



AMERICAN  
HERITAGE  
GIRLS™

FAITH | SERVICE | FUN

**American Heritage Girls**

**Troop KS1279**

**St. Michael the Archangel**

**Troop Policy and Guidelines Handbook**

**2018-2019**

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## 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, creed, 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.

Further Explanation if needed:

- Merriam Webster defines “girl” as a female child; a young woman.
- AHG is open to girls (biological females) who identify as such, and who agree to live according to the standards of the AHG Oath and the AHG Creed.
- The Bible, upon which AHG’s Program is based, also speaks to gender:
  - “Male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27).
  - “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made...My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place...your eyes saw my unformed body” (Psalms 139: 13-16).
  - “A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this” (Deuteronomy 22:5).
  - “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’” (Mark 10:6).

### **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.

### **Helping AHG Girls Live 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.

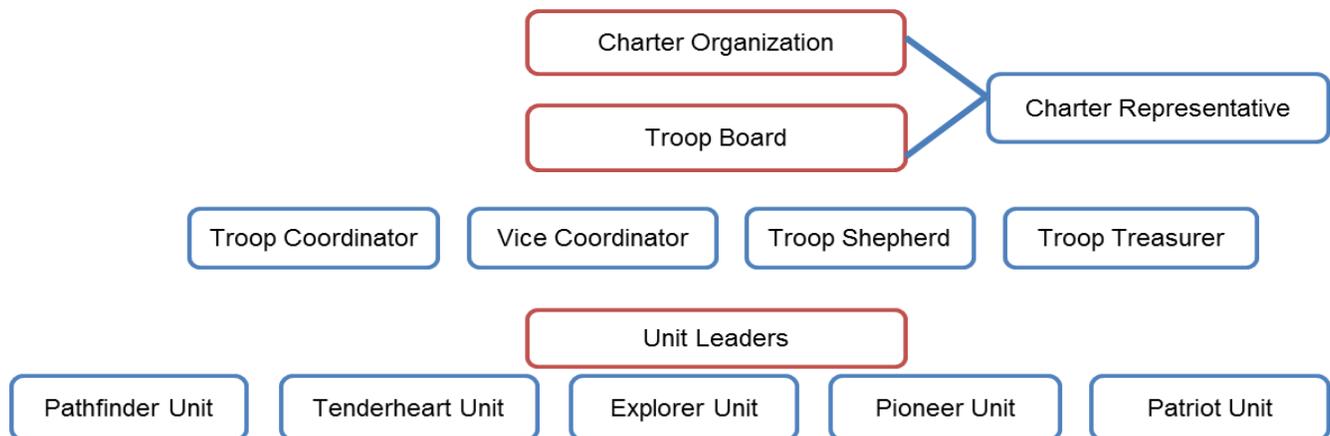
1. Depending on the level of severity of the behavior, the parents of the girl should be notified and included in the process. If the Charter Organization has policies regarding the behaviors being addressed, please refer to the Charter Organization for input, if agreeable to the parent. With parent 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.

\*Scripture addresses the issues of sin: homosexuality, adultery, fornication, lust, pornography, lying, stealing, etc. Sin is contrary to God's design and purposes (Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 6:1, 1 Timothy 1, and Leviticus 18). While AHG is well aware that the culture may promote various sins as natural and people are "born that way," AHG defers to the truth of Scripture that states that these behaviors are "sin" and an "abomination." AHG Leaders should communicate that God's grace extends to every form of sin when there is confession, repentance, and dependence on Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). As girls are maturing, there will be natural questions about same-gender attraction and the development of healthy relationships. Parents should engage these matters with grace, truth, courage and understanding.

## Troop Structure

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



## Troop Communication

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

Troop Coordinator: Tammy Lynam, 816-509-6897

Troop Vice Coordinator: Tracey Lisch, 808-265-7757

Event Organizer (contact information provided prior to event/activity)

**E-Mail** – Email is the Troop's primary form of communication. Troop e-mails will typically be sent out the week prior to a meeting. You may receive updates from your Unit Leader, Troop Coordinator and as appropriate from your Troop Treasurer.

The Troop roster of girl and adult names with contact information is for communicating via Troop Track for Troop information only (see website descriptions below). It is not to be used for solicitation and all communication should reflect the AHG Oath and Creed.

**Website** – Our Troop utilizes a troop management website, called TroopTrack for all communication regarding upcoming events, RSVPs, service opportunities, announcements, etc. All families will have an account set up for them with the username: firstnamelastname – no spaces (example: TammyLynam) – and are expected to log-in regularly. [https://ks1279.trooptrack.com/user\\_account\\_session/new](https://ks1279.trooptrack.com/user_account_session/new). In addition, the troop has space on St. Michael's website. We will manage our recruitment and registration through that website.

**Special Event Announcement Flyers** – These will be emailed or handed out at Troop meetings to keep parents informed of current activities. Most special events have deadlines. Payment and reservation forms will be due on a due date.

**Communication with Girl Members:** KS 1279 Text messages, emails and phone calls should always include two-deep leadership for the safety and protection of both girls and adults. Adults can be included or copied (cc'd) on an email or text or present on a phone call to enable two-deep leadership.

**Communication on meeting 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.

## AHG Program in Our Troop

The founders of American Heritage Girls, Inc. (AHG) developed a program that emphasized six key components to achieve the mission of building women of integrity through service to God, family, community, and country. These six key components, the AHG Program Emphases, bring a balanced structure to the Program and are reassessed to determine if they remain in alignment with the AHG Mission and the current needs of girls. A girl who completes the AHG Program will be a Christ-following servant leader who is honoring, relational, anchored in Christ, and competent: a woman of integrity.



### Christ Follower (Faith)

AHG offers Faith and Religious Award programs for different denominations so that girls can grow stronger in their faith. Several AHG Badges incorporate the Faith Emphasis such as Bible Basics, Daughter of the King, and Mission Minded. Girls also naturally grow in their faith by participating in prayers and devotionals with their Troop.

### Relational (Social)

AHG's Multi-Level Troops encourage girls to create friendships with girls of all ages. Multi-Level Troops allow mentorships to occur naturally among the girls. Girls also learn social skills and self-care through different AHG Badges and Patch Programs.

### Servant Leader (Leadership)

The AHG Program is rich in leadership opportunities! Girls acquire project management skills during their pursuit to earn Level Awards. They have opportunities to hold Girl Leadership Positions in their Troop or Unit. Many Badges also require older girls to lead younger girls.

Potential Girl Leadership positions within our Troop might include:

Care and Prayer	Girl Care Specialist, Hostess, Girl Shepherd, Prayer Team
History	Historian, Newsletter Editor, Reporter, Videographer, Photographer
Service	Girl Service Lead, Service Team
Meetings and Events	Opening and Closing Coordinator, Announcements Director, Song/Skit Leader
Administrative	Steward, Girl Scribe, Unit Scribe
Unit Team	Pathfinder/Tenderheart Unit Helper, Explorer/Pioneer/Patriot Unit Leader

Girls who are 18-21 years old can continue to lead within our Troop as a Leader In Training (LIT).

### **Anchored (Emotional)**

Girls will gain a better understanding of their identity in Christ through the AHG Program. Building confidence will come through outdoor experiences and trying new things in a safe environment. Girls learn to anchor their emotions in Christ in a caring and loving environment. Emotional purity will be encouraged and displayed in the Troop.

### **Honoring (Citizenship)**

Girls learn about their country through Badge work that falls within the Heritage Frontier. Girls grow a deeper understanding of their country by participating in Flag Ceremonies and Patriotic events such as Honor Flights and parades. Serving in their community and being active citizens with their Troop fosters a lifelong love for their country.

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 the Troop newsletter when to turn in additional these 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. Any disputes on service will first be addressed by the Unit Leader and Advancement Chair. If not resolved, it may be taken to the Troop Board for a final decision.

In order for an act to be considered service in AHG, girls must not be reimbursed in any way. As we are called to love our neighbor, AHG does not count family service 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. Please refer to the Girl Handbook for more information.

### **Competent (Life Skills)**

Earning Badges provides girls the opportunity to learn a wide array of life skills, encouraging them to become lifelong learners and doers. Girls love to practice these life skills during activities such as camping, horseback riding, cooking, and sewing. They step out of their comfort zone to try new experiences.

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

The Troop budgets for 3-4 Badges per girl to be completed during Troop meetings. 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 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 earned outside of the Troop meeting (\$3.25 each). AHG Badge Requirements earned outside of Troop meetings should be recorded and approved by the Unit Leader or Troop Advancement Chair. 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 rectification. All badges are ordered bi-annually through your Unit Leader. Individuals will be invoiced for their individual badges. Individuals may not purchase badges or insignia through the AHGstore.

## 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 and spirit wear can be purchased through the AHG online store at [americanheritagegirls.org/store/](http://americanheritagegirls.org/store/). 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.

For placement of the badges and insignia on vests and sashes, please refer to the American Heritage Girls Girl Handbook.

The AHG Official Girl & Adult Uniforms consist of the following items:

			
<p><b>Pathfinder</b> AHG Pathfinder T-shirt, AHG Necklace Kit, Navy skirt/skort/pants/ capris or modest shorts</p>	<p><b>Tenderheart</b> AHG Red Vest, Blue Neckerchief, AHG Polo Shirt (white), Navy skirt/skort/pants/capris or modest shorts</p>	<p><b>Explorer</b> AHG Blue Vest, Red Neckerchief, AHG Polo Shirt (white), Navy or khaki skirt/skort/ pants/capris or modest shorts</p>	<p><b>Pioneer</b> AHG Blue Sash, AHG Polo Shirt (white), Navy or khaki skirt/skort/ pants/capris or modest shorts <b>Patriot</b> AHG Blue Sash, AHG Polo Shirt (red), Khaki or Navy pants, capris, skirt or modest shorts</p>



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 AHG Troop Board about your need. For questions regarding uniforms please see the AHG Uniform FAQ.

### Adult Uniforms and Recognition

New Adult Volunteers will receive the AHG Membership Pin at the annual Joining Award ceremony. The AHG Membership Pin is to be worn on the right lapel. 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 Tab.

### Ordering and Purchasing Uniforms

AHG Official Uniform packages may be purchased individually at the AHGstore or through the Troop. AHGstore carries the official polos for girls and adults and AHG Class B T-shirts. Orders may be placed at the Parent's Registration Night or by contacting the Troop Coordinator or Vice Coordinator.

### Awards and Recognition

#### Joining Award

The Joining Award can be earned within a Troop/Unit or independently. If a girl joins, and the majority of her Troop has already earned their Joining Award, her Unit Leader, along with the parent, can assist the girl in completing the requirements within the first quarter of her membership. New Girl Members will need to complete the Joining Award section in the Girl Handbook and have the Unit Leader sign off on the requirements before the Joining Award may be presented. Girls may be recognized at the mid-year or end of year ceremony or may be recognized during a Troop meeting flag ceremony.

#### Sports Pins

AHG hopes that the Program will encourage life-long health through exercise. Sports Pins are designed to introduce AHG Girl Members to both group and individual sports and to encourage teamwork, respect for authority, goal setting and good sportsmanship. Girls can work together on these pins or can participate individually through community and church teams or clubs. Parents can find Sports Pin Requirements on pages 341-356 of the AHG Girl Handbook and pages 69-81 of the Girl Handbook Supplement.

#### Level Awards

Level Awards are available at all Levels of AHG. It is highly recommended that each girl earn her Level Award, however, she is not required to earn it in order to continue in the AHG Program. The steps towards the Level

Awards include Badge work, leadership opportunities, special event participation and service. The Level Award is earned at the end of each Level. Level Awards usually takes work over a couple of years. Girls joining AHG with less than 1 year left in their Level, may need parent involvement outside of regular Troop Meetings to complete necessary work. Girls receiving their Level Awards will need to participate in a Board of Review. Once the girl has participated in her Board of Review and has been approved to receive her Level Award, she will receive the recognition at the End of Year Recognition Ceremony. The Level Award Tracking Sheets can be found in the Girl Handbook on pages 64-67.

### **Stars & Stripes**

Patriot girls who have earned the Dolley Madison Level Award may go above and beyond and earn American Heritage Girls' highest recognition, the Stars & Stripes Award. The award honors girls who epitomize the Oath, Creed, and mission of AHG. Stars & Stripes incorporates badges, service, and leadership. The award takes a great deal of hard work, and may take a few years to achieve. Patriot girls interested in earning the Stars & Stripes Award should ask their Unit Leader to go to AHGsource and locate more information about the Stars & Stripes process.

### **Board of Review**

Each Girl Member completing her Level Award or Stars & Stripes Award will participate in a Board of Review at the end of their Level and prior to the End of Year Recognition Ceremony. The purpose of a Board of Review is to ensure the girl has completed all requirements for her Level Award. The Board of Review provides the girls with the opportunity to develop and practice skills needed in an interview situation and is an opportunity for the girl to review her accomplishments. Unit Leaders will assist girls with preparing for their Board of Review. Typically, the Board of Review will take place in late spring. The Board of Review will be offered during a regular Troop meeting and girls will be notified prior to the meeting of their required attendance. Girls are to be dressed in full uniform with badges and insignia. Girls should wear the Official AHG Uniform appropriate to their Level.

### **Award Ceremonies**

The Troop plans two or three Award Ceremonies per year so girls may receive their Badges, Joining Awards, Level Awards, Service and Religious Recognitions. Parents should watch troop track for Special Events throughout the year.

Award Ceremonies are open to parents, family and relatives to attend. It is important to the girls that they have at least one parent/family member in attendance for these Award Ceremonies. If a girl is unable to attend the ceremony, her recognition will be given to her during an opening ceremony at the next available Troop meeting. When scheduling your family calendar, please make these ceremonies a priority.

## **Registering You and Your Daughter**

New families can register girls at any time during the year. You will receive an invitation via email from the Troop to register yourself and your daughter in AHGconnect.

As a Registered Volunteer of AHG you can:

- Serve in the Troop impacting the lives of girls for Christ
- Connect with other like-minded Adult 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
- Have access to:
  - Resources in AHGsource and connect with other Volunteers in AHGforum
  - Special Member-only discounts such as American Red Cross, Family Life, Camping Maxx, Great Wolf Lodge and Passport2Purity

## Parent Responsibilities

Parents/guardians demonstrate commitment to their daughter(s) 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 needed Handbooks or supplies. Parents are encouraged to take their daughter for a restroom break prior to the start of the meeting or event. Parents can obtain information at check-in for upcoming activities and should monitor e-mail communication regularly.

### Parent Participation

Providing a quality Program for Girl Members requires a commitment from all families involved. Each family should actively participate in the Troop to enable the success of the group as a whole. At times, some families may need to complete their service outside of regular meeting times, while other families can better complete their service during meetings and others will do a blend of both.

## Finances

### Member Costs

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

Girl Membership	\$26.00 (annual); \$60 Sister cap (Families with 3+ Girls Registering at the Same Time)
Adult Member Registration	\$26.00 (annual) – Annual membership registration with AHG
Troop Dues	\$34.00 (annual) – Helps cover Troop budget
Program Support Fee	\$20.00 (annual) per girl member \$50 Sister cap (families with 3+ Girls Registering at Same Time)
Fundraising Obligation	See Fundraising Policy and guidelines below. All girls are expected to participate in the Fundraising Activities of the Troop.
Girl Handbook	Pathfinder: \$9 Tenderheart through Patriot: \$18.00 (one time purchase)
Girl Uniform	\$24+ (cost dependent on Girl Level and total items purchased)
Adult Uniform	\$24+ (cost dependent on total items purchased)
Girl Handbook, Badge Supplement	\$10.00 (optional, or can be downloaded from AHGsource for free)
Special Events (optional)	Information will be shared through the Troop for special event opportunities for girls and what charges may apply.

### Troop Dues

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

of income is from dues and fundraising by all its members. If you should have questions regarding the Troop Budget, please contact the Troop Board.

### **Program Support Fee**

AHG spends far more than \$26 per member annually 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 to AHG annually by the Troop. (The fee is assessed annually during the Troop's 2<sup>nd</sup> year and after). The Program Support Fee covers the development of new Badges and Program relationships; the maintenance of AHG's website and AHGconnect (online registration system); as well as the member services provided to each Troop through the AHG Office. The recommended way to raise the money is through fundraising.

### **Fundraising Policy**

Fundraising is an essential activity for the success of a Troop. 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 to 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 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 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 give financial support so the AHG Ministry can continue reaching more families and girls with its eternally impactful message and program. Each registered family receives information 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 study. Please submit your request in writing to the Troop Coordinator for Troop Board approval. The granting of funds from the Benevolence Fund is not a total coverage benefit, rather an assist to aid in the specified need. If a family is granted funds, a portion of the event expense is expected to be paid by the individual.

A Girl Member who registers in the fall must participate in the fundraiser to seek money for a special event activity.

## Health and Safety

Keeping girls and adults physically, emotionally and spiritually safe while participating in AHG allows all AHG Members in our Troop to have fun and grow their faith. Our Troop is committed to and abides by all local, state and federal laws and guidelines in addition to the procedures, policies and guidelines outlined in AHG's Health & Safety Guidelines. For a copy of the AHG Health & Safety Guidelines, please go to AHGsource or contact a member of the Troop Board.

### Troop Meetings

The Troop meets at St. Michael's Church at 14251 Nall Avenue once a month on a Friday at 6 p.m. Please have your daughter eat dinner before coming to the meeting.

Troop meetings typically follow the agenda below:

- 5:45 Sign-in and prepare for the Flag Ceremony.
- 6:00 Flag ceremony, prayer and announcements
- 6:15 Badge, service or Patch work in individual Units
- 7:15 Cleanup, and retiring of the flag and closing prayer in individual Units

### Permission Slips

When girls will be participating in a field trip or activity that requires transportation outside of the Troop meeting, they must have a permission slip. If a girl forgets the permission slip, she will not be able to attend. Troop Volunteers are not authorized to take girls without a permission slip. Permission slips are given out at least one meeting prior to the activity.

### Troop Trips

A Troop Trip Notification is to be completed and submitted in AHGconnect for all overnight Troop/Unit trips, trips that include a High Adventure activity, and/or any day trips that are farther than 400 miles from the Charter Organization. All trips require approval by the Charter Representative prior to the activity. Appropriate numbers of certified First Aid/CPR adults must be present at all activities of the Troop.

Girl or Adult Members participating in a High Adventure activity must complete and submit the High Adventure Health and Medical Form which includes a doctor's signature. It is the responsibility of the family to make sure that this information is provided. See your Unit Leader for the necessary forms. High Adventure Health and Medical Forms are good for one year.

### Transportation for Troop Activities

All potential drivers for Troop activities complete a Troop Transport Form, verifying auto insurance, seatbelts and driver's license. The form is filed with the Troop Coordinator and the Unit Leader in charge of the activity. Typically these forms are available for completion at the Parent/Girl Registration Night. Parents choosing not to complete the form may not transport girls other than their own daughter(s) on a Troop-related activity. The form is updated annually.

Appropriate Girl/Leader ratios and two-deep leadership should be present during transportation. All drivers are 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. When a Unit of the Troop travels for an activity of the Troop, each car will be provided with a Troop Trip packet, directions, maps, and contact information. Vehicles traveling more than 75 miles should each have a first-aid kit available.

### **Pick-Up and Drop Off**

Outings begin and end at St. Michael's North Parking Lot unless otherwise specified. AHG Volunteers will not depart the parking lot or the activity area without the express permission of a Volunteer.

For the safety of Girl Members, if a parent/guardian is unable to provide transportation to/from a Troop meeting or activity, a written note is expected to be given to the Troop Coordinator prior to the beginning of the meeting. No verbal approval is accepted.

### **Troop Event, Meeting or Activity Cancellation**

A Troop meeting or activity may be cancelled 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 girl/adult ratios

The Troop will follow the Johnson/Wyandotte County Catholic School and/or Blue Valley School closure schedule. If the schools are closed, the Troop meeting, event or activity will also be cancelled.

The final determination will be made by the Troop Coordinator and Unit Leaders.

If a Troop meeting, event or activity is cancelled, Unit Leaders will notify all Troop members by telephone of the cancellation.

### **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. Parents of Pathfinder, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Tenderheart aged girls should accompany the girl and remain with the girl during the Troop meeting or activity.
3. If a parent is unable to attend, a permission slip should be submitted with vital parent information provided. The Troop Coordinator should be notified if a parent is not attending, explaining the lack of parental attendance.
4. A new girl and their parent may visit **one** time before registering as a Troop Girl Member.
5. All non-member "visitors" attending a "Bring a Friend" Activity sponsored by the Troop will provide a completed permission slip with emergency contact information.
6. 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 participants to Troop meetings and events. Bringing children who are not AHG participants is permissible provided the parents strictly adhere to following rules:

1. Children 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 are never to be unattended or unsupervised.
2. Siblings may not participate in AHG activities, as this may create logistical problems for those organizing the meetings and it may cause distractions.
3. Parents are to remove disruptive children.
4. Any Volunteer taking an active role in a meeting is to make arrangements with another adult to supervise her non-AHG children.

### **Administration of Medication Policy**

1. AHG Girl Members and Volunteers are discouraged from taking 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.
3. The AHG Volunteer fulfilling the Troop Health and Safety Lead role can accept the responsibility of medicating or making sure an AHG Girl Member takes the necessary 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 medications, 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 on an as-needed basis. Parents must provide these over-the-counter medications to the Health and Safety Lead at the start of an event and include them on the Request for Medication Administration 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 per the instructions provided on the Request for Medication Administration Form.

### **Sick Policy**

An AHG Girl Member should be 24 hours fever-free in order to attend any AHG meeting or activity. Any girl who has an unknown rash will be unable to stay for a meeting. If medication is to be given, the request for Administration of Medication should be provided to the Health and Safety Lead before the meeting or activity. A First-Aid and CPR certified Volunteer will be present at all activities. The Troop has a first-aid kit at all meetings and activities. Each girl's health and medical information will always be readily available at all meetings and activities.

### **Camp Skills & Knife Safety 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. For activities when knives

(or other equipment, such as cell phones, electronic devices, etc.) are not appropriate, they should be included on the activity pack list under a “do not bring/leave at home” category. If pocket knives are permitted at a Troop activity, Troop Volunteers will train girls about safe and appropriate use of a pocket knife.

### **AHG Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco and Firearm Policy**

As the use of alcohol and drugs has been proven to be a significant health hazard, they are not permitted 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 activities or events. Use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco by an AHG Girl Member should be reported to the girl’s parents. Use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco by an AHG Volunteer during an AHG event should be referred to the Charter Organization Representative.

Persons using or possessing firearms must comply with all local, state and federal laws during all AHG activities.

### **Electronics Policy**

Cell phones or any other related electronic communication devices are not to be turned on or visible during meeting or activity time. Please consult with your 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 or activities. Photos taken during Troop activities may not be posted online or passed along in emails/texts/social media without the direct consent (including a signed media release,) of all families included.

### **Youth Protection/Child Safety**

American Heritage Girls Volunteers are background checked, fully Registered Members of AHG. In addition, all Volunteers have taken AHG’s KEYS to Child Safety Training which includes 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 Adult Volunteers 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.

AHG Volunteers wear a Member ID badge and lanyard so they are easily identifiable as Registered 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.

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 or families of Troop Members are expected to reflect Christ’s love and the principles of Biblical Conflict Resolution when conflict does arise.

## Conflict Resolution

### Steps to Conflict Resolution

#### 1) Seek Biblical guidance- Humble yourself.

The Bible addresses conflict consistently. Some verses that you may reflect upon include:

*“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience bearing with one another and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” -- Colossians 3:12*

**2) Understand the uniqueness of each Volunteer-** Identifying personality traits, spiritual gifts and preferred management styles will help the Troop Coordinator understand the motivators each Volunteer possesses. Most conflict is a result of a lack of understanding. The conflict may arise from a lack of understanding of the personality of the Volunteer, a lack of understanding of a process or a lack of understanding of the “why” behind the “what.”

**3) Honor the feelings of each Volunteer-** Their concerns are real to the Volunteer, whether you feel they were right or not. Seeking to truly understand their reasons and perspective is key to successful conflict resolution. Helping each other understand perspective and reiterating the concerns of another honors the Volunteer and helps you know that you have an understanding of their feelings. Start your 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. Determine how the lack of understanding came to be.

**5) Deal with the conflict in a timely manner-** Allowing conflict to fester only makes it worse. Using the Biblical approach found in Matthew 18, meet with the person who has the conflict with you as soon as possible.

**6) Do not let the conflict steal your joy of serving-** Nothing will burn out a Volunteer quicker than unresolved or continued conflict. Pray for the armor of God to surround you and take control of the situation. Remember you cannot make others do what you want them to do; you can only make choices to which others respond and create an environment where others can make choices, too.

### Conflict Management Strategy: LOVE

**L** – Look for the good. It takes a special effort to look for the Good and not the Bad. Assume good intentions. Love is Kind. Love Hopes.

**O** – Only talk to people who are related to the problem and will be able to help solve the problem. Otherwise, it is gossip and 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. Love is Patient.

Keep in mind; 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, if applicable.

### **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 email 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. If you're unable to find a solution, it may be that the Troop is handling the situation in the best way possible. The Troop Board will consider your feedback and implement the changes if deemed beneficial to the entire Troop.

### **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 the Handbook Review section of the Member Information Sheet. Once completed, return with your registration paperwork to the AHG Mailbox at the Christian Formation Office at St. Michael's School.