



AMERICAN
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American Heritage Girls

Troop MD2206

Jenkins Memorial

Riviera Beach, MD

Troop Policy and Guidelines Handbook

2024-2025

American Heritage Girls Policy Handbook and Guidelines Table of Contents

About AHG	4
AHG Mission Statement	4
AHG Oath and AHG Creed	4
AHG Statement of Faith	4
AHG Inclusion Policy	5
Girl Membership	5
Troop Structure	5 – 7
Troop Communication	7 – 8
AHG Program in Our Troop	8
Six Program Emphases	9 – 10
Earning Badges	11
Uniforms	11 – 14
Awards and Recognition	14
Parent Responsibilities and Participation	15
Volunteer Position Recruitment and Selection	15 – 16
Finances	16 – 17
Member Costs	16 – 17
Troop Dues	17
Program Support Fees	17
Fundraising Policy	17 – 18
Annual Stewardship Campaign	18
Benevolence Funds	18
Health and Safety	18 – 19

<u>Troop Meetings</u>	19
<u>Permission Slips</u>	20
<u>Transportation for Troop Activities</u>	20
<u>Pick-Up and Drop-Off</u>	20 – 21
<u>Troop Event, Meeting or Activity Cancellation</u>	21
<u>Girl Visitors</u>	21
<u>Sibling Policy</u>	21
<u>Medication Administration</u>	22
<u>Sick Policy</u>	22
<u>First Aid and CPR Volunteers</u>	22
<u>AHG Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco and Firearm</u>	23
<u>Camp Skills & Knife Safety Policy</u>	23
<u>Electronic Policy</u>	23
<u>Youth Protection and Child Safety</u>	23 – 24
<u>Bullying and Conflict</u>	24
<u>Conflict Resolution</u>	24 – 25
<u>Helping AHG Girls Live a Life of Virtue</u>	25 – 27

About AHG

AHG Mission Statement

Building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country.

AHG Oath

"I promise to love God,
Cherish my family,
Honor my country,
And Serve in my community."

AHG Creed

As an American Heritage Girl, I promise to be:

Compassionate	Understanding others in fellowship, empathy, kindness, and caring.
Respect	Others' opinions and emotions.
Helpful	Willingly serve others.
Honest	Always tell the truth and keep my promises.
Loyal	True to God, family, friends, community and country.
Perseverant	Continuing to strive toward a goal despite obstacles.
Pure	Keep my mind and body pure.
Resourceful	Wisely use my time, materials and talents.
Respectful	Honor my country, be obedient to those in authority, and courteous to all.
Responsible	Accountable for my own actions. Reliable in all situations.
Reverent	Faithful and honoring to God. Respectful to the beliefs of others.

Statement of Faith

American Heritage Girls is a Christ-centered leadership and character development ministry. Within the local AHG Troop, the primary statement/profession of Christian beliefs, faith, and/or doctrine is that belonging to the chartering Church/Organization. As with any of its ministries, the Church/Organization should take steps to ensure the Troop appropriately reflects these beliefs. Furthermore, all American Heritage Girls' Charter Organizations, Adult Members and Adult Leaders, must concurrently adhere to the Christian principles stated in AHG's Statement of Faith:

"We believe that there is one Triune God – Father; Jesus Christ, His one and only Son; and the Holy Spirit – Creator of the universe and eternally existent. We believe the Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testaments) to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We believe each person is created in His image for the purpose of communing with and worshiping God. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who enables us to live Godly lives. We believe that each individual is called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength; and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We believe God calls us to lives of purity, service, stewardship and integrity."

Clarity is further provided to the following terms:

Purity – God calls us to lives of holiness, being pure of heart, mind, word and deed. We are to reserve sexual activity to the sanctity of marriage; a lifelong commitment before God between a man and a woman.

Service – God calls us to become responsible members of our community and the world through selfless acts that contribute to the welfare of others.

Stewardship – God calls to use our God-given time, talents and money wisely.

Integrity – God calls us to live moral lives that demonstrate an inward motivation to do what is right, regardless of the cost.

American Heritage Girls' Inclusion Policy

All biological girls of any color, race, national origin and socioeconomic status who agree to live according to the standards of the AHG Oath and the AHG Creed are invited to be a member of American Heritage Girls.

Girl Membership

Girl Membership is defined as a girl, age five (5) through eighteen (18) who is registered and meets all qualifications prescribed in the policies of American Heritage Girls.

Troop Structure

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.” 1 Corinthians 12:12, NIV

Just as the scripture above demonstrates, the body of Christ requires each one to come together in the Kingdom of God, the same is true in the Troop structure. The Troop Board is made up of five positions that are selected by the Charter Organization and entrusted with implementing the mission of building women of integrity. Because of their influence and focus on establishing goals for the Troop, the selection of Troop Board Members is crucial to ensure that the right people are serving on the Troop Board. The Troop Board represents their Charter Organization and AHG, Inc. to Troop families and the local community. Each position has its own volunteer ministry description which outlines the responsibilities and qualifications for the position. To protect the integrity of the Troop's decision-making process, the Troop Board Members should not be related to one another. If the Charter Organization has any questions or concerns about the Troop Board structure, please discuss them with your Hometown Mentor or Troop Coach.



AHG, INC.



**TROOP
COORDINATOR**



**TROOP
SHEPHERD**

A graphic featuring a large yellow heart in the center with the text "TROOP MINISTRY TEAM" inside. The background is light blue with a white checkered pattern. Several small yellow stick figures are scattered around the heart.



**UNIT
LEADERS**

**VICE
COORDINATOR**

**TROOP
TREASURER**

**ASSISTANT
UNIT LEADERS**

The Troop Board works together as a team to provide vision, direction and make decisions on behalf of the Troop. One of the most impactful ways the Troop Board leads is through prayer. The Troop Board Members together and individually pray for the Charter Organization, the Troop, the girls, their families, and the community. ~~Adult registration fees for Troop Board members are paid for through troop member dues.~~

The Troop Board is made up of:

- Charter Representative Steve DeLisle
- Troop Coordinator Christina Bogan
- Vice Coordinator Lisa Anderson
- Troop Shepherd Alane Hresko
- Troop Treasurer Cheryl Richardon

The Troop Ministry Team functions together to fulfill the mission of building women of integrity. The team is composed of the Troop Board, Unit Leaders, and Assistant Unit Leaders. Unit Leaders and Assistant Unit Leaders along with the Troop Board play an integral part in implementing the AHG Program and ministering to girls in the Troop. The number of Unit Leaders and Assistant Unit Leaders will vary year to year, based on the number of girls within the Troop.

The Troop Ministry Team is made up of:

- Charter Representative Steve DeLisle
- Troop Coordinator Christina Bogan
- Vice Coordinator Lisa Anderson
- Troop Shepherd Alane Hresko
- Troop Treasurer Cheryl Richardon
- Unit Leader
- Assistant Unit Leader

Troop Communication

Emergency Numbers – If you have an emergency and need to contact your daughter during a meeting or event/activity, call:

Troop Coordinator	Christina Bogan	443-690-8790
Troop Vice Coordinator	Lisa Anderson	410-245-8518

The Troop roster of girl and adult names with contact information is for communicating Troop information only. It is not to be used for solicitation and all communication should reflect the AHG Oath and Creed.

AHG Family – AHGfamily, <https://www.ahgfamily.org>, is the Troop's go-to place for Troop data management, rosters, resources, training, communications, and more! Calendar events, permission slips, forms can all be found in AHG Family. Track your daughter's progress and enter in her service hours.

E-Mail – E-mail, ahgmd2206@gmail.com, is the Troop's primary form of communication. You may receive updates from your Unit Leader, Troop Coordinator and as appropriate from the Troop Treasurer.

Special Event Announcement Flyers – These will be posted on AHG Family, handed out at Troop meetings and/or e-mailed to keep parents informed of current activities. Most special events have deadlines; please check fliers for payment and form due dates.

Program Year Calendar – Provided at the beginning of the program year, posted to AHG Family and available upon request. Includes dates for all Troop meetings and activities.

Communication with Girl Members – Text messages, emails and phone calls should always include two-deep leadership for the safety and protection of both Girl and Adult Members. Adult Members can be included or copied on an email, text, or present on a phone call to ensure two-deep leadership.

Communication on Meetings Nights – Troop meetings are a busy time for girls and the Troop Coordinator. If you wish to speak to the Troop Coordinator or Vice Coordinator at length, please arrange a time to come early or remain late.

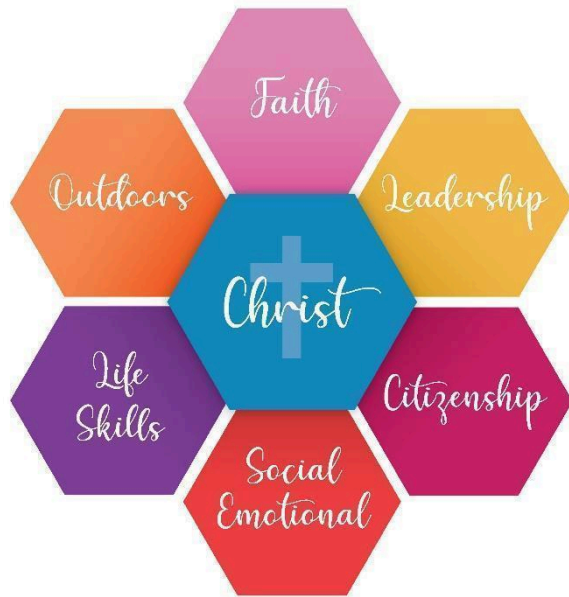
Suggestion Policy

The Troop Board welcomes all feedback for improvement. Suggestions should describe the problem and recommend possible solutions. Feedback should be submitted to the Troop Board or Unit Leader by e-mail or mail. Thinking through the problem and coming up with a possible solution allows criticism to be constructive. If you are upset about something, it is advisable to take time to pray and weigh options before addressing the concern with the Troop Board or Unit Leader. The Troop Board will consider your feedback and implement the changes if it is deemed beneficial to the entire Troop.

AHG Program

The AHG Program is built around six Program Emphases, Faith, Leadership, Citizenship, Social Emotional, Life Skills, and Outdoors, to achieve the mission of building women of integrity. These six key components create a Christ-centered, progressive, and balanced structure, providing girls with a holistic experience. AHG's goal for a girl who completes the AHG Program is that she has learned to be a Christ-following servant leader who is honoring, relational, anchored in Christ, and competent: a woman of integrity.

Six Program Emphases



Faith

Girls are encouraged to grow in their faith and relationship with God through the AHG Faith Award Program, prayer, fellowship, and service, which are woven throughout each aspect of the AHG Program.

Outcome: A *Christ-follower* who submits to Christ and seeks God's will for her life.

Leadership

The AHG Program is rich in leadership opportunities for girls of all ages. Girls discover their passions, acquire project management skills, hold leadership positions, and participate in leadership training.

Outcome: A *servant leader* who follows Jesus' model of leadership by putting others first.

Citizenship

The AHG Program provides girls with a deeper understanding of their country and heritage. Girls cultivate honor for their country by participating in patriotic events, flag ceremonies, serving in their community, and through badge work. Serving others and being active citizens with their Troop, fosters a lifelong love for their country.

Outcome: An *honoring* girl who cares for her community as an active citizen through service and patriotism.

Social & Emotional

Girls will gain a better understanding of their identity in Christ through the AHG Program. AHG's multi-level Troop structure encourages girls to create friendships with girls of all ages. This unique Troop structure allows for mentorships and learning opportunities to occur naturally among girls. Girls learn to anchor their emotions in Christ in a caring and loving environment.

Outcome: A *relational* girl who invests in positive and loving relationships with others and clings to Christ when navigating emotions.

Life Skills

In the AHG Program, girls can step out of their comfort zone and try new experiences in a safe environment. Earning badges provides girls the opportunity to learn a wide array of life skills, inspiring

them to become lifelong learners and doers. AHG's six Badge Frontiers include: Heritage, Family Living, Arts, Outdoor Skills, Personal Well-Being, and Science Technology.

Outcome: A *competent* girl who enjoys mastering new skills and applies them to her life.

Outdoors

Nature reveals to us God's beauty, glory, power, wisdom, presence, creativity, and, most of all, his loving care. Through the AHG Program, girls are encouraged to participate in outdoor activities such as hiking or camping several times a year. High Adventure activities are great times for team building, leadership, physical activity, and strengthening relationships with friends. The outdoors will educate girls about their natural world and the beauty God has bestowed upon them.

Outcome: A girl who *values creation* through outdoor experiences that display the glory of God's creation.

Service

Girls develop character through community service and citizenship activities. Service is a key component of the AHG Program. Our Troop will participate in at least three service projects this year to earn the HUGS (Heritage Girls United Giving Service) Patch. Units may do additional projects if there is interest from the girls.

Girls earn Service Stars based on the number of service hours they log. All service projects completed at the Troop level will be logged by the Troop Advancement Chair.

Girls may earn additional service hours outside of the Troop setting. Each girl will be supplied a Service Hour Tally Sheet at the beginning of the year to log personal hours of service. Parents and girls will be notified through Troop communication when to turn in these additional service hours. Unused service hours may be carried over from year to year within a Level. Each Advancement Chair will review all service hours and has the right to question service hours that do not fit within the service guidelines of American Heritage Girls Girl Handbook. Any disputes about service hours will first be addressed by the Unit Leader and Advancement Chair and then taken to the Troop Board for a final decision, if needed. The board has the right to cap the number of hours that can be earned in the same type of service.

For an act to be considered service in AHG, girls must not be reimbursed in any way. To encourage service to our neighbor outside of the immediate family, AHG does not count household chores or other family obligations as service hours. For those older girls participating in long-term mission trips, please consult with your Unit Leader as to what can be counted on a mission trip prior to submitting those hours. Only hours "serving" may be counted. Preparation time and planning time may not be counted except for meal preparation. Time spent shopping for items are not counted and time traveling to or from the service is not counted. Please refer to the Girl Handbook for more information.

Earning Badges

Life skills are gained through badge work. AHG Badges are progressive, so the girls will learn new skills at each Level, building on previous levels.

AHG's six Badge Frontiers include: Heritage, Family Living, Arts, Outdoor Skills, Personal Well-Being, and Science and Technology.

The Troop budget covers three badges that will be completed during the troop meetings, up to six total for the program year. Unit Leaders help the girls plan their activities to revolve around their AHG Badge Requirements. If girls are absent from a Troop meeting where AHG Badge Requirements are being met, it is up to the Girl Member and/or parent to make sure she fulfills those requirements on her own time if she wants to receive the badge along with girls in her Unit.

Girls may also earn badges outside of the Troop setting. Summer months are a great opportunity for girls to earn badges in the Outdoor Skills Frontier as well as the other Frontiers. The individual will pay for all badges (\$3.50) and sports pins (\$4.25) earned outside of the Troop meeting. AHG Badge Requirements earned outside of Troop meetings should be recorded and approved by the Unit Leader or Troop Advancement Chair using the Additional Badgework Completion Form. Unit Leaders have the right to question AHG Badge Requirements fulfilled outside of the Troop meeting. Girls might bring a display, pictures or videos specific to the badge they earned outside of the Troop meeting or make a short presentation to the Troop or their Unit at a scheduled time. Please set up time with your Unit Leader. If there is a dispute regarding requirements, it will be brought to the attention of the Unit Leader and Advancement Chair and, if necessary, the Troop Board for their consideration. All badges are ordered bi-annually through the Troop Coordinator. Individuals will be invoiced for their individual badges. Individuals may not purchase badges or insignia through the AHGstore.

Girl and Adult Member Uniforms

The AHG Official Uniform is to be worn to all meetings and ceremonies. It can be worn to service projects, fundraising activities, and Troop activities that do not require more casual dress. While the girls are in uniform, they are to be conscious of the fact that they are representing AHG and the Charter Organization and making lasting impressions on those around them. AHG Class B T-shirts or Troop spirit wear can be worn, when appropriate, to AHG activities that are more casual in nature or an outdoor-type event. AHG Uniforms, Class B T-shirts, and spirit wear can be purchased through the AHG online store at <https://store.americanheritagegirls.org/>

For placement of the badges and insignia on vests and sashes, please refer to:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SG9pfzsrWmEJrzgP8mg0WSY-SEC7laab/view?usp=drive_link

The AHG Official Girl Uniforms consist of the following items:



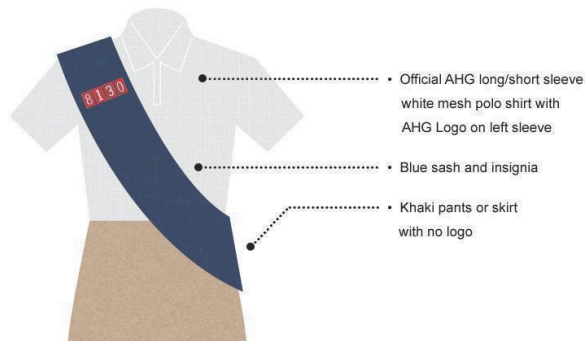
Pathfinder (Grade K): Light blue t-shirt, Pathfinder necklace *included with dues*, navy blue bottoms are **not** included with dues



Tenderheart (Grade 1st-3rd): White polo shirt and navy bottoms are required. Blue handkerchief, red vest, *optional*



Explorer (Grade 4th-6th): White polo, khaki or navy bottoms are required. Navy vest, red handkerchief, *optional*



Pioneer (Grade 7th & 8th): White polo, khaki or navy bottoms are required. Navy sash, *optional*



Patriot (Grade 9th-12th): Red polo, khaki or navy bottoms are required. Blue sash, *optional*

Class A Uniform

The official uniform for each unit is outlined above. Polo shirts do not have to be “official AHG polo shirts,” but can be purchased at local stores, online, or reused school uniforms. Neckerchiefs may also be purchased locally or reused but should not be embellished nor have add-ons attached. Vests and sashes are not immediately required, but highly encouraged as the primary means of displaying badges and other awards.

Shorts and skirts should be modest and should be at fingertip length for Pathfinders, Tenderhearts, and Explorers, and 1” below fingertip length for Pioneers and Patriots. Skirts with a slit must also be modest and the slit should be no higher than below mid- thigh. Shorts, tights or hosiery should be worn beneath skirts. Jeans, leggings, and jeggings or cargo style shorts are not approved with the Class A uniform; however, jeans are permissible with the Class B t-shirt for service projects and other outings.

Opaque tights under skirts or skorts may be worn in white, navy, or red solid colors and should complement the uniform. Hosiery should be complementary to skin tone or navy and should also complement the uniform.

Closed-toe shoes are required for everyone’s safety. Flip flops, clunky-style boots and sheepskin slipper-style shoes may not be worn.

Class B Uniform (T-shirt)

We will wear these for our weekend outings, service projects and other activities. These will be referred to as the “Class B” uniform ~~and will be covered by your Dues fee:~~

The Class B uniform shirt may be worn with clean and modest pants, jeans, shorts, skirts, or capris. It is our desire that requiring a girl to wear a uniform should in no way hinder her from joining the Organization.

If obtaining an AHG Official Uniform for your daughter is difficult, please speak with the Unit Leader or a member of the Troop Board about your need.

Adult Uniforms and Recognition

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cWdDwa2DMZblljU2DIN51b-x7xR1wbCd/view?usp=drive_link

Volunteers are encouraged to purchase an AHG polo or T-shirt for helping at meetings or events. Volunteers may earn additional recognitions for years of service, their role, or mentoring pins. These may be placed on the AHG official polo or the AHG Leader Lanyard.

Uniforms for Flag Ceremonies

When participating in a Flag Ceremony as a Flag Bearer or Color Guard, the full AHG Official Uniform is required.

Ordering and Purchasing Uniforms:

AHG Uniforms, Class B T-shirts, and spirit wear, for girls and adults, can be purchased through the AHG online store at <https://store.americanheritagegirls.org/> or through the Troop. If order placement is made in conjunction with a troop order, \$2 will be added to offset shipping cost.

Please try to have uniforms by the first meeting. However, we understand orders placed with AHG can take up to six weeks for processing and delivery. Having the appropriate colored polo and coordinating pants or skirt will be required by the third meeting.

Awards and Recognition

AHG provides numerous opportunities for girls to grow by earning awards and recognitions. Although not the focus of the program, they serve as a tool to recognize girls as they grow into women of integrity.

Awards and insignia that AHG offers is listed below:

- Joining Award
- Level Awards
- Faith Awards
- Stars & Stripes Award
- Service Stars
- Badges
- Patches
- Sports Pins

AHG also recognizes the immense value of volunteers by offering tenure pins and other recognitions for their investment in girls and the AHG Ministry.

Award Ceremonies

The Troop plans Award Ceremonies throughout the year so Girl and Adult Members may receive their Awards and Recognitions. Award Ceremonies are open to parents, legal guardians, and families to attend. It is important to the girls that the family attend the ceremony to celebrate their accomplishments. If a girl is unable to attend the ceremony, her recognition will be given to her at the next Troop meeting.

Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibilities and Participation

Parents or legal guardians demonstrate commitment to the girls by encouraging them and supporting them throughout their years in AHG. Girls should arrive at meetings and events on time, in the appropriate uniform and with the necessary handbooks or supplies. Parents or legal guardians can obtain information at check-in for upcoming activities and should monitor Troop communication regularly.

Providing a quality program for Girl Members requires a commitment from all families. Each family should actively participate in the Troop to ensure the success of the Troop as a whole. At times, some families may be asked to serve outside of regular Troop meeting times, some may serve during Troop meetings, and others may experience a blend of both. Prayerfully consider how you might partner with the Troop Ministry Team to build women of integrity.

Volunteer Position Recruitment and Selection

AHG is a family-supported program that encourages both Girl and Adult Members involvement. The Troop will benefit most when utilizing the gifts and strengths from all families. An AHG Troop Board Member would like to connect with you to learn more about your gifts and strengths, and how you might use them within the Troop to grow God's Kingdom. As an Adult Member of AHG you can:

- Serve in the Troop impacting the lives of girls for Christ
- Connect with other like-minded volunteers
- Receive AHG's Heritage Headlines magazine and QuickTakes bi-weekly email that includes program information and opportunities for girls
- Attend AHG Leadership Conferences, Conventions, and AHGequip Live! events
- RightNow Media
- Have access to:
 - Resources in AHGresource
 - Special Member-only discounts such as American Red Cross, Family Life, Great Wolf Lodge, Passport2Purity, Always Icecream, Delicate Seams, Different Drum Sailing Adventures, eKnowledge, For Girls Like You Magazine, Sky Ranch, HSLDA

All AHG volunteers will walk through a selection process by the Troop to discern if and where someone might best fit within the Troop. If selected as a volunteer the adult will complete registration including a registration fee, background check and KEYS to Child Safety Training. The chart below provides information about some of the opportunities to serve within the Troop and the Kingdom impact they have:

Role Type	Roles	Kingdom Impact
Administrative Roles: Establishing integrity in the ministry by demonstrating an inward motivation to do what is right regardless of the cost.	Troop Coordinator Vice Coordinator Registrar Advancement Chair AHGstore Troop Purchaser Troop Secretary	Bringing Girls and volunteers closer to God in their spiritual walk, taking a stand for biblical principles, and making their responsibility for the body of believers known.
Shepherding Roles: Serving the Members of the Troop by contributing to the welfare of others in order to show God's love and the value of each individual involved in the Troop.	Charter Representative Troop Shepherd Unit Leader Assistant Unit Leader Recruitment Coordinator Events Coordinator	
Stewardship Roles: Instilling good stewardship practices of wisely using time, talent and money within the Troop in order to biblically model stewardship of the resources we are given.	Troop Treasurer Troop Fundraising Chair	

Finances

Member Costs

The following is a breakdown of initial and annual costs. Please note these costs are subject to change annually.

Girl Membership	\$40.00, annual registration, paid directly to AHG. There is a \$105 Sister cap (Families with 3+ Girls Registering at the Same Time).
Adult Membership	\$40.00, annual registration, paid directly to AHG. <u>Troop will provide you a Class B shirt for volunteering.</u>
Troop Dues	\$75.00 annual for Pathfinders, Tenderhearts, Explorers, Pioneers and Patriots. May be paid in full at time of registering or split into two payments. Contact the treasurer to discuss payment plans. Dues are paid to the Troop. This fee can be prorated depending on what month a girl joins.
Program Support Fee	\$20.00 (annual) per girl member, to be covered with fundraising \$50 Sister cap (families with 3+ Girls Registering at Same Time). Paid to AHG by the Troop

Fundraising Obligation	See Fundraising Policy and guidelines below. All girls are expected to participate in the Fundraising Activities of the Troop.
Girl Handbook	Pathfinder: \$10.99 + tax + S/H Tenderheart through Explorer: \$19.99+ tax + S/H Pioneer through Patriot: \$19.99+ tax + S/H
Girl Uniform	\$40+ (cost dependent on Girl Level and total items purchased)
Adult Uniform	\$24.00+ (cost dependent on total items purchased)

Troop Dues

The Troop Board annually determines the Troop Budget and the amount of dues to be assessed each Girl Member. The Troop budget includes badges, unit supplies, camping supplies, refreshments for ceremonies, crafts and school supplies, girl and leader recognitions, general office supplies, copies, etc.

A Troop Budget is given annually to parents at the beginning of the Program Year for approval. The Troop's primary sources of income are dues and fundraising by all its members. If you have questions regarding the Troop Budget, please contact the Troop Board.

Program Support Fee

AHG spends far more than \$40 per member to provide the AHG Program. The annual registration fee covers the processing of member registrations, background checks for Volunteers, and group liability coverage provided for both AHG Girl and Adult Members. The remaining cost to provide the AHG Program comes from the assessment of the Program Support Fee, which is \$20 per registered girl paid annually to AHG by the Troop. The fee is assessed each year, beginning in the Troop's second year and every year after. The Program Support Fee covers the development of new Badges and Program components; the maintenance of AHG's website and AHGfamily, the online registration system; as well as the member services provided to each Troop through the AHG Office. Fundraising is the recommended means of raising money to cover the Program Support Fee each year.

Fundraising Policy

Fundraising is an essential activity for the success of a Troop. The funds earned support the Troop Budget, provide for the AHG Program Support Fee obligation, and enable girls and their families to lessen the out-of-pocket costs of the Program. Therefore, each American Heritage Girl Member is expected to participate in this effort. Participation in fundraising provides an intrinsic value for each Girl Member; she will develop her leadership skills and marketing experience as well as life skill development.

Each year, the Troop Board reviews the Troop Budget and sets the fundraising goals for the coming year. The Troop may fundraise as a whole for the operational budget and/or Units may raise funds for a particular project or trip. AHG's fundraising guidelines allow for a Troop to fundraise up to three times per year. It is the goal of the Troop Board to keep fundraising to a minimum. If goals are met with the first fundraiser of the year, additional fundraisers may not be needed. All families will be notified of the financial status of the Troop on a regular basis.

From time to time, the Troop Board will provide fundraising incentive levels that may assist girls with out-of-pocket expenses for activity fees, outdoor experiences, or uniform items. American Heritage Girls, Inc. has been granted a 501(c)3-public charity status.

Fundraising using a girl account system is considered a private benefit (inurement) and not acceptable for a public charity. Private benefit (Girl Accounts) creates a risk for both American Heritage Girls and the Charter Organization; the IRS could decide that either group is in violation of its public charity status and that all fundraising is taxable.

Annual Stewardship Campaign (ASC)

The Annual Stewardship Campaign is an annual opportunity for family and friends of AHG to offer additional financial support to the national organization, so the ministry of AHG can continue reaching more families and girls with its eternally significant message and program. Each registered family will receive information via e-mail about the stewardship campaign and how to participate. Each Troop is asked to encourage Troop family and friend participation, as the campaign is crucial to the health and growth of the American Heritage Girls Ministry.

Benevolence Funds

Benevolence funds are available from time to time for Program-related issues, on a case-by-case basis. Please submit your request in writing to the Troop Coordinator for Troop Board approval. Benevolence Funds are typically not available until after the fall fundraiser is complete. The granting of funds from the Benevolence Fund is not a total coverage benefit but is intended to aid in a specified need. If a family is granted funds for a particular need or event, it is expected that the remainder would be covered by the individual.

A Girl Member who registers in the fall must participate in the fall fundraiser before requesting funds for a special event activity.

Health and Safety

American Heritage Girls values the health and safety of its members and is fully committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. Physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health are integrated into everything a Troop does to ensure as safe a program as possible. The goal is always to provide opportunities for faith, service, and fun in a manner that no injuries occur beyond those that are readily

treatable by simple first aid. Volunteers in American Heritage Girls are responsible for the health and safety of others when participating in Troop meetings, trips, events, and activities. AHG Adult Members are accountable for administering the AHG Program in a safe and responsible way by adhering to AHG policies. AHG seeks to equip Charter Organizations, Troops, and members with policies and guidelines which are designed to prevent incidents, reduce risk, protect members and the Charter Organization, and create boundaries.

These policies and guidelines have been established because of the real need to protect members from known hazards which have been identified through knowledge, expertise and experience. Any restrictions or limitations on certain activities should not be viewed as being overly protective; rather, they should be viewed as facilitating safe and enjoyable experiences for the AHG Members of your Troop. Health and safety knowledge can be enhanced when this resource is paired with AHG Foundations training, the BEST Practices: Health and Safety Quick Guide, and AHG's Health and Safety Policies and Guidelines.

Two-Deep Leadership Policy: For the safety and protection of both girls and adults, there will be at least two Adult Members during all AHG Troop meetings, trips, activities and events. Note: A pair of Adult Members who are husband and wife is not adequate to establish two-deep leadership.

Upon completion of the registration process including the application, criminal background check, and KEYS to Child Safety Training, and membership fee payment, volunteers will receive a Member ID badge. AHG volunteers must wear their Member ID badge in a lanyard, so they are easily identifiable as Adult Members. In addition, two-deep leadership and appropriate girl/adult ratios are always maintained when girls and adults are present together at a Troop/Unit activity, meeting, or event.

For more information about AHG's Health and Safety Policies and Guidelines surrounding the following topics, please go to https://www.ahgfamily.org/health_and_safety_guide/#/.

Troop Meetings

The Troop gathers at Jenkins Memorial, two Wednesday's a month from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Please see the Troop calendar for specific dates, as some meetings are scheduled around holidays and other parish or school events. Please sign your daughter in at the entryway table and be sure to check the table for special events fliers or other information. Please ensure your daughter eats dinner before coming to the meeting; food, candy, and gum are not allowed during Troop meetings, though exceptions for medical conditions may be approved by the Troop Board. Please be mindful that the troop leaders may still be setting up right until the meeting starts; do not leave your daughter unsupervised until the official start time of 6:30.

Troop meetings typically follow the agenda below:

6:20-6:30	Sign in
6:30	Announcements as a troop in the Church, Flag Ceremony, prayer, and devotional time
6:50	Badge, Service, or Patch work in individual Units; clean up
7:50	Retiring of the flag and closing prayer as a troop

We invite families to stay for the opening or closing flag ceremony. After the flag ceremony, announcements will be made about upcoming events, and any pertinent information will be given at that time.

Permission Slips and Health Forms

AHG permission slips are required for troop meetings and any field trips or activities requiring transportation outside of a regular Troop meeting. If a girl forgets her permission slip, she will not be able to attend. Troop Volunteers are not authorized to transport or supervise girls without a permission slip. Permission slips are completed electronically or given out at least one meeting prior to the activity.

Meeting Form:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y5aJZOv-ActWPSyQcM2YxoriSG6JUzB4/view?usp=drive_link

Trip or Event Form:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14Hcb0qZ80LPGMccho_DQ0Q3eSC4yOopJ/view?usp=drive_link

Health and Medical Forms are also required for all meetings, events, and activities. Health and Medical Forms are good for one year but need to be updated if changes occur.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BFtSegCwY_GMei2blj8HLqtbUq8qszsN/view?usp=drive_link

Troop Trips

A Troop Board member or other volunteer must complete and submit a Troop Trip Notification in AHGfamily for all Troop/Unit trips. All trips require approval by the Charter Representative prior to the activity. The appropriate number of certified First Aid/CPR adults must be present at all Troop activities. Girl or Adult Members participating in a High Adventure activity must complete and submit the **High Adventure Health and Medical Form**, which requires a doctor's signature. It is the responsibility of the family to make sure that this information is provided. High Adventure Health and Medical Forms are good for one year.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1We40Rgrqo0Q0DU7zI9o1kSPeFlZ0S-F1/view?usp=drive_link

Transportation for Troop Activities

All potential drivers for Troop activities must complete a Troop Transport Form,

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VYGkAPT20QXR6Cusq-pqC2MvAzjb0Mrs/view?usp=drive_link,

verifying auto insurance, seatbelts and driver's license information. The form is filed with the Troop Coordinator and the Unit Leader in charge of the activity. Parents choosing not to complete the form may not transport girls other than their own daughter(s) on a Troop-related activity. This form should be updated annually.

Appropriate Girl/Leader ratios and two-deep leadership should be maintained in each vehicle. All drivers must be licensed and at least 21 years of age. The AHG Troop Board reserves the right to deny a driver based on automobile safety or driving record. The driver's motor vehicle record may be randomly

checked. Each vehicle will be provided with a Troop Trip packet, including directions, maps, and contact information. Vehicles traveling more than 75 miles should each have a first-aid kit available.

At this time, parents must arrange transportation to and from troop meetings and special events. The Troop will not be arranging carpools.

Pick Up and Drop Off

Outings begin and end at the specified special event location. If the event is a drop off event, please sign in your daughter before you leave and have turned in necessary permission slips. Do not allow them to walk in unaccompanied by an adult. To ensure the safety of Girl Members, if a parent or guardian is unable to provide transportation to or from a Troop meeting or activity, a written note must be provided at the start of the meeting indicating which other adult(s) are authorized to do so. Verbal approval alone is not accepted.

Troop Event, Meeting or Activity Cancellation

A Troop meeting or activity may be canceled if:

- There is inclement weather
- 50% of the Members are absent due to illness
- There are not enough Volunteers to provide 2-deep leadership or maintain girl/adult ratios

The Troop will NOT follow Anne Arundel County Schools cancellations. The final decision rests with the Troop Coordinator and Unit Leaders. If there is inclement weather we will make a decision two hours prior to a meeting, event, or activity. If there is a cancellation, we will email everyone in the Troop so please plan to check your in-box.

Girl Visitors

From time to time, girls may like to invite a friend to visit a Troop meeting. The following procedure is to be followed when inviting a guest(s):

1. The Troop Coordinator and Unit Leader should be notified at least one week in advance of a girl visitor.
2. A **NEW** girl and their parent may visit **one** time before registering as a Troop Girl Member.
3. All visitors attending a "Bring a Friend" Activity sponsored by the Troop must provide a completed permission slip with emergency contact information.
4. All other visitation situations can be communicated with the Troop Coordinator in advance.

Sibling Policy

We recognize that parents may sometimes need to bring children who are not AHG members to Troop meetings and events. Bringing children who are not AHG members is permissible, provided the parents strictly adhere to the following rules:

- Children must remain at their parent's side, or at the side of an adult designated by the child's parent, at all times during the meeting or activity. Children should never be left unsupervised.
- Siblings may not participate in AHG activities, as this may create logistical problems for those organizing the meetings and it may cause distractions.
- Parents are to remove disruptive children.
- Any Volunteer taking an active role in a meeting is expected to make arrangements with another adult to supervise her non-AHG children.
- Siblings are not permitted on overnight activities, per AHG policy.

Administration of Medication Policy

1. AHG Girl Members and Volunteers are discouraged from taking any medication at AHG events unless absolutely necessary.
2. No AHG Girl Member is allowed to self-medicate while participating in an AHG meeting or activity. Exceptions include inhalers and Epi-Pens, which may be kept on hand for emergency use. Parents will indicate in writing that the girl is in possession of the medication and possesses the knowledge and ability to administer her own medication.
3. The AHG Volunteer fulfilling the Troop Health and Safety Lead role can accept the responsibility of making sure an AHG Girl Member takes the necessary prescribed medication at the appropriate time. The Health and Safety Lead must first receive a completed medical form and Request for Medication Administration Form.
4. AHG policy does not mandate, nor encourage, the Health and Safety Lead to dispense medication. If a Volunteer is uncomfortable administering medication, efforts should be made to make it possible for the girl to still attend the function. If all ideas are exhausted with no resolve, in an effort to keep the AHG Program available to all girls, please contact your AHG Member Services Troop Coach to further problem solve.
5. No AHG girls may bring over-the-counter medications for self-administration. Over-the-counter medications may be administered by the Health and Safety Lead in keeping with the instructions on each girl's Request for Medication Administration Form. Parents must provide these over-the-counter medications to the Health and Safety Lead at the start of an event and include instructions on the form. These are kept in the possession of the Health and Safety Lead for the duration of the event.
6. Administration of all medication will be done strictly per the instructions provided on the Request for Medication Administration Form.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FjJ-dCaYmzhVKCLM-OR17HcJczhgHjT_/view?usp=drive_link

Sick Policy

An AHG Girl Member should be 24 hours fever-free or 48 hours since last vomit before attending any AHG meeting, event, or activity. If a girl has an unidentified rash, she is asked to remain at home until determining its source and whether it is contagious. If medication is needed, the request for Administration of Medication should be provided to the Health and Safety Lead before the meeting, event, or activity.

First Aid and CPR Volunteer(s)

The Troop will ensure that a First Aid and CPR certified volunteer as well as a First Aid kit are present at all meetings, events, and activities. Each girl's health and medical information will also always be readily available.

AHG Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Policy

Alcohol and drugs are prohibited at any AHG function or activity. Since AHG Adult Volunteers serve as examples for Girl Members, smoking is not allowed in the presence of girls at AHG meetings, events, or activities. The use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco by an AHG Girl Member should be reported to the girl's parents. The use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco by an AHG Volunteer during an AHG event should be reported to the Charter Organization Representative.

Camp Skills, Knife Safety and Firearms Policy

Persons using or possessing firearms must comply with all local, state, and federal gun laws, including their concealed weapons and firearms policy.

Knives can be an important and exciting piece of equipment for outdoor adventures, though they bring with them an inherent increased risk. Knives may only be brought to an AHG activity when deemed appropriate by chaperoning AHG Adult Volunteers and included on a pack list for the AHG activity. If pocketknives are permitted at a Troop activity, Troop Volunteers will train girls about safe and appropriate use of a pocketknife.

Electronics Policy

Cell phones or any other related electronic communication devices are not to be turned on or visible during meeting or activity time. Girls must consult with their Unit Leader or Troop Coordinator for permission to call out to a parent or guardian when needed. Other electronic devices, music players, gaming systems, etc. are not to be brought to Troop meetings, events, or activities. Photos taken by Adult Volunteers during Troop activities may not be posted online or passed along in e-mails/texts/social

media without the direct consent of all families included. Consent is granted or denied by way of a signed media release form in each family's registration packet.

AHG Youth Protection and Child Safety

American Heritage Girls Registered Adults must submit to a background check and complete AHG's KEYS to Child Safety Training, which details the keys to protecting our youth and organization. As volunteers of a youth-serving organization it is our responsibility to be properly trained and equipped to provide a safe environment. AHG volunteers are the gatekeepers and play the most important safety role by holding the sacred keys to the hearts and minds of the children of God. AHG Registered Adults must wear a Member ID badge in a lanyard, so they are easily identifiable. In addition, two-deep leadership and appropriate girl/adult ratios are always maintained when girls and adults are present together at a meeting, event, or activity.

Girl/Adult Ratios by Level are:

- Pathfinder: **6** girls per 1 Registered Adult
- Tenderheart: **6** girls per 1 Registered Adult
- Explorers: **8** girls per 1 Registered Adult
- Pioneers: **10** girls per 1 Registered Adult
- Patriots: **12** girls per 1 Registered Adult

Bullying and Conflict

As an American Heritage Girls Member, girls and adults promise to be compassionate, loyal and respectful. Bullying between girls or adults will not be tolerated. Those involved in the Troop, this includes families of Troop Member, are expected to reflect Christ's love and the principles of Biblical Conflict Resolution when conflict does arise.

Steps to Conflict Resolution

1. **Seek Biblical guidance – Humble yourself.** The Bible addresses conflict consistently. Below are a few verses for consideration:

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do."

- Colossians 3:12

"There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

-Proverbs 12:18

“Know this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God.”

James 1:19-20

2. **Understand the uniqueness of each individual.** Identifying personality traits, spiritual gifts and preferred management styles will help the Troop Coordinator understand the “motivators” each person possesses. Most conflict is the result of a lack of understanding. The conflict may arise from a lack of understanding of the individual’s personality, a lack of understanding of a process, or a lack of understanding of the “why” behind the “what.”
3. **Honor the feelings of each individual.** Remember that a person’s concerns are very real to them, regardless of whether anyone else agrees with them or sees things their way. Seeking to truly understand another’s reasoning and perspective is key to successful conflict resolution. Helping each other understand perspective and reiterating the concerns of another honors the person and helps everyone develop an understanding of others’ feelings. Consider starting a conversation with, “Help me understand...” and remember not to be so busy trying to be understood as to understand.
4. **Retrace the loop.** As mentioned earlier, most conflict comes from a lack of understanding. Review the chain of events that led up to the conflict, to determine how the lack of understanding came to be in the first place.
5. **Deal with the conflict in a timely manner.** Allowing conflict to fester only makes it worse. It is important that the parties in conflict meet as soon as possible to begin working towards a resolution.
6. **Do not allow the conflict to steal the joy of serving or undermine the organization’s Mission and Vision.** Nothing will wear down members quicker than unresolved or continued conflict. Pray for the armor of God to surround those involved and guide them to a swift and peaceful resolution. Remember that people cannot be forced to act as we would like; we can only make choices to which others respond and create an environment where others are free to make the right choices, too.

Conflict Management Strategy: L.O.V.E.

L – Look for the good. It takes a special effort to focus on the good instead of the bad in a situation. Assume good intentions. Love is kind. Love hopes.

O – Talk only to those individuals who are related to the problem or will be able to help solve the problem. Speaking about the situation to any outside parties is gossip and potentially destructive. Love always protects.

V – Value one another. Christ did! He gave His life for each of us. Surely, we can hold our tongues and communicate in love with each other. Love leads to trust.

E – Enjoy the differences. God made each of us unique. We all have different talents, gifts, and abilities. None of us do things the same way others can. Love is patient.

It is the goal of the Troop to resolve all conflict; however, if the conflict cannot be resolved amicably, the adult and/or girl involved may be asked to leave the Troop or step down in leadership as needed.

Helping AHG Girls Live a Life of Virtue

AHG unashamedly believes, teaches, and practices Biblical principles throughout its Program. AHG is committed to developing each girl's character, mentoring girls on how to apply the truths of God's Word to every aspect of life.

It is the expectation of AHG, Inc. that Girl Members not only subscribe to, but also strive to live according to, the values represented in the AHG Oath and Creed, to which they agreed when they became a member. But along with this expectation, it is understood that girls face temptation just as adults do and are not without sin. Because we all fall short from time to time, it is important that the AHG Troop remain a place of grace and truth. Especially during their adolescent years, girls are trying to determine who they are and how their faith and the culture play into that identity. AHG serves a critical role in guiding girls toward their identity in Christ. It is intended to be a ministry of transformation, a ministry which surrounds girls with godly adults who will offer sound Biblical advice and encouragement. AHG should be a safe place for girls to navigate through the confusion clouding the current moral landscape.

When a girl falls short of living up to the AHG Oath and Creed, it is not a time for her immediate dismissal from the Troop. It is a time when a girl needs the Christ-centered program of AHG, her parents, her church and the faith-filled adults of her Troop the most. When a girl engages in behavior that contradicts the Oath or Creed, it is important that she understands her error and is given an opportunity to change. These behaviors might include, but are not limited to: Gossip, bullying, stealing, sexual activity outside the context of marriage (whether opposite-sex or same-sex*), illegal use of drugs or alcohol, etc. When Troop Leadership becomes aware that a girl is engaging in such behavior, there are a number of steps that ought to precede dismissal from the Troop:

1. Depending on the gravity of the behavior, the parents of the girl should be notified and included in the process. If the Charter Organization has policies regarding the behaviors being addressed, please refer to the Charter Organization for input, if agreeable to the parent. With parent approval, the trusted Unit Leader and/or Troop Shepherd plus one other adult, maintaining two-deep-leadership, should discuss their concerns with the girl in a loving manner, stating the reason for their concern and the ways in which the behavior contradicts the Oath and/or Creed. Share the Scriptural references regarding these behaviors. Girls should be given an opportunity to show remorse, repent, and determine a plan

for changed behavior. Accountability should be established in a way that preserves confidentiality and promotes youth safety as described in AHG's KEYS to Child Safety Training.

2. If the Girl Member does *not* show remorse, does *not* agree to a plan of action, or repeats the behavior of concern, Troop Leadership should meet with the girl's parents/guardians as soon as possible, no matter how small the infraction. Troop Leadership should explain in a loving manner why the behavior is of concern; why it contradicts the AHG Oath/Creed; and what steps have been taken to assist the girl in addressing the issue. Following this meeting, girls should be given another opportunity to show remorse, repent, and determine a plan for changed behavior. Accountability should be established in a way that preserves confidentiality and promotes youth safety as described in AHG's KEYS to Child Safety Training.

3. If the Girl Member denies the behavior while the evidence is overwhelming, Troop Leadership must stand for truth and challenge the Girl Member to be truthful. Troop Leadership should explain that second chances are available to those who desire change; but where truth cannot be found, additional chances will not be offered. If the Girl Member refuses to be truthful, then Troop Leadership should meet with her parents or guardians to explain the evidence, to describe the consequences that are available depending upon the Girl Member's willingness or unwillingness to be truthful, and to request that the parents or guardians counsel their Girl Member. Troop Leadership should offer the parents. Or guardian and the Girl Member 24 to 48 hours to respond to the evidence and the possible consequences.

4. If the Girl Member continues to not accept responsibility for the behavior, does not show remorse, does not agree to a plan of action, or repeats the behavior of concern, Troop Leadership should again meet with the girl and her parents or guardians. At this meeting, discussions should be had around engaging a pastor, priest or other church leader within the girl's preferred denomination. Outside ministries that specialize in the issue at hand may be engaged at this time. The object of this meeting is to again work on a plan of action to assist the girl in understanding her behavior and its consequences, and work to overcome it. If the parents or guardians and girl understand the concern around the behavior and are willing to implement a plan for change, then the girl should be allowed to remain in the Troop. Troop volunteers are not expected to provide counsel, which is the job of the parents or guardians, but rather encourage the Girl Member and recall her inherent dignity.

5. If the above avenues have all been exhausted and the girl continues her behavior, refuses to recognize the behavior as contradictory to the Oath/Creed, and/or poses a threat to other girls in the Troop, her membership in her American Heritage Girls Troop will be terminated. The goal for every Troop should be to keep the girl in the Troop. The decision to ask a girl to leave a Troop should be covered in prayer and discernment, and after seeking the counsel of the Charter Representative and Charter Organization. The Troop's AHG Troop Coach should be notified if a girl is asked to leave the Troop.