

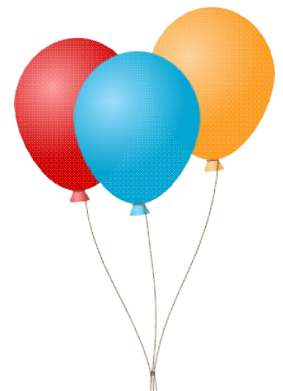
Party to end the death penalty!

Hosting a letter writing party is a great way to help end the death penalty in Connecticut. Grab your friends and loved ones, prepare a few snacks, and set out the stationary! Please contact the Connecticut Network to Abolish the Death Penalty (CNADP) for resources and help planning your party.

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At a Glance: Steps for a Successful Letter Writing Party

- **Planning:** Decide what type of party it will be, who you will invite, what refreshments to serve, and what type of activities you will have at the party.
- **Invitations:** Follow up with phone calls to confirm guests and boost attendance.
- **Preparation:** Plan for food and drinks, make sure all guests have directions to the party, and gather letter writing supplies. CNADP can provide supplies, as well as other helpful materials.
- **Party:** Have fun playing host and inspiring others to action!
- **Follow up:** Thank your guests and send completed letters to CNADP.



Step 1: Planning

1. Select a location. This could be your home, a friend's home, a church social hall, or a community center. Make sure there will be plenty of space for writing, and parking for guests.
2. Choose a date and time. It's best to choose a date at least 3 weeks away so that you have time to get out invitations and prepare.
3. Determine the party activities. Will you show a movie, or have a presentation on the death penalty? CNADP can help by providing resources, DVD suggestions, or even a guest speaker.

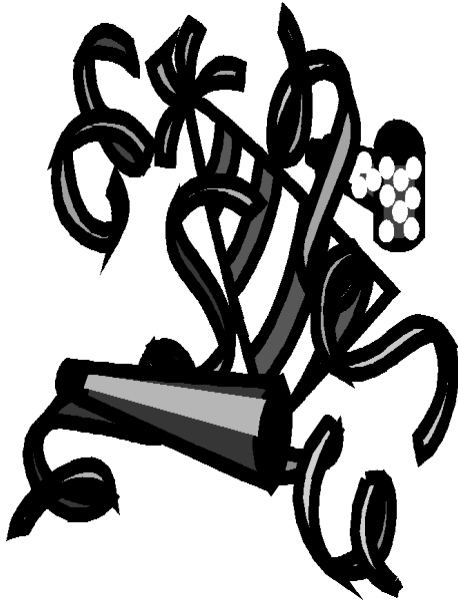


Step 2: Inviting Guests

1. Create a list of friends, neighbors, co-workers, members of your church or synagogue, professional groups, and local peace or justice groups. If you would like to expand your list, CNADP may know of people in your area who would be interested in attending.
2. Send invitations at least 3 weeks in advance. Follow up 2 weeks in advance with those who have not yet sent an RSVP. Making follow up phone calls and emails will help boost attendance.

Step 3: Preparation

1. Plan a menu of food and drinks. It can be as simple as coffee and cookies, or as elaborate as a dinner party or potluck. You do not have to make food too difficult, but it is important to have at least light refreshments for your guests.
2. Set a schedule of activities, leaving plenty of time for letter writing. Here is an example:
 - 5:00 to 5:30 - Mingling and introducing guests; have everyone gathered at 5:30.
 - 5:30 to 5:45 - Share your background and why you are having the party.
 - 5:45 to 6:15 - Watch a movie, have a presentation by a guest speaker, or other activity.
 - 6:15 to 7:00 - Write letters, mingle, enjoy refreshments, and have fun!
3. Gather the necessary supplies for letter writing. CNADP can provide stationary, sample letters, senators' addresses, and more to help your guests.



Step 4: Party!

1. Before guests arrive, set up the refreshments and the letter writing supplies. You could designate a few areas as “letter writing stations” with stationary, pens, and other supplies already set up around tables.
2. Have your guests sign in using the sheet provided in this kit. Please ask guests to provide their email address. This is the best way for CNADP to keep them updated on the abolition campaign and action alerts.
3. Be sure to introduce people who may not know each other.
4. Give everyone something to take with them. CNADP can provide brochures, fact sheets, and other resources.

Step 5: Follow Up

1. After your guests have gone, congratulate yourself on a job well done!
2. Take a few moments to evaluate how your letter writing party went. Do you have any suggestions for improving future letter writing parties? Did anyone at your party express a wish to discuss the issue further? In the next week, give your feedback to CNADP and follow up with guests who wanted more information. Feel free to put them in touch with CNADP staff, who can provide more resources.
3. Collect the completed letters and leftover materials that you no longer need. CNADP will arrange to get them from you. And you don't have to worry about mailing the letters; CNADP staff will stamp the envelopes and send them to each legislator.
4. Send Thank You notes to your guests to let them know that you appreciate their support.

Way to Go!

Letter Writing Party Checklist

Timeline	To Do	Extra Tips
3-4 Weeks Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decide on a date and the basic design of the party ✓ Create a guest list ✓ Send invitations ✓ Contact CNADP for help with planning, materials, and anything else! 	<p>Put together a “party committee”, and grab some friends to help host the party.</p>
2 Weeks Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Give reminder calls to guests who have not yet sent and RSVP ✓ Ask friends to bring food, chairs, etc. if needed 	
1 Week Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gather and print out the necessary supplies, with help from CNADP ✓ If planning to show a video, watch it and pick out the part that you want to show 	<p style="text-align: center;">Get in touch with your committee to make sure everyone is completing their tasks.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Make reminder phone calls to your guests.</p>
The day of the party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Set up letter writing stations and arrange furniture ✓ Set out sign-in sheets, fact sheets and other take-away resources for guests ✓ Prepare refreshments ✓ Have DVD ready to go 	<p style="text-align: center;">Put up a sign on the door, or in the yard/parking lot, to direct people to the right location.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have your committee arrive early to help set up.</p>
Party Time!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Welcome guests, have them sign in, and introduce guests to each other ✓ Mingle and have a good time! ✓ Have a presentation, show a movie, and/or share your experience with gathered guests ✓ Ask guests to take action, and explain the letter writing ✓ Thank guests for coming 	<p>If any of your guests do not know each other, have them wear nametags.</p>

<p>After the party</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Send thank you notes to guests✓ Arrange to return completed handwritten letters and any other supplies to CNADP✓ Take some time to evaluate your party, and give feedback to CNADP	<p>Encourage others to host their own letter writing parties!</p>
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Sample Invitation

Make sure to include the basics:

- The date, time, and address of the party
- Directions and parking instructions, if applicable
- Your phone number and/or the phone number for the party location
- Encourage people to bring friends. Ask for RSVPs so you have an idea how many people are coming.
- If you're having a theme party, decorate your invitations accordingly!

You're Invited to a Letter Writing Party!

When: [Date and Time]

Where: [Location and address]

What: A fun and informative party with food and drinks, a screening and discussion of <movie or "segments of <movie>">, and a chance to stretch our political muscles! The main event will be writing letters to our legislators, urging them to vote for repeal of the death penalty this year.

RSVP: Please call or email me at ###-###-#### or [email address] by [Date]

Spread the Word! Feel free to bring friends, but please let me know how many will be coming.

If you are unable to attend, but would still like to write a letter, I am happy to help. Just let me know!

Parking Directions: [If applicable. This is also a good space to write special notes, such as landmarks if you location is difficult to find, or what guests can bring to share if you are having a potluck]

Sample Thank You

In addition to having fun, you and your guests contributed to something meaningful. Make sure that everyone feels appreciated for their support and their letter. The Thank You can be in the form of a brief phone call, email, or a follow-up note in the mail.

Thank You!

I hope you had fun at our letter writing party. A handwritten letter is one of the most effective ways to reach our legislators. Together, we wrote [number] letters to send to our elected officials, urging them to repeal the death penalty in Connecticut this year! Thanks for your support!

If you have any questions, or want to get more involved, please let me know. Thanks again!

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Phone, email, or other contact info]

