



American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Information for 2024-2025 National Executive Board

So you want to serve on the National Executive Board (NEB)?

GREAT!!!!!! Thank you for being willing to serve AGSM at the National level. We always like for candidates to be fully informed about what will be expected of them and the duties of the position you are seeking. This is going to be a lot of information. We are not trying to scare you, but we have had issues in recent years where people didn't understand exactly what was going to be expected of them, and we do not want that to happen to you.

First, you need to be fully aware of the eligibility criteria for membership in AGSM. As a member of the NEB, you are the spokesperson for the organization. You are a representative of ALL the members of our organization, regardless of the circumstances of their child's death, and will be expected to support and represent ALL members of our organization.

We take very seriously the confidentiality of our members. You will be asked to sign our Confidentiality Policy, and any information you learn about a member, their personal life, their child's history, etc., must be held in strict confidence. Each member's story is THEIR story to tell. If they want things shared freely, they can do that, but a member of the NEB should NEVER share that information.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT IF I'M ELECTED?

if you get elected to the NEB, the first NEB meeting after the close of Convention will begin on Sunday, June 23, but may carry over into Monday morning. Please do not plan to leave Colorado Springs until the afternoon of Monday, June 24. If more than one person is running for an office, it is possible you may not get elected, but you need to plan as if you will.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF NEB MEMBERS?

You need to thoroughly know our Constitution and Bylaws. That's not to say you have to memorize the document, but if someone brings up an idea for something that is contrary to the C&BL, you need to immediately be aware that, no, we cannot do that because it's not allowed, or you at least need to know that the C&BL addresses that issue and needs to be checked before we proceed.

You will be expected to check your e-mail at least three times a day and respond to all business matters in a timely manner. We often do business by e-vote and your vote is critical. You will be given an e-mail address specific to your position on the NEB. All NEB business will be conducted through that e-mail address. You need to know how to manage multiple e-mail addresses.

With regards to technology, we do a tremendous amount of our work via e-mail and through Google Docs and use of a Google Drive for uploading and storage of files. Additionally, there is a database of our members' information that you may have access to, depending on your

position. You must be comfortable with technology and able to navigate through these. It is very important you understand how to work Gmail and the Microsoft Office suite of products (Word, Excel and PowerPoint).

WHAT HAPPENS AT EVENTS?

When we are at events, whether it's in DC or elsewhere, it is an intense time. These times are a roller coaster in every way possible ... including your emotions. It can be a bit overwhelming. There is always something to be done and hardly ever (I would almost say never) time to take a nap. Your NEB responsibilities are your first priority. When you are in DC on official business, your focus needs to be on the business/events we are there to conduct. If you want to sightsee or visit with friends/family in the area, plan to come a day or two early or stay an extra day. Again, we generally have a packed schedule, and all hands are needed to accomplish the tasks.

If family or friends come to DC with you, they will not be able to stay at Headquarters. When the NEB is in DC on official business, NEB members are required to stay at Headquarters. You will not be able to stay at the hotel with your family. Family and friends are welcome to come to special events (such as ceremonies at Arlington or the banquet on Gold Star Mothers Weekend), but you generally will not have availability to do anything extra with them. Additionally, there may be special events we are invited to where only members are included.

We log a LOT of steps during events. Even at Gold Star Mothers Weekend, where we have historically done a 2.2-mile walk, we end up covering many more miles than that. Some positions are more intense than others (Flag and Banner Guard) and require more heavy lifting, sitting, carrying things long distances, etc., but what ends up happening is we ALL have to do the heavy lifting at events. Please be prepared for this. We pack a lot of activities into the times we are in DC and are usually on a short timeline. We may have to make it from Arlington National Cemetery to the Vietnam Wall in less than 30 minutes at a time when there is no traffic allowed to move and it means walking that distance that rapidly. It is not unusual at all for us to be "working" 12-14 hours a day when we are in DC or Convention.

WHAT ARE THE TIME COMMITMENTS?

You need to block the following dates on your calendar for this year. The arrival or departure date may shift a day or so one way or the other, but if you block these dates now, there will not be issues when it rolls around. Additionally, how many NEB members come to certain events may change and we will not bring the entire NEB (depending on budget issues). However, again, if you go ahead and block them now, if you are needed to assist, you will be prepared. The arrival date means get to the location as early in the day as possible. Arrival day is a workday also.

- Gold Star Mothers Weekend - plan to arrive in DC no later than 9/24/24 and leave for home on 9/30/24
- Veterans Day Weekend - plan to arrive in DC no later than 11/7/24 and leave for home on 11/12/24
- February NEB Meeting - plan to arrive in DC no later than 2/4/25 and leave for home on 2/9/25 (there is a possibility these dates will shift to the following week - be flexible)
- Memorial Day Weekend - plan to arrive in DC no later than 5/21/25 and leave for home on 5/27/25

- 2025 National Convention - plan to arrive in North Carolina no later than 6/17/25 and leave for home on 6/23/25

In addition to these in-person meetings, we will have at least one called NEB meeting via Zoom each month (more if the need arises). Also, you WILL be assigned to serve on at least two committees and you will have committee meetings and assignments to complete during the month. Some positions on the NEB have more duties (Secretary and Treasurer) that require almost daily attention. Please review the position description and continuity book to be familiar with the position you are seeking.

You will be expected to prepare items for our newsletter on an as-needed basis. You may also be asked to attend events and speak on behalf of AGSM. Start brushing up on your public speaking and writing skills.

IS THERE OTHER INFORMATION THAT MAY BE HELPFUL?

Regarding “wearing white,” wearing white is a time-honored tradition of AGSM. In the event you are elected to the NEB, please come to Convention prepared to wear something rather dressy (think Sunday best) for the installation ceremony.

When we are in DC, traditionally, if we are there on a Friday, we will wear white jeans/pants or skirt and a red t-shirt (“Red Shirt Friday”). During business meetings, we typically will wear white jeans/pants, skirt, dress and a white shirt of some sort. You should always bring a “Sunday best” white outfit with you to DC, to include white shoes. (As previously mentioned, we do a lot of walking. So even when we are dressed up, we need to wear appropriate white shoes. Flip flops are never appropriate white shoes for an AGSM event.) Because sometimes events pop up at the last minute, we need to be prepared to dress to attend these events. For formal events (such as the banquet event at Gold Star Mothers Weekend), we usually do not wear white. If you choose to wear a white “formal,” that is your choice. You will see everything from full-length evening gowns to cocktail dresses to “Sunday best.”

Please note, if you are running for either flag or banner guard, following Convention, you will need to coordinate with your counterpart in the other position. During times when you are carrying the flag, if one of you wears white dress pants or pantsuit, the other one also needs to wear pants or pantsuit (or both wear dresses/skirts). Additionally, you will need to purchase an official AGSM cover and white gloves at your own expense. (We will provide you with the ordering information.)

IN CLOSING!

Again, we are excited that you want to help advance AGSM forward. It is hard work, but very rewarding. If you have any questions about any of this information, please do not hesitate to reach out to the National President or a member of the current NEB.