



74th AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY PALMETTO GIRLS STATE INFORMATION FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of South Carolina, is pleased to announce the 74th session of **American Legion Auxiliary Palmetto Girls State** ("ALA Palmetto Girls State"), to be held virtually during the week of **June 13-18, 2021**.

We have made the decision to hold a virtual program given the current situation with COVID-19. We have collaborated with our host college, state and local health officials, and DHEC to make this decision. With many school districts still in session during this time we feel this will give all of our schools/districts/delegates the opportunity to participate. **We will hold sessions nightly from 6-9 pm.** Delegates will need access to technology and internet in order to participate. If this is an issue for one of your delegates, please try to help them on the school level. We want to include ALL students. Please talk to your sponsoring unit if there is an issue.

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 2021 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, desire to attend 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 area. The girls selected to attend ALA Palmetto Girls State must be capable of a virtual setting 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 13 through closing session the evening of Friday, June 18).

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 which is assigned to sponsor delegates from your high school. Each unit should be in contact with you on or before the week of March 1-5, 2021. 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 22, 2021 – 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 your school is currently virtual this can be done through email but units will need access to the applications/answers.) If copying applications is an issue for your school, please email director@palmettogirlsstate.net and applications will be mailed to your school.

March 1- 5, 2021 – Auxiliary Units will be getting in touch with schools about the selection process

March 8 -12, 2021 – Applications forms should be filled out returned to school personnel by March 12, 2021.

March 17 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 22 – April 2, 2021 – Delegate interviews and selections will take place.

April 5-9, 2021 - Selected delegates will be entered into the registration system by the sponsoring unit once they are selected. 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 12-15, 2021 – Please follow-up with your selected delegates to ensure they have received and completed the registration process. If they have not received any information, please contact your contact with the American Legion Auxiliary unit.

****All delegates must complete registration by April 15, 2021. ****

June 13-18, 2021 – Virtual American Legion Auxiliary Palmetto Girls State (6-9 pm nightly)

Delegates will receive t-shirts and information prior to the week. They will also have the opportunity to buy additional items (graduation cords, sweatshirts, shirts, etc.) from the store prior to the week. Following competition of the program, delegates will be sent certificates and charms.