

Nevada Girls State

Counselor's Handbook

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Why Am I Here?

Counselor's Responsibilities

1. Help delegates to find their cabins, get situated, and become acquainted with you and each other.
2. Learn the names of the delegates in your cabin as quickly as possible. Get to know all of them and their interests. Make the delegates feel welcome and part of the group the moment they arrive.
3. Go over the handbook with the delegates. Make sure they understand all of it. (If there is something you do not understand or have questions about, ask Daela or Courtenay.)
4. Ensure that all delegates understand what is expected of them during general assemblies, flag ceremonies, meals, elections, and lights out, as well as at the legislative session on Friday. Attendance is required at all events and appropriate behavior is expected.
5. Watch for signs of injury or illness, as well as homesickness.
6. Facilitate city, county, and party meetings. Allow the delegates to be their own leaders. Be there to answer questions, and try to stay in the background.
7. Prepare and supervise elections.
8. Supervise all activities in the chambers and hallways during the legislative session on Friday.
9. Lead by example. Know all procedures. If you aren't sure about something, ask.
10. Be available to assist delegates and other staff members in any way necessary.

Going the Extra Mile

To become a distinguished Girls State counselor you will want to follow these guidelines...

1. Consider yourself a positive role model for campers.
 - Follow the rules created by the camp facility and Nevada Girls State.
 - Encourage all delegates – show no favoritism.
 - Use appropriate language.
 - Guide campers in ceremonies and activities.
 - Possess a positive, cheerful attitude.
 - Be prompt for meetings and activities.
 - Respect each other.
 - Show interest in all activities.
2. Create an environment of fun and fellowship in your group.
 - Include all delegates in your group in Girls State activities.
 - Get to know the names of all delegates.
 - Relate to delegates in topics of conversation and activities.
 - Participate with delegates in all activities.
 - Discover the talents of each camper.
3. Provide encouragement to your cabin.
 - Verbally praise each delegate for her efforts.
 - Give only positive reinforcement. Be kind, not mean.
 - Do not tolerate “bad mouthing” and explain why.
 - Listen to the delegates.
 - Show respect for and appreciation to the delegates.
 - Ask questions instead of telling delegates what to do.
 - Teach each delegate the value of her own opinions.
4. Get the delegates to work together.
 - Participate in activities together.
 - Encourage all delegates to get to know each other by name.
 - Teach delegates how to think, not what to think.

Problem Situations in Camp

Brace yourself, here come the problems . . . It's true that the session is a wonderful world all its own. It is the perfect environment for building strong friendships and indestructible bonds between delegates and counselors alike. There is no place or time in life that can compare with the unique "seemingly perfect" environment of the session.

Problems in camp can range from bed-wetting to personality conflicts, fights, homesickness, etc. The following section is extremely important. It deals with some of the common problems during the session and how you can deal with them. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the following information:

1. Make sure your actions dealing with problems are sound and that they conform to Girls State and American Legion Auxiliary philosophy.
2. Talk to your other counselors; remember that you have a support system.
3. Never make a statement or inform a delegate of consequences that have not been approved by the director. Don't threaten delegates or tell them you are sending them home (such as "one more time and you'll go home"). Only the director can send a delegate home.

Stealing (or unexplainable loss of personal belongings)

Stealing, like homesickness, has a way of being a part of nearly every session. Whenever a large number of people get together, certain situational elements exist that seem to contribute to this problem, whether at Girls State, a residential hospital or an Army barracks. In a group living situation, delegates need to be more careful about keeping their possessions together. Greater care needs to be taken to make sure valuables are not left unattended and in a way that would tempt another delegate.

If a delegate reports a missing or "stolen" item to you, do a search of the cabin before you submit the report to the senior staff. Often times, the missing/stolen item is under a pile of clothes or still in the camper's suitcase. The sad and unfortunate fact is that once something has been stolen, very little can be done about it. In fact, two people have suffered—the victim and the victimizer.

If a delegate would like to, she may entrust her valuables to a counselor. These will be locked in the director's cabin.

Homesickness

First impressions are lasting and what happens during the first few hours of the session is important for the inexperienced delegate. When they get to Girls State, it's like going into a foreign territory. Everyone they know and really depend on is someplace else, especially mom and dad. Despite their age delegates may still suffer from homesickness.

The homesick delegate generally will behave in one of two ways. The first way is when they withdraw from other campers and want to be by themselves. They might be a little edgy or sensitive to the others laughing and joking around, especially when others try to include them. If there is a group activity planned they will no doubt want to stay in the cabin or watch from the sideline. Food will be of little interest. In fact, they may try

to convince you that they should stay in the cabin and miss meals. Finally, the homesick campers will want to talk about good experiences they have had at home or what their families have been doing. While some of this is necessary for the way our program functions, too much of it may indicate homesickness.

The second way homesick delegate will behave is to be overly outgoing, sometimes to the point that they are hardly bearable. They, too, will talk or brag about the great things they can do at home or great successes they have had. They will want you to think they are outstanding so they will be accepted in the group and not feel lonely any more. Again, some of this is necessary for campaigning for election, but too much of it, or doing it at inappropriate times, is a red flag for homesickness.

Homesickness is prone to make its unwanted appearance during our session when any delegate has a chance to think about what they left behind and when the future of the session doesn't look too exciting. One of the best ways to forestall it is to keep individuals excited for all activities.

Stick with the delegates closely for the first few hours and work hard at welding them together in a feeling of "one-ness," since you are laying the foundation for the success of the whole session. Seize opportunities for informal chats, individually, in small groups, or as a whole group so all of you become old friends and can act perfectly natural with each other. Try especially hard to draw in the "loners" and spot the mischief-makers and misfits.

If you have a delegate that you think is homesick, please let Daela know right away.

Text: (775) 224-0073

Fatigue

As Thomas Dekker said, "Sleep is the golden chain that ties health and our bodies together". The busy nature of our session makes delegates and counselors breathe a sigh of thankfulness for lights out at the end of the night. However, life at Nevada Girls State is extremely fast-paced and the days are long. Additionally, teenage girls often want to stay awake and chat instead of taking advantage the time allotted for sleep (college life will teach them better). Signs of fatigue may include restlessness, irritability, excitable talking, undue noise, and paleness. When delegates begin to exhibit these signs of fatigue they will require you as a counselor to be more sure of how to contain them as a group. You will need to be stricter in making sure they do what is expected of them whether it is to listen attentively to a speaker or be on time to a meal.

Code of Conduct for Nevada Girls State

1. No delegate or alternate will be admitted without presenting a Medical Certificate.
2. Delegates to Nevada Girls State are considered Citizens of Nevada Girls State, and are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner towards themselves, other Citizens, staff, speakers, the facility, and equipment.
3. Girls wishing to visit elsewhere after adjournment of Nevada Girls State MUST present written permission from parents or guardians to the Director upon arrival at camp.
4. No citizen will be permitted to leave the boundary of Nevada Girls State after she has registered except on an organized group trip under the leadership of counselor; or on Girls State business, and then only upon permission of the Girls State Director. This includes entering surrounding areas of the camp such as the neighboring golf course or beach.
5. Any citizen who leaves Girls State for any reason other than those given above will not be allowed to be re-admitted.
6. All delegates are advised to deposit funds, bus or plane tickets, and other valuables with the staff at time of registration. It is advisable to bring money for sale items as outlined in the previous section.
7. Nevada Girls State, Inc. will not be responsible for telephone calls or bills of any kind contracted by citizens of Nevada Girls State.
8. No citizen may drive an automobile during her attendance at Nevada Girls State. If she arrives in her own automobile, the keys MUST be turned over to the staff for safe-keeping until the closing session on Saturday.
9. No visitors, other than members of immediate family, are allowed on site without permission of the Girls State Director.
10. No alcoholic beverages or drugs permitted in the camp
11. As guests of the 4-H Camp, each citizen will observe rules and will take good care of all equipment and property. Nothing shall be pinned, pasted, or stapled on walls of any rooms used at Nevada Girls State – **ONLY MASKING TAPE MAY BE USED.**
12. Special rules of 4-H CAMP that must strictly be adhered to:
 - a. No smoking permitted in the bedroom or shower areas of the dorms. Smoking only in designated areas.
 - b. No cooking or other heating appliances in the dorms.
 - c. No food permitted in the dorms. No exceptions.
 - d. No writing on the walls
13. If a Citizen violates any rule(s) of Nevada Girls State, she will be dismissed without a refund of her registration fee and her parents, or guardian, shall be liable for her transportation costs for her return home.

Fire Safety

In the Cabin/Dorm or Meeting Rooms

If for some reason fire should break out in a building it is the counselor's responsibility to evacuate her assigned individuals to a safe place. Confirm with other counselors that all delegates are accounted for in a safe place, then immediately report the situation to the senior staff. Never try to extinguish a fire - just evacuate.

On the Campground

If a brush, grass, or car fire should occur on the campus it the responsibility of the counselor to evacuate all delegates to a safe place. Work with other counselors to insure all delegates are accounted for and immediately report the situation to the senior staff. Do not attempt to extinguish the fire.

In the Event of a Fire Drill

Always be listening for the fire alarm. If you hear it, evacuate your delegates to the designated meeting place.

Bear Safety

We are in the woods and there are bears. Please be alert!

- If you see a bear, contact Daela or Courtenay IMMEDIATELY!!
- If you hear Daela or Courtenay yell something unusual (like "Get in the nearest cabin!") respond quickly and calmly.

Water Safety

At the Lake

The lake is not approved for swimming without the pre-approved presence of lifeguards. For this reason, the lake is gated off from the campus. Only the director, with permission of the camp manager, may approve the use of the lake. Circumventing the fence in any way by any person is in violation of the rules established by our facility and may result in the dismissal of the violator from the program.

Release of a Delegate

- A delegate may only be released into the custody of an authorized person. The director has a record of those authorized to pick up delegates.
- No delegate may leave the campus at any time, except for pre-determined activities.
- All delegates are encouraged to remain for the entire duration of the program.

Filing for City Offices

1. Take any questions about positions, or quickly review the positions.
 - If there are any questions you can't answer, text Courtenay.

EVERYONE RUNS FOR OFFICE!! NO EXCEPTIONS!

2. Have the delegates take the **city** filing forms out of their handbooks (they're in Section 3, pages 27 & 28 [in case of mistakes ☺])
3. You need 2 clerks & 2 inspectors – volunteers are fine; if there are more than enough volunteers, find a fair way to choose.
 - Clerks and Inspectors run for office, too.
4. Have delegates fill out and hand in their filing forms.
5. Clerks and Inspectors sign and sort the filing forms.
 - Forms should be sorted by office, starting with **Mayor**.
 - Within each office, forms should be alphabetized by candidate's last name.
6. Staff makes 2 sample ballots – keep 1; send the other & the sorted forms to Daela.
 - Make sure there's at least 1 candidate for each available position. (*see other side*)
7. Using the staff sample ballot, everyone gives a speech (appx. 30 seconds to 1 minute).
 - Use the white board to write out the last name of each delegate so it can be seen while the speech is given.
8. Everyone needs to make a sample ballot.

THEY MUST HAVE THEIR SAMPLE BALLOT IN ORDER TO VOTE!!

Example

“City Name” Sample Ballot

Mayor (*1 candidate minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

City Councilwomen (*3 candidates minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

City Clerk (*1 candidate minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

Filing for County Offices

1. Take any questions about positions, or quickly review the positions.
 - If there are any questions you can't answer, text Courtenay.

EVERYONE RUNS FOR OFFICE!! NO EXCEPTIONS!

2. Have the delegates take the **county** filing forms out of their handbooks (they're in Section 3, pages 29 & 30 [in case of mistakes ☺])
3. The elected City Clerks are automatically County Clerks. One of the clerks will act as an inspector (tell the delegates that, for us, Clerks and Inspectors do the same job). You need 1 more inspector – a volunteer is fine; if there are more than enough volunteers, find a fair way to choose.
 - Clerks and Inspectors run for office, too.
4. Have delegates fill out and hand in their filing forms.
5. Clerks and Inspectors sign and sort the filing forms.
 - Forms should be sorted by office, starting with **County Commissioners**.
 - Within each office, forms should be alphabetized by candidate's last name.
6. Staff makes 2 sample ballots – keep 1; send the other & the sorted forms to Daela.
 - Make sure there's at least 1 candidate for each available position. (*see other side*)
7. Using the staff sample ballot, everyone gives a speech (appx. 30 seconds to 1 minute).
 - Use the white board to write out the last name of each delegate so it can be seen while the speech is given.
8. Everyone needs to make a sample ballot.

THEY MUST HAVE THEIR SAMPLE BALLOT IN ORDER TO VOTE!!

Example

“County Name” Sample Ballot

County Commissioners (*3 candidate minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

County Clerk (*1 candidate minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

Treasurer (*1 candidate minimum*)

Sheriff (*1 candidate minimum*)

Constable (*1 candidate minimum*)

District Attorney (*1 candidate minimum*)

Justice of the Peace (*1 candidate minimum*)

District Judge (*1 candidate minimum*)

County School Board (*3 candidates minimum*)

Filing for Primary Election

1. Take any questions about positions, or quickly review the positions.
 - If there are any questions you can't answer, text Courtenay.

EVERYONE RUNS FOR OFFICE!! NO EXCEPTIONS!

2. Have the delegates take the **primary** filing forms out of their handbooks (they're in Section 3, pages 31 & 32 [in case of mistakes ☺])
3. The elected County Clerks are automatically Party Clerks. **You may have 0, 1, or 2.** You need have a total of 2 clerks and 2 inspectors – volunteers are fine; if there are more than enough volunteers, find a fair way to choose.
 - Clerks and Inspectors run for office, too.
4. Have delegates fill out and hand in their filing forms.
5. Clerks and Inspectors sign and sort the filing forms.
 - Forms should be sorted by office, starting with **Governor**.
 - Within each office, forms should be alphabetized by candidate's last name.
6. Staff makes 2 sample ballots – keep 1; send the other & the sorted forms to Daela.
 - Make sure there's at least 1 candidate for each available position. (*see other side*)
7. Using the staff sample ballot, everyone gives a speech (appx. 30 seconds to 1 minute).
 - Use the white board to write out the last name of each delegate so it can be seen while the speech is given.
8. Everyone needs to make a sample ballot.

THEY MUST HAVE THEIR SAMPLE BALLOT IN ORDER TO VOTE!!

Example

“Party Name” Sample Ballot

Governor (*1 candidate minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

Lieutenant Governor (*1 candidate minimum*)

- Black, Alyssa
- Burns, Courtenay
- Gibson, Daela
- Lamanna, Brianna

Secretary of State (*1 candidate minimum*)

State Treasurer (*1 candidate minimum*)

Attorney-General (*1 candidate minimum*)

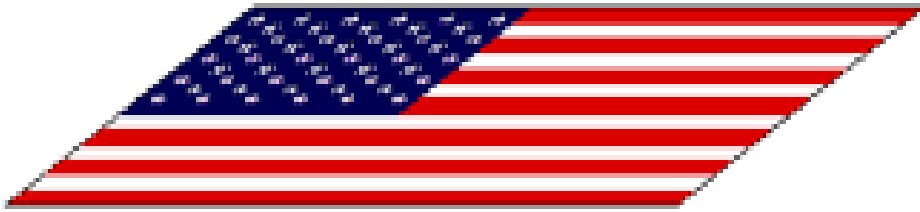
District Attorney (*1 candidate minimum*)

Senators (*7 candidate minimum*)

Assemblywomen (*11 candidate minimum*)

How to Fold the Flag

Step 1: To properly fold the flag, begin by holding it waist-high with another person so that its surface is parallel to the ground.



Step 2: Fold the lower half of the stripe section length-wise over the field of stars, holding the bottom and top edges securely.



Step 3: Fold the flag again length-wise with the blue field on the outside.



Step 4: Make a triangular fold by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open (top) edge of the flag.



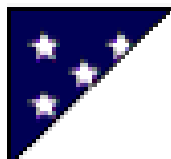
Step 5: Turn the outer (end) point inward, parallel to the open edge, to form a second triangle.



Step 6: The triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the flag is folding in this manner. Tuck the small flap remaining into the pocket created.



Step 7: When the flag is completely folded, only a triangular blue field of stars should be visible.



(taken from the <http://www.legion.org/flag/folding>)

~Notes~

Thank you for all your hard work this week!

Remember - if you ever need anything at all (like letters of recommendation, advice, or just someone to talk to) you can always call or text:

Daela - (775) 224-0073

Courtenay - (775) 513-4681

or email us

NevadaGirlsState@gmail.com