



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
OREGON

# Girls STATE

## 2018

Dear Girls State Chairman,

Thank you for volunteering for this important job within your Unit! Girls State is the ALA's premier program for American youth, and a well-prepared and informed and supported Chairman is essential for its success. This packet contains a variety of things designed to assist you in fulfilling the responsibilities of your position and make your chairmanship experience rewarding (and hopefully easier!).

### **PLEASE IMMEDIATELY DISPOSE OF ALL PREVIOUS YEARS' MATERIALS (EXCEPT BROCHURES AND POSTERS)**

Below are guidelines and suggestions for delegate recruitment, and interview and selection procedure. The documents and information referenced in this letter are available on the [www.alaoregon.org](http://www.alaoregon.org) website.

#### **Delegate Recruitment and Selection**

1. **GOOD NEWS! The ALA Oregon Girls State application is now an online, fillable form.** Units no longer need waste time, money and trees 'snail-mailing' giant packets to schools, which end up in the trash most of the time. Beginning in 2018, Units only need to mail or (preferably) email the ALA Girls State brochure, poster, and *School Information Letter* to high schools in their area. Department headquarters has ordered some of the glossy, new brochures from National this year and you may stop by and pick up a bundle, print your own from the website, or contact Department and ask to have some mailed to you.
2. Materials and resources for Units to use in contacting schools and recruiting Girls State Delegates are under the "*Resources for ALA Oregon Girls State Units*" drop-down tab on the Girls State page of the [www.alaoregon.org](http://www.alaoregon.org) website. **Please make sure to include your Unit name, number and chairman contact info on the materials you submit to schools and girls, because the girls must include their sponsor information on the online application.**
3. Communicate with schools often. *The squeaky wheel gets the oil!* If the school principal or general counselor does not wish to act as the point of contact, try school advisors in the following areas: career, college-prep, government or student government, leadership, and debate. Don't forget alternative high schools and Home School students—they are amazing and valuable participants in the program. Additionally, someone familiar with the Oregon Girls State program is more likely to get students involved, so utilize your 2017 Delegates to do your recruiting for you!

4. A comprehensive interview by the sponsoring Unit (NOT THE SCHOOL) is a necessary part of the selection process and your most valuable tool in selecting appropriate and interested Delegates. The short version of the interview questionnaire can be downloaded from the website. Unit Chairmen are advised to select a committee for this purpose; last year's Delegates can also be a valuable addition to the committee. For smaller units, consider conducting District-wide interviews to maximize manpower.
5. You do not want to schedule an interview with any Delegate who has not remitted her \$100 *Registration Fee*, because you may be selecting a delegate who ends up not paying (and therefore not going) and deprives an alternate of the opportunity to attend.
6. Delegates should be selected on the basis of leadership, scholarship, character and interest in community and government.
7. Once the selection process is complete, you can personalize and mail or email your selected Delegates and Alternates a *Notification Letter* (a form letter can be downloaded from the website and customized to your Unit).

**Fees:**

1. It costs ALA Oregon approximately \$600 per student to house, feed, supervise, and to provide shirts, materials and a safe environment for each delegates' Girls State experience. Each year the cost of the program increases, yet we have maintained the Unit portion of that expense at only \$200.
  - a) The \$200 *Delegate Fee* may be paid by the sponsoring Unit or Post, outside sponsors, the girl or her family, or any combination thereof. If your Unit has more qualified Delegates than you have budgeted to send, please submit the candidates as Alternates; your Girls State Commission is dedicated to finding a sponsor for every qualified young lady who desires to attend this important program. Please remember that there is no such thing as "scholarship money." The grants and donations to Oregon's Girls State program are how we keep Unit fees at \$200.
  - b) The \$100 *Registration Fee* may be paid by the delegate/alternate (or her family), her sponsoring Unit, or a source outside of the ALA, but please keep in mind that, for the past 4 years (since we implemented the refundable \$50 policy) nearly 100% of no-shows, late cancellations, and "leave earlys" are girls who have 'no skin in the game' i.e. they didn't personally pay or solicit the fee from a donor, and they don't care that they've wasted \$300 of your money that could have been applied to an alternate that didn't get to attend.
  - c) Potential sources of financial assistance are corporations, small businesses, service or fraternal organizations (e.g., Kiwanis, Elks, Soroptimists, Lions, Les Schwab, etc.), school groups (e.g., booster club, PTA, student government organizations), governmental and political organizations (e.g., Commission on Children and Families, League of Women Voters, political parties) and individuals (e.g., former GS Citizens or their parents, local elected officials, interested community members, and generous past and current members of the Legion Family). Many people are happy to contribute; they just need to be asked!

- d) Units are advised not to pay the \$50 refundable portion for their delegate because--for accounting administrative reasons--it will not be refunded back to the Unit, even if your delegate completes the program.
  - e) All checks from Delegates/Alternates and outside sponsors should be made payable to: **American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of Oregon and** remitted to the sponsoring Unit or Post who will then include them in their packet sent to Department. (The Department needs to know whom to refund the \$50 to (if applicable)).
2. Please make sure that your Delegate(s) is aware that, if she is not able to attend the session, she must notify you as soon as she knows she will be unable to attend. Remind the Delegates that someone has paid \$200 for them to attend and that money will be lost if an Alternate cannot be found. If you have a Delegate withdraw, please notify the Girls State Commission immediately of the change. Your options in this situation include:
- a) Substitute one of your Alternates for the dropout after confirming that the Alternate will be able to attend.
  - b) If you have no Alternate, you may sponsor a girl from another Unit; the Girls State Commission will have a list of Alternates from throughout the state who need and would appreciate your sponsorship.

### **Obtaining and Submitting Forms:**

1. Documents, resources and materials can be accessed by Units, Students and Schools on the [www.alaoregon.org](http://www.alaoregon.org) website.
2. **The 2018 application is an online fillable form, accessible on the website.**
3. The deadline for submitting your *Delegate and Alternate Payment Forms*, completed *Interview Questionnaires*, and all fees to Department is **April 15, 2018, which is also the deadline for refunds**. As always, we can and will accept girls into the program as late as June 1<sup>st</sup>, **but cannot refund Unit or Registration fees after April 15<sup>th</sup>**.
4. A *Citizen Information Packet* will be available to Delegates, Alternates, Parents and sponsoring Units via the website along with all necessary forms and waivers, and the *Citizen Handbook* that the girls print out and bring with them to Girls State.

### **Miscellaneous Information:**

1. Your Girls State Commission is emailing information directly to Oregon schools that do not have an active unit in their area. If a school has not been contacted by a Unit, or if their the local Unit is unable to work with the school or their students, the Girls State Commission is happy to work directly with potential delegates to assure that all qualified and eligible girls have the opportunity to attend.

2. The *Delegate Orientation* is a very important part of the process to ensure that your Delegates are well prepared for their Girls State experience, and that all 150-200 girls who attend all get the same information. The Commission has a standard orientation outline for use by units/districts, and an online orientation video for girls who miss their area's orientation or who live in outlying areas will be posted on the website. If your unit cannot or prefers not to conduct the *Delegate Orientation* we encourage you to contact the Girls State Commission, who are happy to schedule and conduct the *Delegate Orientation*.

**Please contact the Commission with questions. We are anxious to help, and want to assist you in making your Girls State Chairmanship rewarding and enjoyable!**

**GIRLS STATE COMMISSION**

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(see Department Roster for current contact information)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION TO THE GIRLS STATE PROGRAM...WITHOUT YOU, WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE AMAZING PROGRAM THAT WE DO!!!

***THE WEEK THAT SHAPES A LIFETIME!***