



PARTY HOUSE HANDBOOK

Bel Air–Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council wants to make sure that all residents have the latest information about how to best secure relief from out-of-control parties. Please read this, try our methods, and email us at homeshare@babcbcnc.org to let us know about your experience.

YOU CAN STOP PARTY HOUSES

Shutting down a problem location requires a great deal of persistence as well as assistance from City employees but actions taken generally pay off in the long term. If you are committed to taking care of the situation, you have to face this problem as you would any other project – with organization and persistence, and effective communication with people who can help you.

You also need flexibility and resourcefulness. Rules, practices and personnel may change. Through your efforts, you will learn who your most effective allies are, both in your neighborhood and in the City. You'll need to maintain open lines of communication, and all communication should occur with cordiality and respect, no matter how frustrated you may get. Don't get stuck on the idea that because laws are openly violated, the solutions should come readily. They won't.

Note that this guide is primarily for dealing with a problem AFTER you have already attempted to address it with the property owner or resident. Additionally, one or two parties at a location over the course of a year may not justify use of scarce City resources.

THE PLAYERS

In your quest for peace and quiet, you may enlist the help of many different City employees. **LAPD** responds to party calls and can issue citations for party house ordinance violations. **Neighborhood Prosecutors** are part of the City Attorney's office, and they are tasked with dealing with local problems. They can take legal action on behalf of the City against party house owners. **Los Angeles City Planning** staff is in charge of the home sharing registration system, and they refer violations to the **Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS)** who then can issue fines for violations of the home sharing ordinance. Short term rental permits can also be suspended or revoked. Your **City Council Representative's Field Deputy** for your area can assist with tracking problems and following up with City employees on behalf of residents.

The **GAME PLAN** is to ensure that LAPD is able to provide evidence that Neighborhood Prosecutors can use in addressing the problem. This can take the form of citations for violations of the party house ordinance or the noise ordinance. The Neighborhood Prosecutor will normally take action after two or more violations that result in a citation being issued. This action can take various forms. A nuisance letter may be written to the owner or criminal charges may be filed. If the party house is a short-term rental, efforts may be made that could lead to a suspension of the permit or, if there isn't a valid permit at the location, to get enforcement action taken against the property owner.

Unfortunately, LAPD staffing levels are making party house ordinance citations a rarity, and LAPD's response times to party calls may be long as well. Still, a combination of careful record-keeping and open lines of communication with your Senior Lead Officer, Neighborhood Prosecutor and Field Deputy can make the difference.

Bel Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council territory is served by two police stations. Each station has slightly different operating procedures. Both have "Senior Lead Officers" who are responsible for ongoing issues in their areas. There may be other officers at your station who have special expertise on party house issues.

LAPD's **Hollywood Station** serves the "North of Sunset" area and Laurel Canyon. Our Senior Lead Officer (SLO) there is Ralph Sanchez. You can reach him at 30735@lapd.online. The Neighborhood Prosecutor is Anthony King. You can reach him at anthony.king@lacity.org.

LAPD's **West Los Angeles Station** serves the remainder of the territory - Coldwater Canyon, Benedict Canyon and Bel-Air. Our SLO is James Allen, who you can reach at 39318@lapd.online. Veronica de la Cruz-Robles serves as West LA Neighborhood Prosecutor. Her email address is veronica.delacruz-robles@lacity.org.

City Planning runs the short term rental program. Their 24-hour complaint line (213) 267-7788. Press 2 to properly log your complaint. If you press 1, you will simply be transferred to LAPD. You can communicate with them by email at planning.home-sharing@lacity.org.

If you live within the Bel Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council boundaries and you live in Council District 4, your District Director is Emma Taylor (emma.taylor@lacity.org). If you live in Council District 5, your Field Deputy is Jarrett Thompson (jarrett.thompson@lacity.org).

If there is a neighborhood association or HOA in your area, it may have specific suggestions about how to involve it in enforcement, so it's worthwhile to reach out to it in addition to reading this document.

Others who you may call on as you try to solve the problem:

The Fire Department (LAFD) may be summoned if the party is causing a fire hazard. They can be reached through 911 or the police non-emergency number (877-ASK-LAPD).

Parking enforcement can clear illegally-parked cars. You can reach dispatch at (818) 374-4823 or (213) 485-4184. They may wait for police response to take action if there is an unruly crowd on the street.

THE LAWS

In order to effectively deal with party houses, it's important to understand the laws that are on the books. Several different laws can be applied to party house problems – the party house ordinance, the home sharing ordinance and the noise ordinance.

According to the **party house ordinance**, an unlawful party is a loud or unruly gathering. The conduct that defines such a party can be any of the following: loud noise (audible 150 feet from the property line), obstruction of a street or public right-of-way, including a sidewalk, public intoxication or drinking in public, the service of alcoholic beverages to minors, possession and/or consumption of alcohol by minors, assault, battery, fights, domestic violence or other disturbances of the peace, the sale or service of alcoholic beverages without a required license, vandalism or destruction of property, litter, urinating or defecating in public or trespassing. In order to issue a party house citation a responding officer would need to observe one of these happening and then choose to issue a citation. The party house ordinance is in effect at all hours of day and night.

The noise ordinance regulates noise only. If there is loud noise but no evidence of an actual party, responding officers may be able to cite for a violation of the noise ordinance. The noise ordinance is in effect at all times. This is a misdemeanor charge which may or may not help solve your problem.

The **home sharing ordinance** regulates short term rentals. Short term rentals (rentals of shorter duration than 30 days) require a permit. Permits for short-term rentals can be suspended after two citations or revoked after three. These citations would include citations for parties, citations for failure to put away garbage cans, or any code violations. If a party house is a short term rental with no permit, that's another story altogether.

The home sharing ordinance prohibits use of sound amplifying equipment after 10:00 and evening outdoor congregations of more than 8 people (excluding children).

WHAT TO DO

Here are steps you can and should take if there is a party house in your area. It's best to start this process as soon as the issue becomes apparent.

Before a Party:

*If you see set-up for a party happening at a problem location, please contact your **Senior Lead Officer** and your **Neighborhood Prosecutor**, letting them know what you have seen. Email them even if it's not during normal business hours. This may or may not end up being effective but be sure to take this step.*

Enlist neighbors' help. If only one person calls LAPD about the problem, then the police can assume that only one person is bothered. Enlist neighbors to prepare to call and communicate with one another regularly to coordinate calls for enforcement.

Designate a "lead neighbor" who will be responsible for maintenance of records and communication with public officials.

Keep a running log with your information. This is helpful for demonstrating to responding officers that your problem is ongoing.

During a Party:

- **Figure out where the party is.** Noise travels in the hills so determining the location may require communication with neighbors.
- **Call the police and do so early.** You don't have to wait until late at night to call. Unruly gatherings and noise are prohibited at all hours. This may prove to be effective in addressing the immediate situation. Even when it is not, calling creates a record of the problem that will help you get help. For a problem location, always call. Normally you should call 877-ASK-LAPD but if there are blocked roads, fire, violence, teenage drinking or any other crime happening, you can call or text 911. If you text please be certain to include the address of the problem. Hold times can be long. You don't have to wait until late at night to call.
- **Ask for the responding officer to call you when they are on their way.** This is especially important if the noise you are hearing in your home cannot be heard from the street. It's also important if there is a history at the house that the responding officer may not know about. Getting a call is not guaranteed.
- **Ask the dispatcher for the incident number.** Record the incident number and date. Normally they will just give you the last four digits of the number. This will ensure that you have a record of the call that you can share with others.

During a Party (continued):

- **Meet up with responding officers.** If LAPD responds to the call while the party is still happening, and you are able to meet up with them, get business cards from the responding officers. Ask for a citation to be written. Officers have discretion as to what action is taken but you may be able to exert some influence by sharing the history of the problem. If officers are responding to the location regularly and not citing the violators, you can ask for supervisor response.
- **Call Parking Enforcement.** Do this if there are illegally-parked cars. Response time is unpredictable. Ask for an incident number here too. Please be certain to note if driveways are blocked. This will escalate the problem. If driveways are blocked you should let LAPD know as well. You may want to try to meet up with parking enforcement. You will need to do this if a car needs to be towed. Parking enforcement will not act without LAPD present if the situation is dangerous.
- **Call the Home Sharing Complaint Line.** Do this if the house is a short term rental. There will be no immediate result from the call but it serves as another record of the problem. *Choose option 2 when calling.*
- **Collect video, audio and/or photographic evidence.** This will give the Neighborhood Prosecutor tools to us in making a case against the owner, if that becomes necessary.

In the Morning

- **Check for a notice of violation posted on the home.**
 - **If it's there**, you'll see it. The notice of violation is yellow. Take a picture for your records. Make sure it stays posted for 30 days. If it's torn down or covered up, notify your SLO. It needs to be re-posted. There are additional penalties for taking down the citation.
 - **If there is no notice** and the party was especially bad or the problem is chronic, reach out to your Senior Lead Officer. It may be possible to have a citation written based on footage from the body cameras of the responding officers.
- **If trash is an issue**, document the situation and then file a 311 service request. You can do this using the MyLA311 app, by calling 311 or by using the web interface found at <https://lacity.gov/myla311>. This can lead to a citation which, if there is home sharing involved, can cause the permit to be suspended or revoked. Also document the after-party garbage issues.
- **Update your log** with any additional information from the party – the dates and times of calls, incident numbers, results – and any documentation you might have collected.
- **If you know the owner of the property** and you feel comfortable contacting them, you may want to make sure the owner is aware of the nuisance situation.
- **If your HOA or neighborhood association collects party house information**, alert it about the event.

Now What?

If a problem has occurred several times at a single location, then it's time to reach out to your Senior Lead Officer and your Neighborhood Prosecutor. It's best to do so by email. The subject line should be Party House: address of your particular house. In your email you should reference the incidents and any citations that were issued. You should copy your Council District Office Field Deputy.

If you have had three or more incidents at the location, and there is no discussion of long-term solutions, the lead neighbor should arrange a call or meeting with the SLO and Neighborhood Prosecutor to discuss solutions. If you have trouble getting a meeting, reach out to your Field Deputy. It's probably good to get a number of affected neighbors on the call. Ask in advance for the SLO to look up the number of calls for service at the location.

Bonus Points

Your case can be helped by learning about parties ahead of time from social media and by keeping a file of social media postings from the party.

SHORT TERM RENTAL STRATEGIES

Not all party houses are short term rentals, but if you have a short-term rental party house in your neighborhood, this additional information may serve you well. There can be two consequences for action related to home sharing – fines for non-compliant listings and permit suspension or revocation based on citations.

Listings

Try to find listings for the home. AirBnB and other sites can often be searched by location. You can use InsideAirBnB.com to see a map of Airbnb listings in your area.

A number of boutique sites offer vacation rentals in LA. Google “los angeles luxury vacation rentals” to find active sites.

You may also be able to get more information by talking to guests.

Now you need to make sure what you found is a true short-term listing. Some listings will have a minimum rental period of 30 days or more. These are not short-term rentals covered under the law, and are mostly useless to you in this effort.

For any true short-term listings, check for a permit number. Any listing without a permit number is non-compliant because the law requires listings to display permit numbers.

Communicating with City Planning

If you find a non-compliant listing, email home sharing with the link and the address, noting the absence of a permit number on the listing. You should also mention that it is a nuisance location. The email address is planning.home-sharing@lacity.org. This action should trigger a warning letter or fine. The City can issue fines for up to twice the nightly rent per listing day but normally a warning letter will be issued first, followed by a fine.

If the listing has a permit number, you may wish to inquire with home sharing whether the permit is currently valid and what address it is associated with. Sometimes listings use invalid numbers. These listings are also non-compliant.

You may also wish to start by determining whether the home has a valid permit. A website where you can look this up is coming soon but for now you will need to submit a California Public Records Act Request to beatrice.pacheco@lacity.org. A google search for a permit number may turn up listings.

If you determine that you are dealing with a registered short term rental, you should report all issues to the Department of City Planning home-sharing 24/7 complaint line at (213) 267-7788. Providing the Department of City Planning with photos/video of any parties that have happened can help document the violations and potentially affect the property's homesharing registration.

Home Sharing Suspensions, Revocations and Citations

According to the home sharing ordinance, suspensions of the permit begin after two citations and revocations begin after three. This is a rare event, not yet seen in BABCNC territory, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't try to make it happen if you have a nuisance location with a valid home sharing permit. These citations can be party house citations, code violations or other citations.

If you are dealing with a registered short-term rental, and a party house citation is issued after a party, you may want to ask your SLO whether Planning knows about the citation. Communication is meant to be ongoing but follow-up will help you understand whether that communication is happening.

One other short-term rental nuisance that can be helpful in generating citations is failure to deal properly with trash. If cans are left out when they are not supposed to be, you can report through 311. If you report through the app or on the website, you will get an email notifying you of the resolution of your complaint. Sometimes a second complaint after a citation will result not in a citation but in confiscation of garbage cans.

Building code violations also count towards suspension or revocation.

Working With the Platform:

AirBnB has the most robust policy, not allowing gatherings of more than 16 people at homes listed on their site. This would apply both to short-term rentals and to longer-term rentals. They also have a reporting process.

You can find details on all of that at

www.airbnb.com/help/article/2704/party-and-events-policy.

Other platforms don't have any particular policies that we know of but it can be worthwhile to attempt to reach out to the platform to let them know about the nuisance situation.

FOR HOSTS

Please be considerate to your neighbors!

Give contact information to nearby neighbors so that they can communicate with you if problems arise.

Make sure to check that your homeowners insurance will *actually* cover homesharing and isn't voided by it. Many homeowners policies will not cover homeshare activities because homesharing is considered commercial activity, and as a result, homesharing can actually void your homeowners policy in full, even if an incident happens on a day you're not homesharing the property. Be adequately insured!

Read and get to know all applicable ordinances to fully understand your responsibilities and liabilities as a homeshare/short term rental (STR) Host. Some of them are:

- Every Host must provide and maintain fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and information related to emergency exit routes on the property and must be in compliance with LA fire, life and safety codes.
- Every Host that lists in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone as designated by the LAFD shall include and post notices that smoking is not permitted in any exterior of the property.

- There can be no use of sound amplifying equipment after 10:00pm and no evening outdoor congregations of more than 8 people (excluding children).

Hosts may be responsible for any nuisance violations. Take the time to read through the ordinances below to ensure compliance with the law.

Be aware that if alcohol is served to minors, even unintentionally, and then that minor gets into a car accident, the host and/or property owner may be liable.

And lastly, again, **be considerate of your neighbors!**

Applicable Laws:

Party House Ordinance: http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2012/12-1824-S1_ORD_185451_04-15-2018.pdf

Home Sharing Ordinance:

<https://planning.lacity.org/ordinances/docs/homesharing/adopted/Final%20Ordinance.pdf>

Noise Ordinance:

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/los_angeles/latest/lamc/0-0-0-193774

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

LAPD:

LAPD Non-Emergency#: (877)ASK-LAPD

Emergencies: 911 (call or text; if text include address)

SLO Ralph Sanchez (Hollywood Station): 30735@lapd.online, 213-793-0704

SLO James Allen (West LA Station): 39318@lapd.online, (213) 952-8396

NEIGHBORHOOD PROSECUTORS:

Veronica De La Cruz-Robles (West LA): veronica.delacruz-robles@lacity.org

Anthony King (Hollywood Station): anthony.king@lacity.org

PARKING ENFORCEMENT:

Parking Enforcement: (818) 374-4823 or (213) 485-4184.

COUNCIL OFFICE FIELD:

Council District 4: emma.taylor@lacity.org

Council District 5: jarrett.thompson@lacity.org

HOME SHARING:

Email: Planning.home-sharing@lacity.org

24/7 Complaint Line: (213) 267-7788 OPTION 2