



Macae Mickens, Director
Laying a Solid Foundation for a Better Tomorrow

October 2025

Dear ALA Unit President and/or Girls State Chairman:

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA), Department of Missouri is excited to hold the 83rd session of ALA Missouri Girls State (ALA MGS) on June 20-June 27, 2026. We look forward to hosting our program at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri for the fifth year. This letter provides information and instructions for selecting your Unit's citizens to attend ALA MGS. Each Unit may send citizens at the fee of \$500 per citizen. It is important to note NOW that ALA MGS is planning to increase the citizen attendance to 800 citizens for the 2026 session. We need your help in increasing sponsorship of citizens to meet this goal!

To assist you with updates towards this participation goal, District Presidents will receive regular communication from MBS and ALA MGS Recruitment Coordinator Ms. Katy Schwartz Drowns with status updates from their district. This will include students that have applied to the program, students that have received school nominations to attend the program, and those that have already received sponsorship payment to attend the program. District Presidents will carry the responsibility to request additional contacts to be added to this communication method (such as Vice Presidents or Girls State Chairman) and then will be responsible for forwarding any updates on to their Unit Presidents.

Each American Legion Auxiliary Unit is not limited in the number of citizens the Unit may sponsor, but please remember that only paid applicants are considered citizens. **It is possible that all spots will be full before the deadline of March 1, 2026, so please know that your applicants may be placed on a waitlist if not sent in before capacity is met.**

For 2026, all interested eligible individuals complete an online application for ALA Missouri Girls State. The high school principal, or designee, must "nominate" each applicant in the online portal for their high school. This "nomination" notes that an applicant is of high academic and leadership standing and serves as a school approval of the candidate (similar to a required signature from a school representative on previous applications). If a high school contact needs a link to their portal, it can be requested by emailing headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org. Only applicants nominated by their school are eligible for sponsorship by ALA Units or their school. If you need information on the nominated students from high schools in your area, please contact headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org. ALA MGS Headquarters can provide you with electronic copies of the online applications so the ALA Unit can proceed with selecting candidates. **The nominated students from the high school(s) are endorsed candidates for the program - all ALA Units still can make their own selections of who to sponsor from the applicant pool.**

Please note: If your ALA Unit has a set process in which they wish to make their selections, we can assist you with that process by knowing the details of how you proceed. For example, ALA Unit 5 in Jefferson City typically interviews interested candidates in each high school they select candidates from and then has them complete the online application. If this is something that you choose to do, email us at headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org and we will ensure our recruitment team members do not interfere with this process.

It is strongly encouraged to not select your candidates prior to January 15th, 2026. The ALA MGS and MBS programs consistently make every effort possible to get information disseminated about our programs, but selecting candidates before that date often leaves out many quality candidates due to not having the information from their school counselor, instructor, or principal yet. January 15th is our early application deadline in which we encourage as many people as possible to apply by.

The required materials are due **March 1, 2026**. We have included the 2026 Unit Girls State Chairman information sheet. You can download the ALA Unit pledge form and applicant booklet on the ALA MGS website at www.missourigirlsstate.org, under the "Sponsorship Information" tab. The pledge form is in a fillable PDF format to assist you. If you are able, please download and complete the form on your computer and print it out rather than handwriting your information on the printed copy. The ALA MGS committee will not mail out copies of any of the paperwork to Units.

The ALA MGS program encourages all sponsoring American Legion Auxiliary Units (or American Legion Family organizations such as TAL Posts, SAL Squadrons, and ALR Chapters) to select alternates upon original submission of paperwork to the ALA Department of Missouri. This allows all alternates to get the same information as citizens to prepare them for the ALA MGS 2025 session. If an accepted applicant does not meet orientation attendance requirements, only alternates who have completed the orientation requirement and have submitted their online application will be eligible for consideration to fill any vacancies.

Important Deadlines to Note for ALA Units/Legion Family Sponsors:

- **January 15, 2026** - Early application deadline for applicants to ALA MGS 2026. This is an advertised push for students to apply early to the program to increase the potential applicant pool for Unit sponsorship in addition to finding community funds where ALA Units or Legion family organizations do not exist.
- **March 1, 2026** – The deadline subject to capacity limitations for sending one (1) copy of the Unit pledge form and the accompanying sponsorship funds to **ALA MGS, Attn: MACAE MICKENS, 1242 Estates Drive, Warrensburg, MO 64093**. Reminder - make additional copies of page two as needed and send in with your sponsorship payment. All information mailed to ALA Department office will delay processing time.
- **May 1, 2026**- A letter will be sent by this date for US Mail to all accepted citizens and alternates with orientation information and required tasks to be completed before attendance at the session. This information will also be sent to all contacts via e-mail.
- **May 20, 2026**– Deadline for a full refund (\$500) for any accepted applicant's cancellation. If a contributing organization pays the fee, it will be the Unit's responsibility to return the money to said organization.
- **June 10, 2026**– Deadline for **all citizens and alternates** to complete the online orientation process. Individuals who have not completed this process by June 10th will be notified of their disqualification for the 2026 session. For any citizen not completing the orientation requirement, Units will have the option to apply the funds to another ALA MGS citizen without current funding, apply the funding toward an alternate, or receive a partial refund. The designated alternate must also have already completed the online orientation.
- **June 10, 2026**– Deadline for a partial refund of \$250 for any accepted applicant's cancellation. If a contributing organization pays the fee, it will be the Unit's responsibility to return the money to said organization. There will be no refund to the Unit after June 10, 2026, or for any citizens leaving at any time during the ALA MGS session. No replacements will be allowed or refunds made after June 10, 2026.

The ALA MGS program always has more qualified applicants than sponsorships. The ALA MGS Committee would happily match your Unit's sponsorship dollars with an applicant or forward applicants to your Unit for selection. The same process is available if the citizen your Unit has chosen to sponsor has to cancel. If your Unit does not select an alternate or your selected alternate is not available to attend ALA MGS, the ALA MGS Committee will match your Unit's sponsorship with a qualified applicant to sponsor their experience at ALA MGS 2026 or will forward applicants to your Unit for selection.

Lastly, please remember that the ALA MGS program remains committed to the expectation that **no** citizen of the program will provide personal financial sponsorship to attend. This includes asking the applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay the sponsorship cost. Further questions regarding this policy may be sent to headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org.

If you have any questions, please contact ALA MGS Headquarters via email below. As all members of the ALA MGS committee and staff are volunteers, please expect a 24-48 response time.

Sincerely,

Macae Mickens, Director

E-mail: headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org

Phone for Inquiries: (628) 252-6471

ALA MGS Committee Members

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Auxiliary Unit Information and Procedures

Note: Only 2026 Pledge Forms will be accepted. Any previous years' paperwork will be returned to the sender.

Step 1: Selection of Citizens and Alternates

- Coordinate with local schools to select citizens to attend ALA MGS. Each ALA Unit is not limited to a maximum number of candidates to sponsor. The sponsoring ALA Unit can also follow its selection process for candidates, but the high school must nominate them via the ALA MGS portal. If you need information about the candidates nominated by the high school, you may request it electronically by emailing headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org. The ALA MGS program will not mail printed copies of this information.
- When you have selected your citizen(s) and alternate(s), ensure that each citizen and alternate have completed their online application on the website www.missourigirlsstate.org and have received a nomination by the high school counselor.
- Distribute Copies of the 2026 Applicant Booklet to each selected ALA MGS Citizen, Alternate, and the individual's parent/guardian.
- Reminder: If you have a set process in which your Unit/Post selects candidates, please email headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org and we will work to not interfere with your process.

Step 2: Prepare the Required Pledge Form

- **American Legion Auxiliary Unit Pledge Form** - Include the name of each citizen/alternate and the designated status (citizen or alternate). Each name included must have applied online and been nominated by the high school via the online ALA MGS portal. In addition to the citizen/alternate name, include contributor information for the citizen's sponsorship.
- If financial donations have not been finalized for the sponsorship of the citizens at the time of mailing in the pledge form, please e-mail it to headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org by May 20, 2026. An appreciation note is sent to each sponsor directly from the citizen to whom the funds are designated. If the contributor wishes not to be acknowledged, please note to remain anonymous.
- **Sponsorship fee of \$500 per citizen** - This should be sent as a check written to ALA MGS.
- Reminder: paperwork sent in without the designated sponsorship fee will not be accepted. It is suggested to send in citizens with payment as they are received rather than waiting until the March 1st deadline to send it all in at once.

Step 3: Copy and Mail the Paperwork Packet

- Mail the ALA Unit Pledge Form and Sponsorship Payment to:

ALA MGS, Attn: MACAE MICKENS, 1242 Estates Drive, Warrensburg, MO 64093

The required paperwork and payment must be postmarked by **March 1, 2026**. Any citizen openings for the 2026 session after this date will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. *Please note that capacity could be met before this date, and late applications will only be accepted if space remains.*

Step 4: Review the Deadlines Below and Make the Necessary Changes Early

- Notify ALA Missouri Girls State of any citizen or alternate cancellations as soon as they occur. This includes upgrading an alternate to a citizen. This can be done via e-mail to headquarters@missourigirlsstate.org.
- May 20, 2026- Deadline for a full refund (\$500) to ALA Units for any citizen cancellation
- June 10, 2026- Deadline for a partial refund (\$250) to ALA Units for any citizen cancellation.

Ideas for Sponsorships

To assist with fees for each citizen, previous schools and American Legion Auxiliary Units have received donations from outside organizations and businesses. This compiled list contains some ideas to assist American Legion Auxiliary Units or schools obtain donations.

40 & 8 Voitures

American Legion Posts

AmVets

Banks

Chamber of Commerce

Credit Unions

Daughters of the American Revolution

Democrat Club

Elected Officials

Elks

Farm Bureau

Fraternal Order of Eagles

Funeral Homes

HS Father's Club

Insurance Companies

Kiwanis Clubs

Knights of Columbus

Law Firms

Lions Club

Local Businesses

Optimist Clubs

Pachyderm Foundation

Parent Teacher Organizations

Regional Groups of the Missouri Bar Association

Republican Club

Rotary International

Small Businesses

Sojourners Club

Sons of the American Legion

Teachers MNEA Foundations

Thrivent Insurance

Toastmasters

Utility Companies

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Veteran Owned Businesses

Women Voters League

Women's Civic Clubs

Women's Professional Organizations

- As a reminder, any entity of the American Legion Family (American Legion Posts, American Legion Auxiliary Units, Sons of the American Legion Squadrons, and American Legion Riders Chapters) may complete the ALA Pledge Form/Packet to sponsor a citizen to ALA MGS 2026.
- Individuals and community members can donate to the sponsorship of a citizen to attend ALA MGS 2026. Family members of an ALA MGS 2026 citizen should not make an individual donation to the sponsorship of a citizen.
- Any business, civic organization, or individual can make a partial donation in any increment. Be sure to encourage partial sponsorships if that is what the contributor is able to do.