THE AMERICAN LEGION

Department of Washington

Evergreen Boys & Girls State

Post Recruiter Handbook

2027 Session | June 20-26, 2027

EBGS-WA.org

At a Glance

Location: Warm Beach Conference Center, 20800 Marine Dr, Stanwood, WA 98292

Cost: $700 per delegate ($350 Post tuition + $350 student registration)

Transportation: travel to and from EBGS is a Student/Post/District responsibility

Funding: No qualified student should ever be turned away for lack of funding – please contact the office for help obtaining additional funding

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Quick-Start Checklist for New Post Chairs

New to this role? Start here. This page is the whole job in ten steps. Everything else in this handbook explains these steps in more detail, so use it as a reference once you get going.

1. Get appointed. Make sure your Post Commander sends your name, email, and phone number to the District Chairperson and to Office@EvergreenBoysState.org so we can share updates and information with you.
2. Review the EBGS website (ebgs-wa.org) so you know the program dates, cost, and location.
3. In the fall, contact your local high schools. Ask for a point of contact, ideally a counselor, JROTC instructor, or teacher who has been to Boys State or Girls State. Give them contact flyers and application forms and ask them to suggest candidates.
4. Meet with candidates as a group to explain the program, then schedule individual interviews.
5. Interview each candidate. Interviews can be informal or use the scoring form in the Forms section. Score generously – this is about fit, not competition between students.
6. Notify selected students and their parents right away. Don't wait!
7. Have each selected student complete the online Registration Form immediately.
8. Submit your Post's online Sponsorship Agreement Form immediately.
9. Submit your Post's payment as soon as you know how many students you're sending.
10. Stay in touch with students and parents at least once a month until the program starts.

Short on funds? Never turn away a qualified student for money reasons. Email Office@EvergreenBoysState.org and the program will help find funding.

Introduction

Dear Legion Family Members,

Evergreen Boys & Girls State is now in its second year as a co-educational program, open to all high school juniors. Delegates still form mock cities, run for office, pass laws, and build lifelong friendships, exactly as they always have.

We saw some exciting changes in the program's dynamic with the addition of young women at our inaugural co-ed event in 2026. A full evaluation of the two-year pilot will be presented to the Department in 2027.

The best recruiting tool we have is a real person visiting a school in person. If your Post sent a delegate to EBGS last year, ask that student to help you talk to this year's junior class.

As always, picking a week for EBGS is never easy. Sports, school schedules, speech and debate, scouting, family vacations, and summer jobs all compete for students' time. Some schools are willing to let students reschedule finals or take exams remotely so they can attend. Students and parents should coordinate that directly with their school.

Also, keep in mind that there are hundreds of high schools and homeschool support groups in Washington. The few people on the Department committee cannot reach all of them alone. You, in the Posts and Districts, are the front line. Thank you for the work you do to make this program possible.

Respectfully,

Your EBGS Staff and Committee Members

Where Your Post Fits In

Your Post is the engine behind Evergreen Boys & Girls State. This section covers the two key roles at the Post level, and what to do after your delegates come home.

The Post Commander's Role

Appoint a Boys & Girls State Chairperson or form a small committee. The right person isn't necessarily someone who attends every meeting. Look for someone who communicates well with teenagers: a teacher, coach, scout leader, or reporter can all be a good fit. Reach out to them personally and explain why you think they'd do well in the role.

The Post EBGS Chairperson's Role

This is one of the most important volunteer jobs in the Legion. Many Boys State and Girls State alumni have gone on to lead in government, the military, and business, including a President of the United States.

Move quickly! Contact your high school's counselor, government teacher, or principal early, as well as any local clergy or scout leaders who might know strong candidates. You and your Post make the final call on who gets sponsored, but recommendations from school staff are welcome.

Read this handbook and the Citizens' Manual to understand the program from a delegate's point of view. If you have questions, reach out to your District Chairperson, District Commander, or the EBGS Program Office at Office@EvergreenBoysState.org.

Aim to have a list of possible interviewees by March or April, but it's never too late to start. An application form and an interview scoring form are both included in the Forms section of this handbook.

When picking people to help with interviews, choose Legion members who are comfortable talking with teenagers and can judge attitude and readiness fairly.

The online application system on the ebgs-wa.org website does not replace your personal contact with local schools; it is intended to supplement your local efforts. Take advantage of both.

After EBGS: Reporting Back to Your Post

Once your delegates return, host a fall dinner and invite them, their parents, school officials, and local media. Give each delegate a few minutes to share their experience with your Post. Keep the spotlight on the students; that's the whole point of the evening.

Consider inviting your EBS/EBGS alumni to help select next year's delegates. Their firsthand experience is valuable to your selection committee, and it keeps last year's momentum going into this year's recruiting season.

About the Program

A Short History

Boys State began in the 1930s, when Fascist-inspired youth camps were telling American boys that democracy was outdated. Two Illinois Legionnaires and educators, Hayes Kennedy and Harold Card, built a program to counter that message by giving boys hands-on experience running their own government. The first Boys State was held at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in June 1935. Since then, more than a million young men have taken part nationally.

In recent years, the Legion and Auxiliary in several states, including Maine and New Mexico, have collaborated to merge their separate Boys State and Girls State programs into a single program that incorporates the best of both.

Washington State, along with California, later created a separate co-educational version of the program called Boys & Girls State, run independently from the American Legion Auxiliary's Girls State program.

Why Evergreen Boys & Girls State Transitioned to a Co-Ed Format

Citizenship, leadership, and self-government matter for every student. The traditional Girls State program is a great fit for many young women, but not everyone is comfortable in an all-girls environment.

Evergreen Boys & Girls State gives young women who would not attend an all-girls event the opportunity to participate in a co-educational format while maintaining the same mission and structure the program has always had.

Program Goals

The American Legion built this program around six core goals:

- Build civic leadership and pride in American citizenship.
- Grow a genuine interest in how government works.
- Teach American traditions and where our founding principles come from.
- Build a lasting commitment to our constitutional form of government.
- Instill a sense of personal responsibility to community, state, and nation.
- Pass on the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy to the next generation.

How the Program Works

EBGS runs on a "learn by doing" model. Citizens build fictional cities, counties, and a state government from the ground up. They form political parties, run campaigns, hold elections, and staff a bicameral legislature and courts, all modeled on Washington State's actual government structure. Experienced staff coach them along the way but let the citizens run things themselves.

Each Citizen is randomly assigned to a city and a political party prior to arrival, so parties end up roughly balanced. Cities are named after Washington trees, counties after mountain ranges or bodies of water, and the whole simulated state is called "Evergreen."

A Non-Partisan Program

EBGS political parties are entirely fictional and are not modeled on any real party. Citizens decide their own party's positions as part of the learning experience. The goal is for young citizens to understand how government works, not to reach any particular political outcome.

Eligibility and Attendance

To attend Evergreen Boys & Girls State, a student must:

- Have just completed their junior year of high school at the time of attendance (Running Start counts as high school for this purpose).
- Be between 15 and 18 years old.
- Be willing and genuinely interested in attending and participating fully.
- Not have attended any previous Boys State or Girls State session.

A few other notes:

- Foreign exchange students may find the program difficult, since it relies on some prior knowledge of Washington State government.
- Selection is made by the local Post, Unit, District, Riders Chapter, or SAL squadron. Selection should be fair to all eligible candidates and based on citizenship, leadership, character, scholarship, and service. Race and creed cannot be a factor, and applicants should never be asked for a photograph as part of the selection process.
- Only select students who can commit to the full week. Late arrival and early departure are not allowed, though brief virtual check-ins for school testing can sometimes be arranged.

The EBGS Program Office reserves the right to accept or decline applications as well. The Chairman (or a designee) approves attendance, and the on-site Director (or a designee) can dismiss a Citizen during the program for breaking the rules, regardless of who sponsored them.

Dates, Location, and Fees

Time and Place

EBGS 2027 runs at Warm Beach Conference Center in Stanwood, Washington, from Sunday, June 20th through Saturday, June 26th, 2027.

Item	Details
Registration window	Noon to 2:30 PM, Sunday, June 20th
Program officially begins	3:00 PM, Sunday, June 20th
First meal served	Dinner, 5:30 PM, Sunday, June 20th
Program ends	10:30 AM, Saturday, June 26th

Delegates should not arrive before noon on June 20th and should eat lunch beforehand, as housing and meals are not available before registration opens or after the program ends.

Cost and Financial Aid

The total program fee is $700 per delegate, traditionally split as $350 tuition (paid by the sponsoring Post) and $350 registration (paid by the student or their family). Families able to cover the full $700 are welcome to do so.

> **Funding Should Never Be a Barrier**
>
> If your Post can't fully fund every qualified student, do not turn them away.
>
> Interview them and have them complete the online registration form.
>
> Then email Office@EvergreenBoysState.org and the program will help you find funding.

Post sponsors can pay online or by check (payable to "Evergreen Boys & Girls State," with the delegate's name in the memo line). Unpaid balances can be settled in cash, check, credit card, or money order at on-site registration in June.

Sponsorship and Early Enrollment

Submit your Post's forms and fees as soon as possible after you select delegates. Reservations are first-come, first-served. Registrations and fees will be accepted up through June 20th if space remains. Mail checks to: Evergreen Boys & Girls State, American Legion Department of WA, PO Box 3917, Lacey, WA 98509-3917, c/o EBGS Registrar.

Civic, fraternal, educational, religious, labor, and other community organizations are welcome to sponsor tuition for a deserving student, even if that student was selected by a Post.

Transportation

Getting to and from EBGS is the responsibility of the delegate and their family. Some Districts or Posts help coordinate carpools or rides at the local level, but the Department of Washington and EBGS staff are not responsible for arranging or funding transportation.

Health, Safety, and Program Structure

Physical Exams and Special Needs

A physician's exam is not required, but every applicant must complete the medical questionnaire and meet standard health requirements. EBGS welcomes applicants with special needs; any arrangements and related costs are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization or the family.

Health and Medical Care

EBGS staff provide first aid and can arrange medical attention if needed, and local healthcare facilities are available for anything more serious. Staff do not administer over-the-counter medication such as ibuprofen or allergy relief, so delegates should bring what they need from home. Evergreen Boys & Girls State is not responsible for injuries or illness during the program.

Student Safety

Delegates should review the on-site rules on the website and in the Citizens' Manual. Intoxicants, tobacco, vaping products, illegal drugs, firearms, other weapons, and explosives are strictly forbidden, as are gambling, vandalism, and leaving campus without permission.

EBGS has a zero-tolerance policy for cyberbullying, including harassment or threats made through digital devices or online platforms.

Male and female delegates are housed in separate, supervised dormitories with clearly defined boundaries. Unauthorized entry into the opposite sex's dorm area is strictly prohibited.

A citizen who breaks these rules is subject to immediate dismissal, with no refund and no future participation in the program.

Rest and Free Time

EBGS is not a recreational camp. There's no time built in for sports, swimming, or other typical camp activities. The week is intense, and any free time is meant for genuine rest, not recreation. There is some time built into the schedule for fun activities such as the chant contest and a talent show.

Selecting Your Delegates

Selection is not a competition between students. Judge each applicant on their own merit: is this student a good fit for EBGS? There's no cap on how many students a Post can select. If you have more qualified students than funding, contact your District Chairperson or Office@EvergreenBoysState.org for help finding additional funding.

What to Look For

The strongest candidates usually show:

- A genuine interest in the program and a real desire to attend.
- A positive attitude and good citizenship.
- Willingness to commit to the entire week.
- Leadership potential, whether or not it's shown through a title or office.

Helpful, but not required:

- A recommendation from a teacher, counselor, or principal.
- A strong GPA (a strict cutoff isn't necessary, and a motivated average student often gets more out of the week than a disengaged high achiever).
- Community involvement (Scouting, church, 4-H, FFA, YMCA, etc.), school activities, work experience, or a family connection to the American Legion.

These are *guidelines*, not hard requirements. If a student genuinely wants to attend and grow from the EBGS experience, give their application a fair look even if they don't check every box.

Interview Tips

- Plan 10-15 minutes per candidate.
- Score on a 1-10 scale (1 = unacceptable, 5 = average, 10 = outstanding), and have every committee member score at the same time.
- Where possible, invite parents to sit in on interviews.
- The one non-negotiable question: can the student commit to the entire week, June 20th through June 26th, noon to noon? Only a "yes" moves a candidate forward.

A full scoring form with sample interview questions is in the Forms section at the end of this handbook.

Recruiting Roles and Responsibilities

District Chairpersons

- Send your current contact information to Office@EvergreenBoysState.org.
- Before December 1st, collect contact information for every Post's EBGS Chairperson in your District and forward it to the EBGS Program Office.
- Make sure each Post Chairperson understands their responsibilities.
- Attend District conferences and roundtables and take part in EBGS events in your District.
- Forward student applications to Post Chairpersons and follow up to make sure applications and registrations are moving on schedule.
- Support Post Chairpersons with advice as needed.
- Serve on the EBGS Board of Directors.

Post Chairpersons

- Contact local high schools as soon as you're appointed.
- From November through February, reconnect with every high school in your area to confirm they have flyers and your contact information.
- Identify a contact person at each school (principal, counselor, teacher, librarian, JROTC instructor or coach).
- Arrange a fall or winter school visit to talk about the program.
- Consider running a Post fundraiser if you need to raise money to sponsor students.
- Select delegates and submit forms and fees to the Department as soon as possible.
- Promote the program to other community organizations to build goodwill for the Legion.

Note: space permitting, EBGS accepts registrations right up to the start date. Contact Office@EvergreenBoysState.org with questions.

The Department has two simple goals: at least one EBGS Citizen per Post, and at least one per high school.

The Recruiting Process, Start to Finish

This is the complete recruiting process in one place. Everything else in this handbook supports these steps.

Step 1: Get Ready

Confirm your appointment with your District Chairperson. Review ebgs-wa.org and this handbook so you know the program well before you talk to anyone else. Download flyers and applications from the website for distribution.

Step 2: Reach Out to Schools

In the fall, contact your local high school's counselor, Junior class advisor, principal, or vice principal. JROTC instructors and club advisors are also excellent contacts. Ask for a point of contact, ideally someone who has been to Boys State or Girls State themselves.

Step 3: Distribute Applications

Give your school contact flyers and application forms for interested students. These forms, included in this handbook, are an information-gathering tool. Schools can hand them out directly to students.

Step 4: Use the Online Application System as a Backup, Not a Replacement

Students can also apply online at ebgs-wa.org. These online applications get routed to the right District or Post Chairperson, but they are meant to complement your in-person recruiting, not replace it. If you receive a lead this way, please contact the student quickly. Students who don't hear back promptly often commit to other summer programs instead.

Step 5: Interview and Select

Interview every candidate (see "Selecting Your Delegates" for tips and a scoring form). You don’t need to wait until May to do this – you can start selecting and registering students immediately! Notify selected students and their parents as soon as possible after the interview, ideally the same day.

Step 6: Register

Give selected students the *Delegate Registration Checklist* and have them complete the online Registration Form right away. Submit your Post's online *Sponsorship Agreement Form* as soon as possible. As soon as you know how many students you're sponsoring, send payment (check or online) to the Department.

Registration is complete only when all three of these are done:

- The online Registration Form is submitted.
- The Post Chairperson has completed the Sponsorship Agreement Form.
- Full payment has been received.

Step 7: Stay in Touch

Contact each student - and their parents - at least once a month between selection and the program start date, Father's Day weekend, June 20th. Talk through transportation plans along the way. Students plan their summer months in advance, so early, consistent contact is what keeps a commitment from slipping.

If you have multiple delegates, consider helping them arrange to carpool to and from the program.

Make It Easier with Digital Tools

- A QR code linking straight to the online application is an easy addition to any flyer or classroom visit.
- Consider a short video or a post on your Post's social media featuring a recent alumnus talking about their experience.
- See the website for ready-to-use materials.

Scholarship Opportunities

Scholarship	Award
Samsung American Legion Scholarship	$1,250 minimum at the state level; state winner advances to compete for $5,000 or $10,000 awards nationally Scholarship winners receive one award amount only (not a combination). The Samsung Scholarship application must be completed entirely online before midnight June 20th, 2027; no mailed, faxed, or hard-copy materials can be accepted. Apply at legion.org/scholarships/samsung.
Gladys M. Heintz Memorial Boys Nation Scholarship	$1,000 each, for the two male Citizens selected to attend Boys Nation
Women of Distinction Scholarship	$1,000 each, for two female Citizens in lieu of Girls Nation attendance
Governor's Scholarship	$1,000, awarded to the elected Governor of Evergreen
Carl Wipperman Leadership Scholarship	$1,000, for demonstrating outstanding leadership during the week
Harry L. Easley Outstanding Citizen Scholarship	$500, for an outstanding citizen of Evergreen
Leonard Beil Speaker of the House Scholarship	$500, awarded to the Speaker of the House

Several Certificates of Recognition are also awarded during the week, including

- Outstanding Citizen (1 per city)
- City of the Day (daily award)
- Expectations of Excellence (daily award)
- Bar Examination Ace

Delegate Handout Packet

Feel free to copy and hand out this section to the delegates your Post selects. The full Citizen Instructions are also posted at ebgs-wa.org and are not mailed individually.

General Information

Once your Registration Form is received, EBGS will email you and your parents important updates throughout the spring. Add Office@EvergreenBoysState.org to your contacts now so these emails don't land in your spam/junk folder.

What to Bring (refer to website for full list)

- Toiletries: soap, shampoo, deodorant, washcloth, bath towel(s), toothbrush and toothpaste, shaving supplies, feminine hygiene products.
- Clothes hangers and a few plastic bags for laundry.
- A reusable water bottle.
- Any personal religious materials you'd like to bring.
- A notebook and pens, if you like taking notes on paper (the Citizens' Manual has limited space).
- Rain gear. Western Washington weather is unpredictable, even in June.

Dress Codes (refer to website for more information)

Plan on three types of dress during the week:

Code	When / What
C - Casual (about 80% of the week)	Think school-appropriate attire! Jeans or slacks, T-shirts, polo shirts, sweaters/hoodies, knee-length shorts with a shirt, comfortable walking shoes.
D - Dress (Friday Banquet and stage appearances)	Male delegates: dress shirt, slacks, tie, sport coat or suit, dress shoes. Female delegates: equivalent business-style attire
R - Rest and Relaxation (about 10% of the week)	Comfortable athletic or casual wear. Shirts must stay on outside of buildings, and open-toe shoes must stay in the dorm area.

Money

We suggest you bring no more than $25 in cash, in small bills, since the vending machine change machine only breaks $5 bills. A T-shirt is provided at registration.

Electronic Devices

Smartphones, tablets, and laptops aren't required but are handy to have. Free internet is available all week. EBGS is not responsible for lost or damaged electronics, so keep track of your things.

Valuables and Insurance

Leave jewelry and other valuables at home; there's no check-in or safekeeping service on-site. Delegates without existing accident or medical insurance are covered by a group policy for the week as excess coverage on top of any other insurance they may have.

Dining

Meals are served buffet-style and cover a wide range of dietary needs. If you have a specific restriction, you're welcome to bring supplemental food; refrigerators, microwaves, and counter space are available. No peanuts are used anywhere on-site, including the vending machines. You will be asked to complete a form regarding dietary restrictions.

Emergency Contact During the Week

- Emergency messages reach the Director 24 hours a day through Warm Beach Conference Center.
- Email: Office@EvergreenBoysState.org, monitored 6 AM – 11 PM daily.
- Phone: a dedicated EBGS line is posted on ebgs-wa.org during program week.

Mailing Address During EBGS

{Citizen's Name}, c/o Evergreen Boys & Girls State, Warm Beach Conference Center, 20800 Marine Dr, Stanwood, WA 98292.

Advance Preparation

- Preview the prior year's Citizens Manual on ebgs-wa.org.
- Learn the basics of parliamentary procedure.
- If you're interested in running for office, consider reaching out to a real elected official to ask what the job is actually like.
- Learn how a bill becomes a law; then try drafting a practice bill using the form provided online. Bills should focus on state-level topics rather than federal.
- Follow the news so you're ready for discussions and debates on current issues.

Other Opportunities

Play trumpet or bugle? EBGS is always looking for musicians for opening and closing flag ceremonies - email Office@EvergreenBoysState.org if interested.

EBGS also hosts a short version of the American Legion's National High School Oratorical (Constitutional Speech) Contest for delegates interested in public speaking.

Family Day and Closing Ceremonies

Families, sponsoring organizations, school officials, alumni, and the public are all welcome at Family Day.

Event	Details
Breakfast	8:00 AM, Saturday, June 26th: $15/person, ticket required, purchase in advance online or on-site June 20th. No refunds on unused tickets.
Awards Celebration	9:00 AM, Saturday, June 26th: No ticket required, open to the public
Final City Meeting	Immediately following the ceremony. Citizens receive their graduation certificates and pins here, so attendance matters.

Forms

Interview and Scoring Form

Recommended scoring scale: 1 = unacceptable, 5 = average, 10 = strong understanding. Plan 10–15 minutes per candidate, and have every committee member on the panel score each candidate at the same time.

Candidate Information

Name of candidate: _____ Date: _____

Application Review

- Is the application fully and legibly filled out? (Score ___)
- Are parents present at the interview, where possible? (Y/N)

Interview Questions

1. How did you hear about Evergreen Boys & Girls State? What do you think happens during the program, and why should you be selected? (Score ___)
2. Can you commit to the entire week, June 20th-26th, 2027, noon to noon? Only "yes" is an acceptable answer - if the answer is no, explain the attendance requirement to the candidate.
3. What school activities are you involved in? (Score ___)
4. What activities are you involved in outside of school? (Score ___)
5. What is your GPA?
6. What are your plans after high school - college, military, work, or something else? (Score ___)
7. Will you apply for EBGS scholarships? (Y/N)
8. How would you define leadership? What leadership activities have you been part of? (Score ___)
9. How would you define patriotism? Have you taken part in any patriotic activities? (Score ___)
10. How would you define citizenship? Do you consider yourself a good citizen? (Score ___)
11. Have you been involved in student government? (Score ___)
12. Why would you be a good representative of your school? (Score ___)

Committee Discussion (score after the interview)

- Is this student a good representative of our local school district? (Y/N)
- Is this student willing to work within the structure of the EBGS program? (Y/N)
- Is this the student you want representing you, your school, and your Post? (Y/N)

Recommendation: I recommend we send this student to Evergreen Boys & Girls State.

Signed: _____ Total Score: _____

Quick Reference Sheet

Dates

- Program dates: June 20-26, 2027
- Registration forms must be submitted online
- Samsung Scholarship deadline: June 20, 2027 (apply at legion.org/scholarships/samsung)

Location and Time

- Warm Beach Conference Center, Stanwood, WA
- Registration: June 20th, Noon – 2:30 PM
- Family Day Breakfast: June 26th, 8:00 AM ($15/person)
- Awards & Graduation: June 26th, 9:00 AM (free, no ticket needed)

Cost

- $700 total per delegate
    - $350 from sponsor / $350 from family
- Delegates may self-sponsor and pay the entire $700
- Financial aid is available up to the full cost – never turn away a student for lack of funding

Website Links

- ebgs-wa.org
- https://ebgs-wa.org/recruiters/ (resources page)
- https://form.jotform.com/251298944306161 (volunteer to help on-site)
- Facebook: @EBGState | Instagram: @EvergreenBoysGirlsState

Contacts

- Chairman: Tony Morea - Chairman@EvergreenBoysState.org
- Director: [Name] - Director@EvergreenBoysState.org
- Administrative Officer: Carol Reed - Office@EvergreenBoysState.org
- East Region Contact: Mike Montaney - mmontaney@gmail.com
- West Region Contact: Carol Reed - cmreed98058@hotmail.com
- Mail: EBGS Registrar, PO Box 3917, Lacey, WA 98509-3917