



Applicant Booklet

American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State

June 22-29, 2024

Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri

Please read the enclosed material upon applying to ALA Missouri Girls State.

Website: www.missourigirlsstate.org

Please read this booklet upon completion of your Application. Additional information may be obtained on the website at www.missourigirlsstate.org, where you will find contact phone numbers for any questions not answered on the website.

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Missouri Girls State (MGS) program provides young women who have just finished their junior year in high school the opportunity to come together to study city, county, and state government. ALA MGS enforces the understanding that every person is an integral part of the political process and has a responsibility to make tomorrow a better time, and the world a better place regardless of religious or political beliefs. It provides an opportunity to form a government structure to deal with problems and situations as they arise and to see the political process work effectively.

WHAT IS ALA GIRLS STATE AND WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED?

American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State is an intensive week of government study and Americanism training sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. Americanism is defined as an allegiance to the United States, including our country's traditions and ideals. At ALA MGS, we will focus on educating all participants the ideals of our democratic society while also teaching flag etiquette.

Upon arrival each citizen is assigned to the Nationalist or Federalist political party, neither of which is affiliated with the Democrat or Republican Party. Party spirit provides support to those who choose to run for political office. In addition, all citizens are assigned to a city, and the citizens of each city are housed together and eat together at a campus dining facility. Each city forms a city government with elected officials who carry out responsibilities and duties as assigned. Together, two cities form a county with duties and responsibilities performed by their elected officials.

Finally, the state government is formed. Each political party holds a state convention complete with platform, resolutions, credentials, and regulations committees; candidate speeches; and party spirit. The primary ballot narrows the party candidates to the final general election ballot which elects the Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, and Auditor. Elected state officials may be invited to return the following session to perform duties as assigned.

Also part of the state government is the General Assembly and the Supreme Court. The General Assembly is the legislative branch of state government. Each city elects Representatives and each county elects Senators. The ALA MGS General Assembly travels by chartered bus to Jefferson City for one of its sessions in the actual respective chambers in the Capitol building. It is our intent to provide this opportunity in 2024, but many decisions must be finalized closer to the session date for this to be confirmed. During the week, the General Assembly meets for several sessions to write, debate, and vote on various proposed bills. Members of the Supreme Court are appointed by the governor following a non-partisan selection process, and those citizens appointed to serve on the Supreme Court will preside over appeals from criminal and civil trials held during the week.

There will be other opportunities to participate in ALA Missouri Girls State without running for elected office. Each day includes assemblies with guest speakers, including elected officials, business leaders, and public servants. Citizens may participate in the ALA MGS band which performs before some assemblies and the Friday inauguration of state officials. There are also opportunities to be selected by fellow city citizens to serve as members of the press, either as staffers of the program's broadcast program or the newspaper, and to serve on the Highway Patrol, which provides law enforcement assistance and education to the citizens. The patrol assists as required, serving as the honor guard for the Governor, writing tickets, helping with trials, and performing any duties assigned.

Each citizen will select one of nine (9) classes to attend daily. At this time, classes planned for the 2024 session include Campaign and Political Operations, Commerce, Education, International Affairs, Journalism and Media, Law, Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Legislative, and Local Government and Policy. An exam will be given on Friday. A passing grade on the exam, active participation in the week's activities, compliance of rules and regulations, and attendance for the entire session will enable a citizen to apply for college credit. More information on the college credit will be available prior to the session's start date.

ALA MGS provides the opportunity to experience college living, meet new friends, and expand awareness of other types of Missouri living, either rural or urban. During unstructured time, all citizens have the opportunity to network and share ideas and activities from their own high school. Plus, the ALA MGS Shoppe has a wide variety of souvenirs, clothing, and snacks for attendees to enjoy.

ALA MGS is an eight-day session which can be physically, mentally, and emotionally strenuous. The program is structured as a very intensive learning situation and involves a great deal of walking among campus buildings. If you applied and are not comfortable with this structure of long days, very limited unstructured time, and time away from home, please e-mail us at headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org to withdraw your application.

Any eligible individual interested in attending ALA MGS must submit an application at apply.missourigirlsstate.org. Upon completion of the application, the individual must be nominated by their school designee. This occurs through an electronic portal that all schools receive an individualized weblink for via e-mail. The required paperwork must then be sent in by the local American Legion Auxiliary Unit or high school by April 3, 2024, or before session capacity is reached (whichever occurs first). The ALA MGS Code of Conduct is available on the online application process to acknowledge and is also available in this booklet. The applicant and the applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) must agree to comply with the Code of Conduct.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A citizen must remain at ALA MGS for the ENTIRE session to receive credit for the program. The sponsoring organization, ALA Unit, and school are informed when a student fails to attend ALA MGS or a citizen leaves before the program is completed. The list of citizens who completed the full program is provided to the host institution for part of the dual credit eligibility process and is provided to other colleges and universities for scholarship eligibility.

All accepted citizens must download the complete Program Guide which will be available on or about May 1, 2024, from the ALA MGS website (www.missourigirlsstate.org); the website includes more information and forms to be completed and brought to the ALA MGS session.

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State reserves the right to accept or reject any applicant nominated to attend ALA MGS.

Any citizen of ALA MGS found to be violating ALA MGS Code of Conduct will be subject to immediate dismissal without refund and barred from further participation in the program. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified and required to come pick up their citizen. The American Legion Auxiliary Unit, contributing organization, and school will be notified when a citizen fails to complete the course and a request will be made to the school that ALA MGS be stricken from the citizen's academic record. A citizen who fails to complete the ALA MGS session without just cause, barring illness or death in the family, may be held responsible for reimbursing the sponsorship fee to her sponsor.

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

Harassment and bullying at ALA MGS will not be tolerated. For purposes of this policy, those terms are defined as intimidation or harassment of a citizen or multiple citizens perpetuated by individuals or groups. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: physical actions, including violence, gestures, theft, or damaging property; oral or written taunts, including name-calling, put-downs, extortion, or threats; or threats of retaliation for reporting such acts.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL POLICY

During ALA MGS, first aid and/or medical attention, if required, will be available. Every care will be taken to avoid accidents and prevent illness, but American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State will not accept responsibility for either injuries or sickness should they occur. Please understand this assistance is available to those that are in urgent need and not to be used as a way out of an activity.

The medical form must be properly filled out with the citizen's insurance information (if available). Further information about all medical procedures will be provided in the Program Information Guide available by May 1, 2024.

All medical and dietary restrictions and/or limitations must be provided to ALA MGS by June 1, 2024, by contacting headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org. This allows proper communication between the ALA MGS program and the host institution if accommodations need to be made.

DISABILITY POLICY

All arrangements for an applicant with a physical disability **must** be submitted in writing to the Director prior to the acceptance of the applicant to ALA MGS. If an individual with a physical disability is selected who needs assistance to participate, the sponsoring organization must furnish a full-time female aide of legal age to assist the citizen. All expenses for the aide, including transportation, meals and lodging must be assumed by the sponsoring organization. ALA MGS will not be responsible for any expenses or providing any equipment. Also, the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State must be assured that proper insurance is provided for the citizen with a disability and the aide, and any additional premiums will be assumed by the parent or guardian of the citizen.

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State is an educational exercise in which the majority of the base skills are transmitted to the citizens via verbal and written communications. ALA MGS will make every effort to afford qualified individual applicants an opportunity to participate regardless of impairment, but at no additional cost to the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State.

HEARING IMPAIRED AND/OR VISION IMPAIRED (legally blind)

The following policy will be applied to the Hearing Impaired and/or Vision Impaired:

1. A citizen with a severe hearing and/or visual impairment must be accompanied, so as to provide her safety at all times, by a qualified female aide or signing person (an interpreter) of legal age who is capable of voice communication and/or sign language.
2. The aide or interpreter must accompany the citizen to all program functions, and must adhere to all citizen rules.
3. The personal aide or interpreter will be subject to the same exact fees as a citizen but will not be allowed to participate in the actual program without the expressed prior permission of the ALA MGS Director.
4. The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State, will not be responsible to the personal aide or interpreter in any way, for any remuneration for her efforts on behalf of the hearing impaired and/or vision impaired citizen.

5. If there are varying degrees of vision impairment, or a Seeing Eye dog involved, that may be subject to variation of the above rules, each will be considered on an individual basis by the ALA MGS Director, consulting with the host institution.
6. This policy is in addition to the ALA MGS Disability Policy.

All arrangements for any citizen with a severe visual or hearing impairment must be submitted in writing and approved by the ALA Missouri Girls State Director, before the individual's acceptance as a citizen to the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Missouri, Missouri Girls State program.

PHOTO/IDENTITY RELEASE POLICY

Each citizen and her parent/guardian hereby give consent to ALA Missouri Girls State and its designees the right to film and photograph the citizen and use the citizen's name, pictures, and other reproductions of physical likeness in connection with ALA Missouri Girls State press releases, website, social media pages and all other projects sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary and ALA Missouri Girls State, including any digital photo links, videos or films used to publicize and/or advertise ALA Missouri Girls State and further understand that no compensation for such use will be paid to the citizen and/or the citizen's parent/guardian. The ALA Missouri Girls State program has permission to distribute the following identifying information to Universities and Colleges for scholarship information: name, high school, physical address, and e-mail address from the online application.

ACCEPTANCE TO ALA MGS

Upon applying for the ALA Missouri Girls State program, your completed application is reviewed by a school counselor or designated contact. This individual must nominate you via the specified school portal. Following your nomination, your school or local American Legion Auxiliary Unit (or Legion Post) is required to send in the sponsorship funding and pledge form with your information on it. Nominated applicants can assist with local fundraising efforts to ensure they are sponsored to attend, but may not pay their own admission to the program. Once pledge form and payment are received for the ALA MGS 2024 applicant, the sponsored citizen(s) will be notified of next steps to enroll in attendance for ALA Missouri Girls State including, but not limited to, completing a pre-session informational survey and downloading an app for communication from the ALA MGS program.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information related to the 2024 session of American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State will be released in the Program Guide on the ALA MGS Website (www.missourigirlsstate.org) by May 1, 2024. This packet will contain any amended information from this packet.

In the spring, you will begin receiving regular e-mail communication from headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org. It is important to watch out for these e-mails as you will be responsible for understanding any updates provided in them. It will be announced on our social media when these e-mails have started so you can know to watch for them (even in your junk or spam folder).

Contact Information for ALA Missouri Girls State

E-mail: headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org

Phone: (628) 252-6471

**Please note that all ALA MGS staff members serve on a volunteer basis. E-mail is preferred and a 48 hour response time should be expected.

American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State 2024

Code of Conduct

Expectations of the American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State Citizen *Upon completion of the online application process required by the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Missouri Girls State (MGS) program, I acknowledge following the expectations and rules outlined in the Code of Conduct below:*

1. I acknowledge I am participating in a program focused on democratic process, government, patriotism, and Americanism at my own will. I agree to participate in expected activities during the week but will not be forced into any situation for which I am uncomfortable.
2. I acknowledge I am representing my school and hometown at ALA MGS.
3. I acknowledge I must attend an orientation prior to June 12, 2024, or I forfeit my position at ALA MGS.
4. I acknowledge I will have completed my **junior** year of high school by the session's start date. I also agree that I have at least one semester remaining of my high-school career.
5. While I will not be required to agree or understand all beliefs or views of my fellow ALA MGS citizens, I acknowledge that I will be asked to treat everyone with respect. I acknowledge that I will speak to my ALA MGS city counseling staff, county counselor, or any other staff member of both ALA MGS and MBS programs if I am not comfortable in a situation at ALA MGS.
6. I agree to abide by the following regulations for safety of all participants, counselors, and staff of ALA MGS:
 - a. I will wear my identification badge at all times when I am not in my dorm room. I also will wear shoes at all times when I am not in my dorm room.
 - a. I will not bring, possess, or obtain firearms, fireworks, liquor, drugs, tobacco products (including eCigarettes, vapes, or like products), CBD products, or any other substance declared to be illegal under the Missouri Revised Statutes or the United States Code.
 - b. I will not smoke anywhere on the campus (including dorm restrooms). This includes cigarettes, eCigarettes, vapes, or similar products.
 - c. I will not steal, deface, or destroy ALA MGS property, the property of another participant, or the property of the host University.
 - d. I will not operate any automobile or other form of non-pedestrian transportation while at ALA MGS. If I drive myself to ALA MGS, I agree to surrender my keys to the Missouri State Highway Patrol during the week of ALA MGS.
 - e. I will not participate in any self-harming acts or threaten an act of harm to myself or others while at ALA MGS.
 - f. I will travel on campus in pairs or groups only with permission of an ALA MGS staff member or counselor. I will not attempt to leave the dorm after 10 p.m. for any reason without verbal permission from my counselor or ALA MGS staff member. I understand that ALA MGS has implemented such precautions for my physical safety on campus.
 - g. I agree to abide by all safety precautions in place due to the nature of communicable diseases, viruses, and bacterial infections, and I acknowledge that the purpose of any such safety measures is to ensure the physical safety of all ALA MGS citizens and staff. If I choose not to abide by the regulations put in place, I understand that I may be sent home.
7. I agree to abide by the following regulations regarding respect of all participants, counselors, and staff of ALA MGS:
 - a. I will not prevent any other participant, counselor, or staff member from participating in the program.
 - b. I will not use my cell phone during formal meetings, assemblies, or my selected school of instruction without direct permission from a staff member. I understand my cell phone will be confiscated upon causing disruptions to the educational goals of the planned program activities.
 - c. I will not engage in offensive conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, the following: boisterous or rowdy conduct; using lewd, profane, or obscene language; or possessing obscene pictures or printed materials.
 - d. I will not violate the rules of common courtesy, decency, and respect, in my relationship with another citizen or members of the ALA MGS staff, MBS staff, University staff, or visiting speakers and guests. I will conduct myself in an orderly manner, and at all times, practice good self-discipline.
 - e. I agree I will not participate in any act of bullying or harassment. For purposes of this policy, harassment and bullying are defined as intimidation or harassment of a citizen or multiple citizens perpetuated by

individuals or groups. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: physical actions, including violence, gestures, theft, or damaging property; oral or written taunts, including name-calling, put-downs, extortion, or threats; or threats of retaliation for reporting such acts.

- f. I will follow all rules, ordinances, and statutes of the government of ALA MGS; and shall cooperate with all duly elected or appointed MGS officials.
 - g. I will honor the purpose of the ALA MGS program in all of my actions during the week of ALA MGS. My responsibilities include, but are not limited to: respecting the authority of the ALA MGS counseling staff in pre-session orientations and during the session; and cooperating with requests made by all figures of authority, including the ALA MGS counseling staff and University officials, to benefit the goals of the program and to respect the host institution.
 - h. I will be prompt for scheduled activities and events of the ALA MGS program.
 - i. I will show respect for the ceremonial events and procedures of ALA MGS including being present at all flag raisings and lowerings and standing during the openings of assemblies (this includes the pledge, national anthem, and invocation/inspirational message).
 - j. I will have my binder that contains my manual, schedule, and other ALA MGS material at all times, unless instructed otherwise.
 - k. I will care for my belongings and clean up after myself in the dorm and any other areas of the University campus.
 - l. I agree to abide by the instructions of my counselor or ALA MGS staff member for lights out each evening. This includes being quiet and in my assigned room at this time.
 - m. I understand that ALA MGS and Missouri Boys State are hosted on the same campus during the same week, and I understand that there are planned opportunities for citizens to interact and learn alongside one another. I agree that I will not promote or participate in interactions between programs without explicit permission, direction, and supervision of ALA MGS Staff.
8. The American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State program has an adopted Sexual Harassment Policy. I agree to report any incidences outlined in this policy to a designated staff member or counselor in order for appropriate action steps to be taken.

I understand that if I cannot abide by the expectations set forth in the Code of Conduct, I am subject to dismissal from the ALA MGS program immediately. Any behavioral choices I make that result in my dismissal will be shared with my sponsoring organization and high school. I also may be required to repay the \$500 program fee to my sponsoring individual(s) or organization(s).

Expectations of the Parent/Guardian of the ALA MGS Citizen Upon signing the printed application required by the ALA MGS program, I acknowledge following the expectations and rules outlined in the Code of Conduct below.

1. I agree to support the program goals and ideals of ALA MGS. I will support my citizen's attendance during the week of ALA MGS and encourage her to participate fully in program activities and events.
2. I agree to provide personal transportation for my citizen to and from ALA MGS unless notified that transportation has been confirmed for my citizen.
3. I acknowledge my citizen must attend an ALA MGS orientation prior to June 12, 2024. Failure to complete this requirement will result in her dismissal from the program.
4. I agree to disclose medical needs and restrictions to the ALA MGS program by June 1, 2024.
5. I understand any behavioral action resulting in my citizen's possible dismissal from the program would require me to pick my citizen up from the host site at the ALA MGS Headquarters immediately.
6. I understand that my citizen must be picked up within 1.5 hours of the close of the session. Failure to comply with this regulation will result in my citizen being released to the local Police Department and/or the Missouri State Highway Patrol.
7. I understand that due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, I may not have the opportunity to attend special events of the program in person (*i.e.*, registration, Inaugural ceremony, and closing awards). Any regulations and expectations will be further explained in the orientation that my citizen will attend.

I understand if I cannot abide by the expectations set forth in the Code of Conduct, I am forfeiting my citizen's opportunity to attend ALA MGS.