ARIZONA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
YOUTH, FAITH & FAMILY

ARIZONA GOVERNOR'S YOUTH COMMISSION

INFORMATION PACKET

2026-2027



gyc.az.gov

GOVERNOR'S YOUTH COMMISSION

OVERVIEW

This packet is designed to help applicants understand the application process, answer some frequently asked questions, and provide more background on the Governor's Youth Commission (GYC). Please take the time to read through this informational packet before applying to serve on the Commission.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The GYC is one of the nine councils and commissions housed within the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF). The GOYFF is a cabinet-level agency that administers state and federal grant programs and engages stakeholders across all sectors throughout the state to improve services and service delivery to our citizens. Through a trauma-informed lens, the GOYFF develops programs, coalitions, strategies, and initiatives to support Governor Katie Hobbs' priorities related to workforce development, sexual and domestic violence, substance abuse prevention, juvenile justice, aging, and child well-being. The GOYFF also serves as the Governor's faith-based office and administers the state's AmeriCorps program.

The GYC is an advisory body composed of high school students appointed by the Governor and representing all the state counties. The mission of the GYC is to promote healthier communities through youth volunteerism and service learning, increasing awareness of the most significant issues affecting their community, and encouraging civic participation. This empowers generations of civically engaged, service-oriented leaders to create a brighter future for Arizona and to advise the Governor. The contributions of the GYC to the state are part of the more remarkable story of youth empowerment in Arizona and the nation that dates back to the early 1970s. In 1972, Governor Jack Williams established the Traffic Representatives of Arizona's Governor Youth Council (TRAGYC). TRAGYC was tasked with developing countermeasure programs for highway safety and was housed within the Governor's Office of Highway Safety. In 1988, Governor Rose Mofford created the Governor's Youth Commission Against Drugs (GYCAD) to involve youth in developing long-term substance abuse prevention plans in their communities throughout the state. GYCAD was housed within the Governor's Office of Drug Policy for much of the 1990s. It was not until the 2000s that GYCAD became known as the Governor's Youth Commission (GYC). Governors and their administrations have, over time, adapted the Commission's focus areas to reflect the needs of youth and the interests of the Commissioners.

Hundreds of students apply to join the GYC annually, and only 40-55 are selected to serve as Commissioners. These Commissioners come from diverse backgrounds and embody the best of Arizona's youth. GYC's successes over the years are a testament to Arizona's commitment to empowering young people to make a positive difference in their communities.

As the GYC begins a new chapter, it is mindful of its proud past. It remains committed to its vision of "empowering generations of civically engaged and service-oriented leaders to create a brighter future for Arizona."

APPLICATION PROCESS

The GYC membership represents Arizona's demographic and geographic diversity. Commissioners are selected based on their demonstrated commitment to their school and community, as well as their oral and written communication skills, during the application process.

Qualifications: Applicants must be students enrolled in an Arizona high school in their sophomore, junior, or senior year for the 2026-2027 school year.

Term: Commissioners are appointed to a one (1) year term and may apply to serve up to three (3) terms with the GYC, so long as they are still in high school and selected through the renewal application process.

Travel: Mileage reimbursement is available for Commissioners traveling 50 miles or more from the State Capitol, where quarterly in-person meetings are held. Before all reimbursements, the Arizona State University Participant Support Certification and the Arizona State University Substitute W-9 must be completed, signed, and sent to the GYC Coordinator(s). These will be provided to members upon acceptance into the Commission.

Meetings: There will be four (4) Quarterly Commission Meetings throughout the term, which include Orientation. Each Commissioner will be placed into a Workgroup that meets virtually bi-weekly between the Quarterly Commission Meetings.

New Applicants Form:

The application form can be accessed here or by copying and pasting the URL into your web browser: https://forms.gle/1LmncHPP3ZSZJnGD6. A hard copy of the application can be downloaded at gyc.az.gov and returned via mail. The application form will consist of the following parts:

- **Part 1 – Applicant Information**
- **Part 2 – Parent/Guardian Information**
- **Part 3 – Short Essays**
  - Personal Statement
  - Leadership Statement
  - Project Planning
- **Part 4 – Resume**
- **Part 5 – Letter of Recommendation**
  - One (1) letter of recommendation is required with the application; however, up to two (2) letters may be submitted. The letter can be from a teacher, faculty member, community leader, or youth group leader. Please note that the letter of recommendation must be typed and on official letterhead (if possible).
  - The letter should include:
    - The writer's experience with the applicant.
    - What specific skills/attributes make the applicant a good candidate for GYC.
  - If Recommenders prefer to submit their letters separately, they can email them to gyc@az.gov. We ask recommenders to list the applicant's name in the email's subject line.
- **Part 6 – Orientation Attendance**

Renewal Application Form:
The application form can be accessed here or by copying and pasting the form URL into your web browser: https://forms.gle/6G1vaecMJDyKcTsp9. The application form will consist of the following parts:

- **Part 1 – Applicant Information**
- **Part 2 – Parent/Guardian Information**
- **Part 3 – Short Essays**
  - Personal Statement
  - Improvement Statement
- **Part 4 – Resume**
- **Part 5 – Leadership Roles**
  - Leadership Skills Statement
  - Reflection on Previous GYC Participation
- **Part 6 – Orientation Attendance**

Selection: All applicants will be notified of their application status and whether they have been selected to serve on the GYC in mid-July 2026. If that changes, you will be notified.

Application Timeline:***

- March 31, 2026 – Open New Member and Renewal Applications
- April 17, 2026 – Close Renewal Application
- May 10, 2026 – Close New Member Application
- June 2026 – Staff Review Applications
- July – Executive Board/General Commissioner Status Notification

*** *Notice*: If the dates change, all applicants will be notified using the email addresses provided in their applications.

COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBILITIES

Applicants who are selected to join the 2026-2027 GYC Class will be asked to abide by a few guidelines regarding protocol for meetings and conduct in general:

1. Ensure the Onboarding Online Form is submitted to GOYFF and that the information is up to date.
2. Perform at least five service hours per month (August through April) and leverage at least two peers to join you in conducting service hours monthly.
3. Track and report service hours performed and service hours leveraged by peers.
4. Attend four quarterly Commission meetings annually, arrive on time, and be prepared.
5. Actively participate in assigned Workgroups.
6. Participate in all Commission and Workgroup Meetings, whether remote or in-person. Hotel rooms are provided to commissioners traveling more than 50 miles one-way.
7. Provide their transportation to all GYC Meetings and events; mileage reimbursement is available for eligible commissioners.
8. Follow curfew if and when overnight accommodations are provided.
9. This is a non-partisan, non-political position, but you must be able to represent the Office of the Governor positively at all times.
10. Absences must be communicated to the GYC Secretary three days before a Commission Meeting, Workgroup Meeting, or special event.
11. If any agreements are not fully honored, the individual may need to complete a corrective action plan, up to and including being asked to resign from the GYC.
12. Open communication is essential throughout the year. If you need support in completing any responsibilities, please contact the GYC Coordinator(s) at (602) 339-9134 or gyc@az.gov.

@AZGOYFF @GOYFFAZ @AZGYC

