

Iowa American Legion Auxiliary Girls State

Iowa American Legion Auxiliary Girls State. How do you explain Iowa Girls State to a potential candidate? Girls State is a program sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. It is a "learning by doing" program, which takes the girls through the entire political process. We cover city government, which is non-partisan in Iowa. Each girl is assigned to a floor, which is also her city for the week. Early in the week, the girls elect a mayor and city council, appoint city officials, transact business by passing city ordinances and work together on a city project. Later in the week, the girls are divided into political parties-the Nationalists and the Federalists. They work together to get their parties candidates elected and create party loyalty. By the end of the week, they have elected county officials and state officials that include a House of Representatives, a Senate, and a Governor and Lt. Governor team along with other state officials. The Senate and House actually write, debate, and pass bills, which are sent on to their own Governor for signature or veto. The Governor makes many State appointments to various boards and commissions.

What else do the girls do at Girls State? During the week, the American Legion Auxiliary Department President informs the girls about the various programs that the Auxiliary sponsors. The residing Girls State Governor opens and closes each day's session. We have speakers throughout the week that talk about a variety of subjects. Some past subjects have been about car safety, the importance of a college education, how Girls State motivated them in their careers, and other topics. In addition, we teach the girls about Flag Etiquette and have a Flag Disposal Ceremony. There is additional time for the girls to get to know each other and to bond with the other girls on their floors. All girls are members of the Girls State Chorus that performs on the final evening of Girls State. Inauguration includes the closing of the final joint session of the House and Senate, the installation of the Governor, Lt Governor and the other top five officials, the retiring Governors farewell address, and many scholarships that are presented along with the announcement of the two girls who are selected to attend Girls Nation representing Iowa.

Every Unit is given the opportunity to send girls to Iowa Girls State. If space and funds are available, a Unit has the opportunity to send more than one girl. A Unit may ask other organizations in their community to contribute to the cost of sending a girl and co-sponsor a girl with that organization. However, if another organization co-sponsors a girl, they must contribute the money to the Auxiliary Unit and the Auxiliary Unit must write the check for the entire registration fee and send it to the Department Office. To secure your spot(s) at Iowa Girls State, you will need to fill out the enclosed Reservation Form, marking either one girl or two girls and send the form along with your registration fee of **\$340.00 for each girl by December 1, 2007.** December 1st is a firm deadline but to make sure that you have a spot for your Girls Staters, you may send your reservation and fees now. Reservations are logged on a first come basis. If you would like to send more than two girls, mark on your form that you would like additional girls but do not send the money until the Department Office contacts you after March 31, 2008. Additional girl requests are also logged according to the date received. To make sure

that your reservation is recorded, **check the March issue of the Communique** to see that your Unit is listed.

What kind of girls are we looking for to attend Iowa Girls State? There are many qualifications that would make any girl an excellent candidate to attend Iowa Girls State. First of all, the girl must want to come to Iowa Girls State and have the time available to attend the entire session. No girl is allowed to come late or leave early at Iowa Girls State except in the case of an extreme family emergency. Secondly, a girl should be a leader in their community and school. They must have just completed their Junior year of High School by the time they go to Girls State and they must be 16 by September 15th of the calendar year prior to attending Girls State. They must agree to salute the American Flag and be an American citizen. We encourage Units to select girls who demonstrate qualities of honesty, leadership, citizenship, rank in the upper half of their class, and they should understand that the Girls State program is about government and politics.

Attached is a reservation form for Girls State 2008. This form needs to be in the Department Office by **December 1, 2007 along with your reservation fee (note amount and date change from last year)**. Shortly after January 1st, you should receive your packet of information for selection of your girl and also an information packet to pass along to your selected girl. Please remember to check the March Communique to make sure your Unit is listed, if you did not get your packet. If you did not get your packet, call the Department Office immediately. Remember, **the only communication that a girl receives regarding Girls State is a packet that is sent to the Unit in January to pass along to the girl.** This packet contains all the information that a girl will need to attend Girls State. In addition, all forms that the girls need to fill out are in this packet. Please mention to your girl that the application/waiver form is in the packet and it has a firm deadline of March 31st.

If you have any questions about the above information, please contact the Department Office for clearer directions. If they need to refer you to a board member, they will pass that message along and the board member will contact you.

Now that I've explained the Girls State program to you, it's your turn to tell all eligible girls in your area about it. Many girls have heard of the program but don't know what it is about. This program will only continue to grow if we let people know how great it is. The American Legion Auxiliary should be proud that they support this program and from the bottom of my heart I like to say thank you for your support of this program and believe me when I tell you that it changes girls lives.

Iowa Girls State Board

Wendy Riggle
1625 53rd St
La Porte City, IA 50651

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Urbandale, IA 50322

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3224 180-th St..
Lawler, IA 52154

Marlene Valentine, Dept. Sec-Treas.
720 Lyon
Des Moines, IA 50309

Plan of Work 2007-2008

Reservation Form for Iowa Girls State 2008

Reservation Deadline: **December 1, 2007**
This is a change from last year.

Registration Fee: **\$340.00 per Girl**

Number of Girls Allowed per Unit: One or Two*
*additional girls may be sent from a Unit if space allows.

Who may sponsor a Girl: Auxiliary Unit **MUST** sponsor the girl however donations may be received from other organizations to contribute to the cost of sending a girl.

Refunds: No refunds of the registration fee will be made to Units after June 1st unless a vacancy can be filled.

Send To: American Legion Auxiliary
Attn: Girls State
720 Lyon
Des Moines, IA 50309

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Please Fill in Blanks or Check Blanks:
This form is due in the Department Office by December 1, 2007.

Reservation for Unit # _____ of _____ (city), District # _____
_____ One girl (**\$340.00**) or _____ Two girls (**\$680.00**)

The registration fee of **\$340.00** for each girl is enclosed. Check # _____

Unit Contact Person _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

_____ Please contact us after March 31st if there are spaces left for additional girls.