – coffee cannot overcome the effects of alcohol.
- Before your guests leave, ask them how they plan to get home. Encourage guests to leave their vehicles at your premise, if necessary. If the designated drivers failed to attend or didn't behave responsibly, arrange for guests to get home with other responsible family members, public transportation, taxicabs or even drive them home yourself, provided you have not consumed alcohol.
- If you can't ensure that your guests will get home safely, be prepared for them to stay overnight. A little embarrassment is a small price to pay compared to a drinking and driving tragedy.

MYTHS

SOME COMMON ALCOHOL MYTHS THAT COULD DISRUPT YOUR FUNCTION

MYTH: Eating a big meal before I drink will keep me sober.

FACT: Food in your stomach only delays how fast alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream. A full stomach won't keep you from feeling the effects of alcohol or getting drunk.

MYTH: I get drunker when I drink 'hard' liquor. That's why I stick to beer or wine.

FACT: A drink is a drink is a drink. There is the same amount of alcohol in one standard 355 ml can of beer, one standard 142 ml glass of wine, and one standard 43 ml shot of spirits. Each is considered one serving.

MYTH: Switching between beer, wine and spirits will affect me more than if I stick to one type of alcohol.

FACT: Absolutely not. Your blood alcohol concentration is what counts, not the type of alcohol you drink.

MYTH: As a woman it's okay for me to drink as much as my boyfriend or husband.

FACT: It takes less alcohol for a woman to become intoxicated because women process alcohol differently than men. They reach a higher blood-alcohol level than men do after drinking the same amount, even if they are the same height and weight.

MYTH: Alcohol gives me energy.

FACT: Actually, the opposite is true. Alcohol is a depressant and slows down your ability to think, speak and move. Your perception, coordination and judgment will be affected before you notice any physical signs of impairment.

MYTH: If someone passes out after drinking, it's best to let them sleep it off.

FACT: If a friend or a guest passes out, do not leave the person alone. Roll the person onto his or her side, place the head to the side as well, and keep him or her in this position. If necessary, have someone call 911 for medical assistance and stay with the person until help arrives.

MYTH: A cold shower and a cup of coffee are good ways to sober up.

FACT: They may make you feel clean and awake, but time is the only thing that will sober you up. Coffee is a stimulant – it will keep you awake but it won't make you sober.

SLGA does not condone or encourage the provision of beverage alcohol to minors or to individuals who are intoxicated.

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