



Dear Girls State Unit 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. Documents and information referenced in this letter are available on the www.alaoregon.org website.

Delegate Recruitment and Selection

1. **GOOD NEWS! The ALA Oregon Girls State application is available on the ALA website.** Potential delegates should print out the form, complete it, and have the school and parents sign where indicated. Please make sure that you fill in the Unit contact information on the forms so that the girls know who is sponsoring them. Units no longer need to waste time, money, and trees 'snail-mailing' giant packets to schools, which end up in the trash most of the time. Units only need to mail or (preferably) email the ALA Girls State brochure, poster, and *School Information Letter* to high schools in their area. National no longer has the "Girls State Brochures" available. They are now combined in the Youth Programs Brochure. The original Girls State brochure may be printed from the ALA Oregon website.
2. Materials and resources for Units to use in contacting schools and recruiting Girls State Delegates are under the "*Resources for ALA Units*" drop-down tab on the Girls State page of the 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 application.**

3. Communicate with schools often. *The squeaky wheel gets the grease!* 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 2019, 2021 & 2022 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 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. If you need assistance with this, please contact Department.
5. Delegates should be selected based on leadership, scholarship, character and interest in community and government.
6. Once the selection processes are complete, you can personalize and mail or email your selected Delegates a *Notification Letter* (a form letter can be downloaded from our website and customized to your Unit).

Fees:

1. It costs ALA Oregon approximately **\$700** 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 expense at only \$400. The sponsoring unit pays \$300 and the student pays \$100. This is primarily due to a Grant received from the William K Blount Family Fund.
 - a) The \$400 *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 contact Department and we can help locate sponsorship. 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 \$300. We are now asking students to pay \$100 as they are more likely to show up if they have to pay.
 - b) Potential sources of financial assistance are corporations, 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!
 - c) All checks from Units/Posts and/or 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.

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 \$300 for them to attend, and that money will be lost if an Alternate cannot be found. Also, if an alternate is not found, they will not be refunded the \$100. If you have a Delegate withdraw, please notify Department immediately of the change. Your options in this situation include:
 - a) If you have no other Applicant, you may sponsor a girl from another Unit or a school that has no Unit attached to them; the Department will have a list of applicants from throughout the state who need and would appreciate your sponsorship.
 - b) Department will make every effort possible to connect girls to Units when their application comes in directly from the applicant.

Obtaining and Submitting Forms:

1. Documents, resources and materials can be accessed by Units, Students and Schools on the www.alaoregon.org website.
2. **The 2026 application is accessible on the ALA website.**
3. The deadline for submitting your *Delegate Payment Forms*, completed *Interview Questionnaires*, and all fees to Department is **May 15, 2026, which is also the deadline for refunds**. As always, we can most likely accommodate late applicants into the program. Please make sure to contact Department with any late applications.
4. A *Citizen Information Packet* will be available to Delegates, Parents and sponsoring units, along with all necessary forms and waivers. Department will also send packets to the delegate when paperwork is received at Department, prior to the session.

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 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 girls who attend all get the same information. The Commission has a standard orientation outline for use by units/districts. 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 or Department 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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THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION TO THE GIRLS
STATE PROGRAM...WITHOUT YOU, WE WOULD NOT HAVE THE AMAZING
PROGRAM THAT WE DO!!!

THE WEEK THAT SHAPES A LIFETIME!