



AMERICAN  
HERITAGE  
GIRLS®  
FAITH | SERVICE | FUN

**American Heritage Girls**

**Troop CA2517**

**Chartered By: Lutheran Church of the Cross**

**Troop Policy and Guidelines Handbook**

**2022-2023**

## Table of Contents

<b>ABOUT AHG</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>AHG PROGRAM</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>FINANCES</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>12</b>

## 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:

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

### **Living a Life of Virtue**

AHG unashamedly believes, teaches, and practices Biblical principles throughout its Program and is committed to developing girls' character and to teaching girls 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 strive to live according to the values represented in the AHG Oath and Creed, to which they agreed when they became a member. With this expectation, it is understood that, just like adults, girls face temptation 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. Girls, especially during their adolescent years, are trying to determine who they are and how their faith and the culture play into that identity. AHG can serve a critical role in guiding girls toward their identity in Christ. AHG is meant to be a ministry of transformation—a ministry which surrounds girls with godly adults that will offer them sound Biblical advice, encouragement, grace and truth. AHG should be a safe place for girls to navigate the confusion that is today's 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 which 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 (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 must precede dismissal from the program.

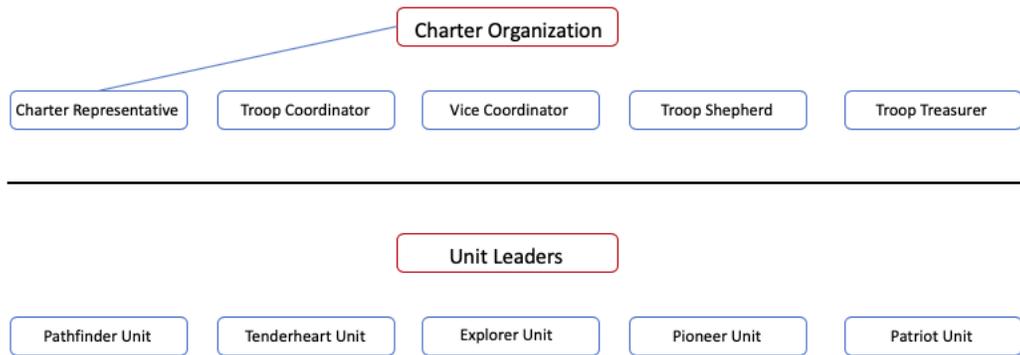
1. Depending on the level of severity of the behavior, the parents of the girl should be notified and included in the process. If the Charter Organization has policies regarding the behaviors being addressed, please refer to the Charter Organization for input, if agreeable to the parent. With parent 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. "Here is why we are concerned. Here is why this behavior contradicts the Oath/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 manner which 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 manner which 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 grace is available to all, but where truth cannot be found, grace will not be applied. If the Girl Member refuses to be truthful, then Troop Leadership should meet with her parents/guardians to explain the evidence, to describe the consequences that are available dependent upon the Girl Member's willingness/unwillingness to be truthful, and to request that the parents/guardians counsel their Girl Member. Troop Leadership should offer the parents/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/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 in order to assist the girl in understanding her behavior, its consequences and work to overcome it. If the parents 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. The Troop volunteers are not expected to provide counsel, which is the job of the parents, but rather show support and acknowledgement of the worth of the girl.
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, she may be asked to terminate her membership in her American Heritage Girls Troop. 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 one covered in prayer and discernment and in which counsel of the Charter Representative and Charter Organization is sought. The Troop's AHG Troop Coach should be notified if a girl is asked to leave the Troop.

## Troop Structure

Each Charter Organization owns and operates their AHG Troop. Charter Representatives are the liaison between the Troop and the Charter Organization.



The Troop Board works together to govern the Troop and to establish goals for the Troop.

Troop Board is made up of:

- Charter Representative
- Troop Coordinator
- Vice Coordinator
- Troop Shepherd
- Troop Treasurer

The Troop Ministry Team works together to plan Troop activities and implement the AHG Program with excellence.

Troop Ministry Team is Made up of:

- Charter Representative- Liz Travieso
- Troop Coordinator- Kara Folmar (949) 632-3362 karafolmar@gmail.com
- Vice Coordinator- Zirna Luistro (949) 231-8639 zbluistro@gmail.com
- Troop Shepherd- Vilma Perez
- Troop Treasurer- Sarah Berg (952) 334-4500 selberg30@hotmail.com
- Unit Leader: \_\_\_\_\_
- Assistant Unit Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

## Troop Communication:

**Email:** Email is the troop's primary communication. Troop emails will be sent out from Troop Track the week prior to the meeting as a reminder of the date and location of the meeting.

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.

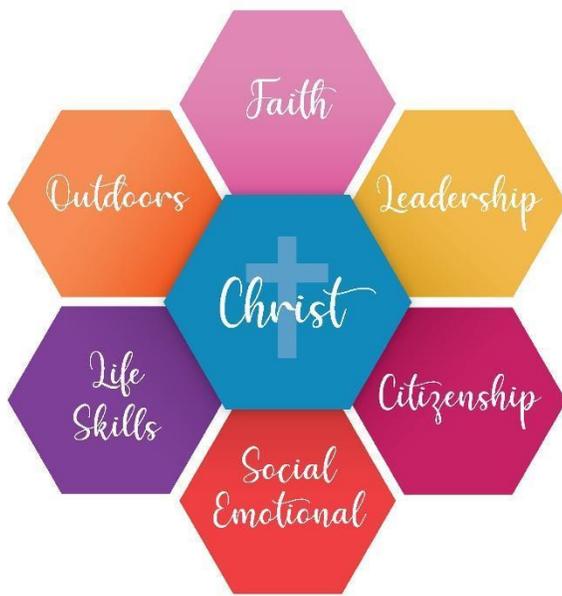
**Jump:** *The Jump* is a social media platform chosen by AHG for communication within troops. We will have a CA 2517 Jump available and hope to communicate information once we have the majority of the troop signed up on this platform. You can download the app on any phone and we will send an invite once you are a registered member of the troop.

**Website:** Troop Track is the platform the troop utilizes to communicate information to the troop. All registration forms are accessible and once logged in badge progress, troop communication tools and the calendar are available. <https://troop-ca2517.trooptrack.com/>

**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 (CC'd) on an email, text, or present on a phone call to ensure two-deep leadership.

## AHG Program

The AHG Program is built around six Program Emphases 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.



### 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.*



## Parent Responsibilities

Parents/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 can obtain information at check-in for upcoming activities and should monitor email 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 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 AHG Equip Live! events
- Right Now Media
- The Jump social media platform
- Have access to:
  - Resources in AHG's resource library
  - Special Member-only discounts such as American Red Cross, Family Life, Camping Maxx, Great Wolf Lodge and 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 safety training. Volunteers will complete a background check and training pertinent to their role. 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
<b>Administrative Roles:</b> Establishing integrity in the ministry by demonstrating an inward motivation to do what is right regardless of the cost.	Troop Coordinator Vice Coordinator Unit Leader and Assistant Unit Leader Registrar Advancement Chair AHGstore Troop Purchaser Troop Secretary Refreshments Coordinator	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.
<b>Shepherding Roles:</b> Serving the Members of the Troop by contributing to the welfare of	Charter Representative Troop Shepherd	

others in order to show God's love and the value of each individual involved in the Troop.	Recruitment Coordinator Events Coordinator	
<b>Stewardship Roles:</b> 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 Troop Treasurer	

## Finances

### Member Costs

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

Girl Member Registration	\$35.00 (annual); \$75 Sister cap (Families with 3+ Girls Registering at the Same Time) PAY ONLINE DIRECTLY TO AHG
Adult Member Registration	\$35.00 (annual) – Annual membership registration with AHG PAY ONLINE DIRECTLY TO AHG-link will be sent to you.
Troop Dues *Troops are not required to collect dues as this is a Charter decision	\$60.00 (annual) – Covers local Troop activities which in addition to troop and badge supplies includes \$20 for 4 badges, 4 patches and 4 service stars. PAY TO TROOP (AHG TROOP CA 2517) and can be given to the TREASURER OR REGISTRAR
Program Support Fee *Charter responsibility per COMA	\$20.00 (annual) per Girl Member \$50 Sister cap (families with 3+ Girls Registering at Same Time) Half paid by troop to AHG.
Fundraising Obligation	All girls are expected to participate in the fundraising activities of the Troop. The goal is to cover the \$20 per girl member Program Support Fee
Girl Handbook	Pathfinder: \$10.99 Tenderheart through Explorer: \$19.99 Pioneer through Patriot: \$19.99
Girl Uniform	Cost dependent on Girl Level and total items purchased
Adult Uniform	\$24+ (cost dependent on total items purchased)
Special Events (optional and/or Troop specific)	Information will be shared through the Troop for special event opportunities for girls and what charges may apply.

**Total cost to Troop: \$60.00 (Troop will pay half of Program Support Fee for 2022)**

**Total cost to AHG: \$35 per member (Child and Adult)**

**Uniform and book cost: see <https://troop-ca2517.trooptrack.com/> for links to AHG store**

## Health and Safety

As volunteers of a youth-serving organization, it is our responsibility to be properly trained and equipped to provide a safe environment for the girls we serve. AHG Adult Members are the gatekeeper and play the most important safety role by holding the sacred keys to the hearts and minds of the children of God. Therefore, AHG volunteers are registered Adult Members, which includes a criminal background check (CBC) and are required to complete AHG's KEYS to Child Safety Training.

AHG volunteers wear a Member ID badge and 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 & Safety Policies and Guidelines surrounding the following topics, please go to <http://bit.ly/AHGHealthANDSafety>.\*

Topics Covered in the Health & Safety Policy Manual:

- AHG and Membership
- AHG Attire, Membership Lanyard and Member ID Card
- Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting
- Supervision, Ratios and the Buddy System
- Bullying, Behavior and Discipline
- Troop Meeting, Trip, Activity and Event Safety
- Troop Record Keeping, Permission Slips and Signing In/Signing Out
- Member Placement and Girl/Adult Visitors
- Emergency Preparedness and Incident Reporting
- Health and Medical
- Controlled Substances, Firearms and Tools
- Troop Trips and Overnights
- American Heritage Girls and Trail Life USA
- Multi-Troop Events and Adopting Girl or Adult Members
- Troop Trip Packets and Transportation
- Activities Guide
  - Land Activities
  - Snow Activities
  - Water Activities
- Forms and Resources for Download

# Parent/Guardian Signature Page

Parents/Guardians please review our Troop's Policy Handbook and Guidelines. Indicate below your review and commitment to the policies and guidelines by signing and dating this form. Once completed, tear off this page and return to the Troop Registrar (Sarah Berg) by the first Troop meeting.

*I have reviewed and am committed to adhering to the policies and guidelines in the CA 2517 Troop Policy Handbook for the 2022-2023 Program year. I agree to actively participate in the Troop and to ensure the success of the Troop as a whole.*

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_