



POLICY ON ALA GIRLS STATE SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MEDIA USE

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Virginia recognizes and supports its ALA Virginia Girls State participants' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of online social networks. In this context, however, each delegate must remember that participating in the ALA Virginia Girls State program is a privilege, not a right. As a delegate, you represent the American Legion Auxiliary and are expected to portray yourself, your school, and the Auxiliary in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with federal and state laws, Longwood University rules, and ALA Virginia Girls State rules, regulations, and policies including the Guidelines listed below.

Guidelines

If you participate on a social networking site or use social media, you must keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Everything you post is public information—any text or photo posted online is completely out of your control the moment it is posted—even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, comments, and identity of posters) may be accessible even after you remove it.
- Think before you post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Post only pictures and comments that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public.
- Use caution when adding someone or inviting someone to be a friend (this includes The American Legion Boys State citizens).
- Limit information about your whereabouts and plans in order to minimize the potential of being stalked, assaulted, or the victim of other criminal activity. Post about where you've been, not where you're going.
- What you post may affect your future. Many colleges' admissions officers and employers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posts).
- Similar to comments made in person, you should be respectful online. The American Legion Auxiliary will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:
 - Derogatory or defamatory language and/or images
 - Comments that create a serious danger to the safety of another person or that constitute a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person
- Take the high ground. Don't pick fights, or engage in fights, online.
- Respect yourself; respect others; respect the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program.

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Monitoring and Consequences

The American Legion Auxiliary reserves the right to have ALA Girls State staff members review and/or monitor delegates' social networking sites and postings.

Any violation of law or Longwood University and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State's rules, regulations, or policies, or evidence of such violation in your online content, is subject to investigation and possible immediate censure by the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State staff and/or law enforcement agencies. Internal consequences may include, but are not limited to, notice to remove the content and dismissal from the ALA Virginia Girls State program.

No alterations to the terms state above may be made. If you are not in agreement with the terms of this policy, please contact the director immediately at **director@VaGirlsState.org** or through our website at **www.VaGirlsState.org**.

As an American Legion Auxiliary Virginia Girls State participant, I attest that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by this policy:

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Responsible Adult if the above is a minor

Date

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian/Responsible Adult

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