



This packet of information will assist you in preparing for your experience at the ALA Cornhusker Girls State. Please READ all details and BRING this packet with you when you come on May 31, 2026.

ARRIVAL

LOCATION

- 2026 Cornhusker Girls State will be housed at Sandoz Residence Hall, 820 North 17th Street, University of Nebraska-Lincoln city campus. The Abel-Sandoz residence hall complex is located at 17th and Vine Streets. Visit <http://maps.unl.edu/> for a campus map.
- Girls State activities will be held in the Abel-Sandoz complex, Carolyn Pope Edwards Hall, and other campus facilities or locations as assigned.

PARKING FOR ARRIVAL / DROP OFF

There are a limited number of parking spaces for unloading on the east side of Sandoz Hall. Girls State staff will be available to direct you to parking. Please be aware that there is always a possibility of construction on the UNL campus that you may have to reroute, so please plan your arrival time accordingly.

PARKING FOR THE WEEK - CITIZEN

- Any citizen driving to Girls State must park in the designated UNL parking lot. The process for parking on campus will be provided when you arrive. Counselors will verify that your car is parked in the appropriate area. You will not have access to your car during the week. Counselors will secure keys. Unregistered cars will be towed at your expense.
- Parking lots/garages are patrolled by campus security, however, parking on campus is at your own risk. **Girls State is not responsible for any damage to your car.**

REGISTRATION

- Registration will be held in the lobby of Sandoz Hall from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 31, 2026. No late registrations will be allowed as activities will begin immediately.
- To expedite the registration process, know your floor number. Floor rosters will be posted by May 24 on the website – www.cornhuskergirlsstate.com. They will also be available upon your arrival at Girls State.
- A \$25 activity fee will be collected at registration unless it has been paid previously.
- You will be issued a voter registration card. Registration will then continue on your floor where you will receive your Girls State handbook, identification badge, and complimentary t-shirt.

SANDOZ RESIDENCE HALL

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

- ♦ You will share a room with one other citizen assigned randomly. Please respect your roommate and her property. Exercise common sense regarding noise and lights. Keep your voice low when it might disturb others. Keep your room and your floor neat and clean. Dispose of trash daily.
- ♦ ***Girls State citizens are not allowed to leave their designated floor between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. for any reason, including to campaign. It is important that your counselors know where you are at all times. In the event of weather or other emergency, counselors must account for all citizens.***

MEALS

Please eat lunch on Sunday, May 31, before arriving at Girls State. The Sunday evening meal will be a pizza party on each floor as part of the get-acquainted town meeting. All other meals are served at the Abel-Sandoz Cafeteria. Citizens are expected to eat three meals a day. The last meal on Saturday, June 6 at noon is an optional meal for citizens and a meal count will be required by Wednesday., June 3.

- ✓ **If you have food allergies please note this in the medical information.**

ILLNESS OR INJURY

Licensed medical staff will be on duty 24 hours a day to assist citizens with any medical situations. **Please read the letter from the Girls State medical staff enclosed with this packet.** Girls State is strenuous, both physically and emotionally. Report any illness or medical problem to your counselor or other Girls State Staff immediately. Facilities at UNL Student Health Center, as well as Lincoln medical centers, will be available for emergencies. *Citizens are responsible for any fees associated with the use of these facilities.* If you are injured before your arrival and unable to walk around campus, please bring a doctor's note with you. If at all possible, please notify Girls State prior to arrival.

MEDICAL STAFF NOTE: *Because of the amount of walking and number of blisters treated by the nurses each year, comfortable walking shoes may not mean flip-flops. They suggest tennis shoes for walking with extra shoes in a light bag/light backpack to change into upon arrival at your destination.*

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

With digital aspects incorporated into Cornhusker Girls State, you may have your cell phone with you. However, use of cell phones is limited to break times. Cell phones must be turned off during assemblies, meetings, and other activities UNLESS otherwise allowed. Please be respectful of those volunteering their time, including speakers and Girls State staff.

When posting on social media, during and after about Cornhusker Girls State, keep in mind these things:

- People can see what you post. Keep your language hashtags and other tags appropriate.
- You represent your school and the American Legion Auxiliary. Make those who sent you proud.
- Do not post anything you would not want your grandparents to see.
- No uncomplimentary comments or photos about other citizens will be tolerated.

Media Staff will give you the official hashtags for Cornhusker Girls State 2026 during the opening session. Please do not use other hashtags when posting about Girls State.

Girls State is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen cell phones.

VISITORS

Girls State citizens have organized activities all day and evening, with very little free time. Visitors are discouraged for this reason. If a family member needs to visit you, please contact Girls State in advance to arrange a time to meet. No visitors are allowed above the first floor.

DRESS CODE

PROPER ATTIRE

Girls State is a leadership program. The dress code is designed to maintain the standing and integrity of the program and serves as a reminder to citizens of their role as leaders.

1. Extremely short skirts are NOT acceptable.
2. Crop tops are NOT acceptable. Your mid-section must be covered.
3. Strapless or single strap tops or dresses are NOT permissible, unless worn at all times with a jacket or sweater.
4. No logo T-shirts.
Exception No. 1 is the Girls State T-shirt.
Exception No. 2 is a school logo shirt for the National Guard tour.
Exception No. 3 is Friday afternoon for Wear R.E.D. (Remember Everyone Deported) Day.
5. Girls State T-shirts ARE allowed for wear during sessions with appropriate bottoms (skirts, dress pants, dress capris). Professional length shorts (approximately a nine-inch inseam) are an appropriate bottom.
6. NO blue jeans and NO gym/athletic shorts are allowed during session.
7. NO rompers. No exceptions.
8. Bring a red shirt for R.E.D. Friday afternoon session and picture. Red Girls State T-shirts, red school logo shirts, and red University of Nebraska shirts are acceptable with appropriate bottoms.
9. Blue jeans, shorts, sweats and any T-shirt may be worn AFTER sessions on your floor.
10. Leggings are allowed but may only be worn under a knee length dress or skirt. T-shirts are not an appropriate pairing for leggings.

DRESS CODE CRITERIA

Business Attire: Dresses, suits, coordinated attire.

Business Casual Attire: Dresses, skirts, blouses, long tops, dress pants, dress capris. Dresses and skirts must be of appropriate length (approximately knee length). No strapless or single strap dresses or tops, unless worn at all times with a jacket or sweater.

Appropriate Top: Blouses, long tops, Girls State T-shirts. No strapless or single strap tops unless worn with a jacket or sweater.

Appropriate Bottoms: Dress pants or dress capris. Nice khakis are allowed. Skirts of an appropriate length (approximately knee length). Professional length shorts (approximately a nine-inch inseam). No blue jeans except for on your floor. Refer to rule 10 above for leggings.

Jeans: No tears, holes, or rips please.

Comfortable Shoes: Shoes that are comfortable for walking and walking and walking. We can't stress this enough. Flip flops may be comfortable to you, but after considerable walking they do cause blisters. If this happens on the first or second day, the rest of the week will be spent trying to cover and heal them. We suggest bringing tennis shoes with a different pair of shoes carried in a light bag/light backpack to change into at your destination. Please bring one pair of **black shoes** for the official Girls State picture.

Sports Activity Night: Assigned Girls State shirt, leggings, joggers, or athletic shorts, tennis shoes. No biker shorts.

Please adhere to the dress code. If you are dressed inappropriately, your counselor(s) will ask you to change. Here is a jingle to help you decide whether to bring an outfit: "Raise your arms, touch your toes, if anything shows, change your clothes."

DAILY SCHEDULE OF SUGGESTED ATTIRE

SUNDAY

- Arrival and Registration – casual. Citizens will be given time to change for afternoon activities.
- Afternoon Dorm Activities – appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms.
- Opening Assembly – business casual, appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms.

MONDAY

- State Capitol Tour – *assigned* Girls State T-shirt, appropriate bottoms, comfortable walking shoes.
- Girls State Session – business casual, any Girls State T-shirt, appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms.

TUESDAY

- Girls State Session – business casual, any Girls State T-shirt, appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms.
- Group Photo – *assigned* Girls State T-shirt, *preferably* black skirts, black dress pants, or black dress capris, and black shoes.
- All Star Sporting Event

WEDNESDAY

- Girls State Session – business casual, any Girls State T-shirt, appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms.

THURSDAY

- Girls State Session – business casual, appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms.
- Capitol and Office Visits – business, business casual.
- National Guard Tour – professional length shorts, jeans (no tears, holes, or rips) and logo shirt (Girls State or school only), or any other appropriate top.

FRIDAY

- Court, Legislative, and Girls State Session – **Morning:** business casual, appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms. **Afternoon:** any appropriate red shirt. It can be a red Girls State T-shirt, red school logo shirt, or red University of Nebraska shirt with appropriate bottoms.

SATURDAY

- Closing Session – suits, dresses, coordinated attire.

GIRLS STATE STORE

STORE

The Girls State Store is open Sunday – Friday. Items available include, but not limited to:

- Short sleeve t-shirts
- Crew neck sweatshirts
- Puffy Sling Backpacks
- Trio 3-in-1 Charging Cable
- String back packs
- Water bottles
- Sunglasses

Stop in to see what our friendly staff has in store for daily surprises! The cost of merchandise ranges from \$3 to \$25. Cash is the preferred method of payment. Personal checks are also accepted. **Credit/Debit cards are NOT accepted, but there is an ATM located in the Abel-Sandoz lobby.**

MAIL SERVICE

The Girls State Store serves as the Girls State Post Office. They receive outgoing mail, incoming mail, package deliveries, and phone messages. It takes a few days for mail to arrive and go through UNL delivery before arriving at the Girls State Store. Family and friends should send mail no later than Tuesday. The address is:

YOUR NAME – *i.e./Jane Doe*
Cornhusker Girls State
UNL Sandoz Residence Hall
820 North 17th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508

YOU WILL NEED CASH FOR

- \$25 (cash or check) activity fee (unless previously paid) will be collected during your arrival on Sunday afternoon.
- Cash (or checks) for purchases you choose to make in the Girls State Store.
- Cash or Credit/Debit cards are accepted in the UNL convenience store, located in the Abel-Sandoz Commons area, for snacks or drinks.

DO NOT BRING VALUABLES TO GIRLS STATE – Such as jewelry and computers. There is no internet access for citizens. Girls State is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen items.

PURPOSE AND PREPARATION

PURPOSE

The American Legion Auxiliary Girl State program teaches young women responsible citizenship grounded in ethics, the principles of our nation's founders, and respect for God and Country. It is an educational program of government instruction and civic leadership.

Girls State is a learning experience for everyone regardless of your prior background in government and politics. There is room for a wide variety of skill and knowledge levels and you will be able to participate fully in the program.

PREPARATION

Inform yourself

- The secret to a successful week at Girls State is preparing yourself. Current issues play an important role in determining party platforms, writing bills and debating issues. Read your local newspaper or news websites to become informed about current state issues, as well as national and international affairs.
- Learn about the duties and responsibilities of the elected and appointed government officials. This will help you decide in which office you are interested. Become familiar with the political party platform and convention process.
- Review basic parliamentary procedure because it is used throughout the week. A “Map to a Successful Meeting” is enclosed. Parliamentary Procedures and Frequently Used Motions will be posted on the website to review and also be included in your Girls State Packet you will receive when you arrive.

EXAMS

1. **Current Events Quiz** – Multiple Choice. This quiz will cover both national and state events as well as contemporary affairs. Information for quiz questions will come from a variety of sources; such as CBS, ABC, and NBC news, Channel 10/11 News, *Lincoln Journal*, and *Omaha World Herald*. Also, Nebraska Public Radio (NPR) and Nebraska Public Television.
2. **Government Exam** - Information for this exam can be found in the latest edition of the **Nebraska Blue Book**. This is available in your local school library, public library, OR online at www.nebraska.gov.
3. **Citizenship Quiz** – Tests your knowledge of the country’s history, government, and laws as part of becoming a citizen. It ensures you understand the nation’s values and how to participate as an informed citizen.

ORIENTATION

Orientation for Girls State is held online at www.cornhuskergirlsstate.com.

The pre-recorded orientation videos will be available by April 15 for you to view under the Orientation tab. The videos are intended to be watched after you have completed your registration online. Upon completion of watching the orientation videos, we will be hosting a series of three online zoom sessions where attendees/parents/guardians/sponsors may join any one of the sessions to ask any questions that they have about Girls State.

The Q/A sessions will be held:

- Sunday, April 19 7:00 PM CT
- Monday, May 4 7:00 PM CT
- Wednesday, May 13 7:00 PM CT

Zoom links for each Q/A session will be posted on the Cornhusker Girls State website under the Orientation tab. Your attendance is required for at least one of the Q/A sessions and attendance will be taken. Any questions that come from these sessions will be added to the FAQ Orientation page on the website for future reference.

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of our Vice Chairs:

- Vicki Colson, 308-289-4836, colson.vicki@yahoo.com
- Elsa Knight, 402-762-5056, knightelsa15@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES

CHOICE OF ACTIVITIES

Girls State offers several fun, more relaxed activities during the week. Media/Newspaper, Community Service (volunteer projects), Places of Interest, Band, and Chorus will be held simultaneously on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. During your online registration you will rank your choices from the five (5) categories. Groups will be established from your choices. Every effort will be made to put you in your ranked choices. Media/Newspaper will be limited to 25 citizens.

TALENT SHOW

What is your special talent? Plan to participate in our talent show on Friday, June 5.

- ♦ There will be auditions held on each floor as we will have a limited number of participants.
- ♦ You can do a variety of things - sing, play an instrument, juggle, dance - any talent you would like to share.
- ♦ Bring any necessary props/items you will need.
- ♦ Please limit your performance to five minutes or less.
- ♦ You are not required to participate.

POLITICAL PARTIES – Nationalist (blue) and Federalist (gold)

You will be assigned to either the Nationalist or Federalist Party at registration. You will actively participate in party conventions.

- ✚ Each party will develop a party platform. Plan several planks for your party's platform. What would you like to see happen in the State of Nebraska? These ideas can be the beginning of a platform for your party.
- ✚ You should also come with ideas for bills you would like to see passed by the mock Legislature.

ELECTED OFFICE

Each citizen is required to run for a City, County, or State elected office. Prior to arrival, think about which office you might be interested in. Focus on two or three elective positions. After arriving at Girls State you can then make a decision on which position you will file and campaign for. State elected positions and town mayors will be required to give a report to the delegation.

FILING FOR OFFICE

You will be required to file for the elective office of your choice. Filing for office declares your intent to seek that office. You may only run for one elected office. Select from the following list of elective offices:

State Elective Positions:

- 1 – Governor
- 1 – Lieutenant Governor
- 1 – Secretary of State
- 1 – State Treasurer
- 1 – State Auditor
- 1 – State Attorney General
- 5 – Public Service Commissioner

County Elective Positions: 2026 County names – Ray and Hietbrink

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2 – County Assessor – 1 per county | 2 – County Attorney – 1 per county |
| 2 – County Clerk – 1 per county | 6 – County Commissioners – 3 per county |
| 2 – County Engineer – 1 per county | 2 – County Sheriff – 1 per county |
| 2 – County Treasurer – 1 per county | 2 – Clerk of the District Court – 1 per county |
| 2 – Clerk of the District Court – 1 per county | 2 – County Public Defender – 1 per county |
| 2 – Register of Deeds – 1 per county | 8 – *Board of Regents – 4 per county |
| 8 – *State Board of Education...4 per county | |

*Board of Regents and State Board of Education are normally elected by District in the State of Nebraska. At Girls State they are elected by County.

City Elective Positions: 2026 City Names – Bowring (Floor 2), Brown (Floor 3), LaFlesch Picotte (Floor 4), Penny (Floor 5), Pittman (Floor 6), Orr (Floor 7), Smith (Floor 8), Sharp (Floor 9)

8 – Mayor – 1 per city

32 – City Council – 4 per city

24 – City School Board – 3 per city

49 – **State Senators – 6 per city (City of Omaha will have 7)

**State Senators are normally elected by District in the State of Nebraska. At Girls State they are elected by city during city elections.

CAMPAIGNING

CAMPAIGN PRE-PLANNING

Campaigning allows other citizens (1) to know your name, (2) the office you are running for, and (3) the reasons you are running for that office. You may make posters and handouts with your name on them, and/or give speeches to get attention. You may also have other citizens assist and support you with your campaign.

- Begin developing your campaign ideas now. Have your election platform and slogan ready prior to arriving. Your own ideas and abilities are always the best.
- County and State offices will participate in whistle stop campaigns. Simple costumes will be allowed for this part of the campaign process.
- You have limited time to prepare campaign materials so keep your ideas simple. Catchy slogans and name recognition is the key.

CAMPAIGN RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. **No citizen can campaign for a Girls State office by letter, social media, or other means BEFORE the Girls State session begins.** Any delegate who disregards this rule will not be permitted to attend. Any known incident should be reported immediately to the Girls State Office.
2. **All campaign materials prepared prior to arriving at Girls State are not allowed.** This is the policy so each citizen has equal opportunity.
3. **No campaigning is allowed until AFTER you have officially filed for office at Girls State.** Posters or other campaign materials are not to be displayed or circulated prior to filing for office.
4. Campaign materials that will be supplied include white paper, scissors, markers, construction paper, and glue sticks.
5. Any “give-a-ways” or “enhancements” for your campaigning is optional on your part to provide.
6. No campaign materials can be purchased or ordered through the Girls State Store or the Abel-Sandoz convenience store.
7. **No PREPRINTED, COMPUTER GENERATED, or COPIED campaign materials are permitted.** No photographs are allowed on campaign materials.
8. Plan your campaign materials according to the office you are seeking. If you run for:
 - A. State office, you will campaign on all eight floors.
 - B. County office, you will campaign on the four floors in your county.
 - C. City office, you campaign on your floor only.***NOTE: There will be approximately 35 - 40 citizens per floor.***
9. Campaign materials must be hung with approved UNL materials only. Tape and other approved materials will be available on each floor. **Remove** your campaign signs following your election out of courtesy to those candidates who are still campaigning.
10. Girls State Staff will remove and discard any inappropriate campaign materials.

DIGITAL CAMPAIGNING

1. Candidates may not campaign before arriving at Cornhusker Girls State or before filing for office.
2. Approved platforms for digital campaign material creation will be reviewed at our Opening Session.
3. No campaigning can be done outside of sanctioned internal channels monitored by the Girls State Staff. Do not campaign on social media sites like Twitter or Facebook.
4. Unapproved digital campaigning on external channel will result in disqualification of the position you are running for.
5. Any questions about digital campaigning should be directed to the Media Staff, not counselors or other staff.

Campaigning rules will be reviewed at our Opening Session.

APPOINTED OFFICE

If you are not elected to office, don't be disappointed. You will receive an appointed position. The appointed positions are just as important as the elected positions and government could not function without them.

In real State government, the Governor makes appointments. At Cornhusker Girls State, the Advisory Board makes all appointments. In most cases, the appointment fits the level of the failed office that you ran for.

- ✓ **During your online registration process you will have been asked your preference choices for this appointment, if it is necessary. All possible efforts will be made to appoint you according to your preference.**

INAUGURATION AND OFFICE VISITS

INAUGURATION: On Thursday afternoon Girls State Citizens and staff will walk to the State Capitol for the inauguration ceremony of the Girls State Governor.

OFFICE VISITS: Following Inauguration, citizens will be dismissed, in a designated order, to visit the office that corresponds to their elected or appointed position. Girls State staff and/or personnel from the various Departments will escort citizens to their respective offices. Transportation will be provided to offices located beyond walking distance of the Capitol.

CLOSING SESSION

Closing session will be held on Saturday, June 6, at 9:00 a.m., in the Carolyn Pope Edwards Hall. Certificates, pins, and awards will be presented. Bills introduced and passed by the Girls State Legislature will be reported.

- ❖ **There is no extra seating at the Carolyn Pope Edwards Hall closing session. Parents should plan to pick up their daughter at the dorm after dismissal.**

DEPARTURE

CHECK-OUT:

- Girls State officially ends following the closing session at the Carolyn Pope Edwards Hall. Check-out at Sandoz Hall begins at approximately 10:15 am. Your counselor will provide check-out instructions. **All Girls State citizens must be checked out and gone from campus by 2:00 pm. Preferably sooner.**
- Citizens must return home in the same manner in which they arrived. If your parents brought you to Girls State on Sunday, we will expect them to pick you up on Saturday. If you will be returning home with someone else, Girls State officials must be notified **by your parent/guardian** and a permission slip **from your parent/guardian** provided to the Girls State Secretary. If you rode the bus and your parents will be picking you up, please notify the person in your area/district arranging the bus transportation. Do this **prior to leaving for Girls State**, so the area/district and the drivers are aware.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS

GIRLS NATION

Girls Nation is a continuation of your Girls State experience, but with concentration on national government. In order to attend this unique Federal government session, you must first attend Nebraska's Cornhusker Girls State. During the Girls State session, two Girls Nation Senators will be selected to represent Nebraska. Fellow delegates and staff make the selection.

- Girls Nation delegates must be knowledgeable about national and international affairs, able to prepare and present a bill, and be experienced in using parliamentary procedure. The process also includes an interview.
- The Girls Nation program is funded by the national organization of the American Legion Auxiliary with support from each participating state. Little or no expense is required of the selected participants or their families.
- The 2026 session of Girls Nation will be held July 18-25, 2026, in Washington, DC. Citizens are asked to confirm their availability on these dates before deciding to run/apply for Girls Nation.
- Information about Girls Nation will be provided during Girls State week. You may also go to alaforveterans.org/ALA-Girls-Nation for additional information.

SAMSUNG SCHOLARSHIP

Please read the information about the Samsung Scholarship that is included in this packet. Read the information carefully. All citizens will not be eligible to apply. If you meet the eligibility requirements, your Welcome Letter provided a QR code to directly take you to the online registration. Fill out the online application form and submit (you may print a copy for your reference). Applications must be completed prior to arriving at Girls State.

Scholarships will be judged during Girls State with the state winner application submitted to The American Legion, National American Legion Auxiliary, and announced during closing session. If the state winner is not a National Scholarship winner, she will receive a \$1,250 scholarship from National.

PACKING CHECK-LIST

When packing for Girls State, keep in mind that you may need to walk a block or more to the residence hall when arriving or departing from Girls State. Please also refer to the Medical Staff letter (*included in this packet*) for their suggested items to bring to Girls State.

- _____ \$25 activity fee (if not previously paid)
- _____ All information sent to you from Girls State
- _____ Clothing for the week (see dress code, pages 3 & 4)
- _____ Rain gear or umbrella
- _____ Light jacket
- _____ Blanket (sheets and pillow with case are provided). *If you wish to bring your own sheets, the beds require X-long twin size sheets. The beds will not be made. You will have to make them when you arrive.*
- _____ Bed Pillow—one is provided—you can bring your own.
- _____ Towels, washcloths
- _____ Shower caddy or something to carry items to the shower
- _____ Shower shoes/flip flops
- _____ Plastic drinking glass
- _____ Toiletries/soap/feminine hygiene items (shower items must be plastic – no glass please)
- _____ Hair dryer/straightener/curling iron
- _____ Cameras + extra batteries (optional if bringing a cell phone)
- _____ Cell phone + charger
- _____ Alarm clock (optional if bringing a cell phone)
- _____ Notebook paper/pencils/pens/highlighters
- _____ Optional campaign materials (adhere to rules, *page 9*)
- _____ Red shirt for Friday afternoon Wear R.E.D. (Remember Everyone Deployed).

NOTE: This list is not intended to specify the only things you need to bring but is a list of necessary items you will need. If you forget an item, like toothpaste, shampoo, etc., it may be purchased at the UNL convenience store.

NOTE: Cornhusker Girls State and/or the University of Nebraska will not be responsible for any articles lost, stolen, or broken.

