



76th AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY PALMETTO GIRLS STATE INFORMATION FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of South Carolina, is pleased to announce the 76th session of **American Legion Auxiliary Palmetto Girls State** (“ALA Palmetto Girls State”), to be held on the campus of Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC, during the week of **June 11-17, 2023**.

As the week approaches, we will continue monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and evaluating the best way to protect the health and safety of our delegates and staff without compromising the integrity of our program. We will consult with state and local health officials before determining safety protocols that will be in place during the week. Please be aware that the program will involve spending time indoors in group settings. Social distancing will not always be possible, for example, in assemblies, in the dining hall, and in dorm buildings. Protocols in place during the week could include masking, prior testing or vaccine proof, etc. Our team is continuing to monitor the situation and we will make and communicate requirements prior to the week. Please ensure that your potential delegates are aware of both the risks of attending an in-person overnight camp and what precautions **MAY** be in place before they commit.

The week is a hands-on application of government and citizenship. The girls attending ALA Palmetto Girls State (also referred to as “delegates” or “citizens”) participate in mock political activities at the municipal, county, and state levels of government by creating the mythical state of “Palmetto.”

“ALA Girls State” is a program developed and sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary, and ALA Girls State programs are held in every state of our nation. ALA Palmetto Girls State is the South Carolina program and is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of South Carolina. Delegates are selected by local American Legion Auxiliary Units from across South Carolina. (Note: The term “Unit” refers to a local chapter of the American Legion Auxiliary.) In order for the local American Legion Auxiliary Unit in your area to select qualified delegate(s) from your high school, members of the Unit may contact your school for a list of recommended delegates. **The American Legion Auxiliary Unit is only seeking recommendations or nominations of eligible and qualified girls from school personnel**, and the American Legion Auxiliary Unit may add and consider additional girls not nominated by school personnel. The Unit will undertake its selection process, which may include an application form, interviews, essays, or other means to meet and evaluate candidates. **The ultimate selection of the girls to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State rests with the American Legion Auxiliary Unit.** Therefore, please do not inform any girl that she has been selected to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State. The American Legion Auxiliary Unit will inform the girls selected as delegates to attend this year’s session of ALA Palmetto Girls State.

Eligibility of delegates is limited to girls who have completed their junior or third year of high school and who will return to high school as seniors in September or January following the ALA Girls State session. Girls who will have graduated from high school before the ALA Girls State session in June 2023 or who will not return to school in the fall following the ALA Girls State session are not eligible to attend. Delegates must either be a citizen or legal inhabitant of the United States. Finally, each girl attending ALA Palmetto Girls State must be sponsored by an American Legion Auxiliary Unit in South Carolina.

As a program sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary, ALA Palmetto Girls State emphasizes many of the tenets of the American Legion Auxiliary. Among these principles observed, discussed, and practiced throughout the week are the concepts of “God and country,” respect for the American flag and South Carolina flag, patriotism, and honoring our United States’ veterans. Delegates should therefore be willing to observe and participate in morning

invocations, daily vesper services (devotional services), patriotic observances (such as singing patriotic songs and moments of honoring our country's veterans), and showing respect for the American and South Carolina flags (such as saluting the American flag during the presentation of colors, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Star Spangled Banner). Please inform potential delegates of the program's inclusion and observance of these principles, practices, and activities at ALA Palmetto Girls State as **ALL in attendance** are expected to participate in these events.

When making recommendations of potential delegates, please consider the following qualifications or characteristics: character, leadership ability, interest in government, maturity, honesty, scholarship, cooperativeness, all around leader, and desire to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State.

Please note that scholarship is but one characteristic to consider. Nominees to ALA Palmetto Girls State should be young women of strong, moral character and should be leaders in their schools and/or communities. When making nominations, please also consider the girl's maturity, participation in extracurricular activities, leadership ability, civic participation, work experience, and interest in government, politics, law, ROTC or other related subject areas. The girls selected to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State must be capable of spending the week with a strict, regimented schedule. If selected to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State, each delegate is expected to be in attendance for the entire session (from opening session on Sunday, June 11, through closing session the morning of Saturday, June 17).

The session is a strenuous week. Good health, emotional stamina, and maturity are important. All delegates are required to follow a strict schedule as well as follow and abide by the rules of the program. Delegates are expected to be of good moral character and to demonstrate honesty, integrity, humanity, and thoughtfulness in all actions, behavior, and speech. The delegates are also required to follow and adhere to a dress code.

We appreciate your assistance in providing a list of eligible, qualified candidates if contacted by the local American Legion Auxiliary Unit. After the final selection of delegates has been made by the American Legion Auxiliary Unit, we hope that your school will announce the selection of the delegates. Selection to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State is an honor and is a once in a lifetime experience.

One goal of ALA Palmetto Girls State is to instill in each delegate a sense of citizenship and an interest in government. Upon returning to their respective high schools and communities, we hope that our delegates will share their experiences and lessons from ALA Palmetto Girls State.

Questions should be directed to the personnel of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit assigned to sponsor delegates from your high school. Each unit should be in contact with you on or before the week of February 13, 2023. Please begin sharing the information with potential delegates and having them complete the application form included. The units will need this information in order to work with the school on the selection process. All applications will be given to the Auxiliary unit to determine interviews and selections.

Please note: ALA Palmetto Girls State does not discriminate on the basis of religion, creed, physical handicap, or national origin. However, ALA Palmetto Girls State is a private program sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary and is specifically exempt from Title IX. As a private program, ALA Palmetto Girls State has its own unique purpose and own rules. Each delegate selected to attend must understand that she is expected to adhere to a high code of conduct, to participate in all phases of the program (including times of spiritual observance and patriotic observances as well as showing respect to the American and South Carolina flags), and to abide by the rules of the program (including a dress code). Finally, please be advised that public funds cannot be accepted for the cost of a delegate to attend the program.

School Selection Process Timeline:

February 6, 2023 – Information and application emailed to schools

- Schools begin announcing information to Junior girls. Applications should be made available. ALL interested girls should fill out and return an application to the appropriate school personnel. If copying applications is an issue for your school, please email director@palmettogirlsstate.net and applications will be mailed to your school.

February 13 – 17, 2023 – Auxiliary Units will be getting in touch with schools about the selection process

February 20 – February 24, 2023 – Application forms should be filled out and returned to school personnel by February 24, 2023.

March 6 or before – Potential Delegate applications are to be submitted to the appropriate American Legion Auxiliary contact. This can be done virtually or in person, depending on what is worked out with the unit.

ALL applications should be provided to the units. Schools DO NOT need to vote or make recommendations. All decisions will be made by the Auxiliary. If there are concerns about a delegate application in regards to discipline, etc., please discuss that with the sponsoring Auxiliary unit.

****Auxiliary units DO NOT need grade reports, transcripts, etc.****

March 6 – March 20, 2023 – Auxiliary Units will conduct delegate interviews and make selections.

March 21 – March 31, 2023 - The unit will enter delegates selected to attend ALA PGS into the online registration system. Please remind selected delegates to check their email/junk mail/spam for the email to register. Delegates and parents will have portions that need to be completed.

April 1, 2023 – All units and delegates must have completed online registration. Payment and unit information sheet must be received by ALA Palmetto Girls State by this date.

****All units and delegates must have completed registration by April 1, 2023. ****

June 11-17, 2023 –American Legion Auxiliary Palmetto Girls State on the campus of Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC (Registration will be on the morning of Sunday, June 11, 2023.).