Troop Finances

Financial responsibility is paramount in Girl Scouts. The troop leadership team and the signers on the troop account are accountable for handling troop funds in a responsible manner. At times troop accounts may contain large sums of money; therefore, accurate financial recordkeeping is very important. Here are some important financial procedures to follow when dealing with troop funds. Please review these with the volunteers in your service unit. Reference the Volunteer Essentials Handbook to ensure volunteers are using the resource.

Establishing a Troop Checking Account
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- Troop Checking Account Request Form
- Balance monthly to bank statements
- Annual Report
  - Tips
  - Delegate Troop Treasurer
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Troop Money Earning (outside of Fall Product and Cookie Program)
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Girl Progression in Money Management
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Establish a troop checking account: Refer to the Money Management section of the Volunteer Essentials Handbook

- Every Troop Bank Account must have at least two non-related & fully approved adults on the bank account. It is recommended there be three signers.
- To open a troop bank account, print off the "Troop Checking Account Request Form" found at http://girlscouts-ssc.org/volunteer-resources/forms/. Complete the form and turn into the Volunteer Support Team (VST). Please do not use the council address for bank mailings (bank statements, etc.) This should be one of the signers address. The VST will then send this form to the bank and send you a copy back. You may then go to the bank to set up account. Make sure you are getting free checking. You do not want to spend troop proceeds on expensive bank charges. The VST has a list of recommended banks.
- Accounts must be kept current at all times and balanced monthly to the bank statement. Each bank statement must be signed by two signers of the account.
- Troops must complete an Annual report, attach all bank statements for the membership year. This report must be turned in at the Service Unit level by June 15th each year or the Troop Leader may not be reappointed.
  - Troops should keep a copy of the Annual report and keep all receipts with their copy in case an audit is requested for at least 1 year.
  - Any expenditure over $100 should be explained on the bank statement (e.g: dinner for troop bridging, supplies for Winter Camping, etc)
  - Some Service Unit Treasures or other troops may use an Excel spreadsheet that they use to help categorize the income and expenses to assist the troop in filling out the annual report quickly and accurately, check with your Service Unit Team for a similar spreadsheet.

Tips:

- Troop Leaders are encouraged to delegate the Troop Treasurer position to a fully Approved Volunteer*: so that the troop Leaders can focus on the girls, program, or if even if that is just not one of their strong attributes.
- Deposit funds promptly
- Use of the Bank Debit card is helpful for keeping track of purchases and online registering.
- If reimbursement is needed for a troop expenditure, it should be done within one month of the expenditure and be signed by one of the other signers of the account.
- Use the "Memo line" on the checks to document how the troop money was used, ie: Pins/patches for "Sow What" journey, food for Winter Camping, etc.
- Troop finances should be shared with the girls and also available upon request to families of the troop.

Cookies and Money:

- A Troop Cookie Manager (TCM) is vital to a troop. They relieve the troop leader of the tasks of cookie management so the leader can focus on the program with the girls. Some tasks a TCM will be able to do are:
  - Bank deposits of cookie money. Girls will turn in all cookie money to TCM and should be counted with the parent/guardian at that time.
  - The TCM MUST give receipts for all money turned in (and also cookies checked out).
- Each troop has the option of enlisting the help of Northstar to help the troop collect on any checks that are NSF-returned from the bank. There are forms to be filled out to send to your bank to authorize that the bank forward any bad checks to Northstar to collect on your behalf and other forms to send to Northstar, with that authorization. Forms can be found at http://girlscouts-ssc.org/cookies/girl-scouts-cookie-sales/
- TCM is responsible for making sure that all money is paid by parents/girls for cookies sold and checked out. A Bad Debt form is available at the location above, if needed. For more information, see the Troop Cookie Manual.
- As the TCM, work with the Troop Leader to make sure that product money is in the account for the withdrawal dates as set by council
Troop Dues:

- Troop Dues are intended to cover troop expenses (supplies, pins, badges, refreshments, fieldtrips, etc)
- It is up to the discretion of each troop leader to set the amount of troop dues for their troop and communicating the amount to the parents and girls. Girls can be included in the decision making process for dues. Some leaders request $1/per meeting while others set a specific amount per year, please keep in mind the demographics of your troop, no girl should be excluded from participating if they don't have the ability to pay dues.

Troop Fundraising:

- All troop fundraising, outside of council product sales, MUST be approved by council. Please use the "Application for Troop Money Earning Project" found on GSSSC website.
  
  NOTE~to be approved for additional fundraising, troops must have participated in council product sales (there may be exceptions-check with your VST) if they were available to. See Volunteer Essentials-Safety Wise Chapter for council guidelines or specifics

- Troops CAN NOT fund-raise directly for any other organizations however they can earn money and purchase items for that organization. For example, the troop has decided they want to help the Humane Society. They can not ask for donations for them, but they can do a carwash for donations to support their "community service projects" and purchase supplies for the Humane Society and then donate them. We encourage troops to consider donating to girls that need financial assistance for Girl Scouts versus other organizations. This promotes the "Being a Sister to every Girl Scout".

- Troops CAN NOT participate in fundraising opportunities that support another organization, such as Scentsy, Pampered Chef, etc.

Girl Progression in Money Management:

- Girls responsibility should progressively increase each year, starting with cookie sales and making change, calculating how much the boxes are, planning a budget & goals (both personal and troop level) and deciding what they want to spend at least a part of the money on…see Financial Literacy badges and Cookie badges

- All money earned by the girls goes into a common troop treasury and is spent equally on all girls regardless of how much each contributes. If a girl transfers to another troop her "portion" of the troop funds should go with her to the new troop. Money is NEVER given directly to the girl or her family!

  If an older Girl Scout (Cadette and above) is going on a Destination or is working on her Gold Award and is earning money in other activities than with a troop (car wash, babysitting, etc) she can work with her troop to have these money earning activities recorded separately. This is a troop decision though. All girls in the troop need to have a vote in this decision and this must be approved by the council office too. All money earned in the cookie program though (excluding the girls cookie dough) must remain in the troop account.

- Cookie Dough can be used for registration, uniforms, camp, council events, service unit events or fun items from the store. Older girls can use Cookie Dough for Destinations or for council approved troop travel (Cadettes and older. Please use the Troop Travel forms for assistance with this process).

Troop Splits or Disbands:

- When a troop is disbanding (not returning the next year) a Troop Disband Notice, (form can be found at http://girlscouts-ssc.org/volunteer-resources/forms/) should be turned in along with a current Annual Report (from the date of the last report to current, including bank statements) and checkbook, bank stamps, deposit slips, troop supplies to the Service Unit Manager.

- If no girls are continuing, it is Board policy that the monies are held in a Council Account in case a girl returns the next year and is placed in another troop, the money would go with her to her new troop. There are some cases where a graduating class of girls decides to purchase uniforms or books for incoming Daisy Girl Scouts with their remaining funds. This has to be voted on by the entire troop.

  If any or all of the girls are continuing, all money remaining in the account should be divided equally among all registered girls and a check issued to their new troop for their portion. The portion of funds for girls not returning should be turned into the council office to be held in a council holding account. This is figured by the amount of money divided by the number of registered girls in the troop. Money is NEVER given directly to the girl or her family.