Volunteer Essentials
Chapter 5: Troop Finances
2018-2019
Chapter 5: Girl Scout Troop Finances

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Chapter 5: Girl Scout Troop Finances

Money Earned Belongs to the Troop
No matter how many girls participate in product programs and no matter who participates in or chooses not to be a part of money-earning projects, all money earned belongs to the whole troop. Troop money is deposited in one troop account and is used for activities that benefit all girl members. Money never belongs to any one girl. It’s an IRS rule that the troop operates in a way that benefits all girls, not any one person.

If girls want to use troop funds to support their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Awards, that’s okay, as long as the troop approves. In this case, the troop would still meet the IRS rule, since the funds support the project, not the girls themselves.

How Troops Finance their Activities
Girl Scout troops finance their activities by participating in the cookie program and the fall product program, by collecting dues, and by planning money-earning projects.

The Cookie Program and Fall Product Program
The cookie program and the fall product program are money-earning activities that are sponsored by Girl Scouts San Diego. These product programs are optional. However, troops are encouraged to participate, since product programs are the primary way that troops earn funds. Girls must be current, registered Girl Scout members in order to participate. Troops that participate in the fall product program must also participate in the cookie program.

Want to get started? Take Getting Started with Your Troop (6) training online. It’s a simple overview of product programs designed for new leaders and co-leaders.

If you’re a leader, you’ve probably already taken Getting Started with Your Troop 1-3. If so, you can access Getting Started with Your Troop (6) on your own by logging in to Litmos, our online learning portal, at sdgirlscouts.litmos.com. Need help? Contact training@sdgirlscouts.org.

Troop Dues
Troops can set dues and decide how often to collect them (e.g. weekly, monthly, annually). Troop dues help the troop get up and running and cover costs like supplies. When setting dues, help girls consider an amount that will work for everyone. Some troop families may be unable to pay dues—that’s OK.
Money-Earning Projects

Money-earning projects are projects that Girl Scout troops plan and organize in order to earn funds. They must be approved by Girl Scouts San Diego, but unlike the cookie program and the fall product program, they are not sponsored by Girl Scouts San Diego.

Examples of appropriate money-earning projects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Back 2 School kits</th>
<th>Events (Daisy Day, Brownie Sports, etc.)</th>
<th>Party favors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baked goods</td>
<td>Event photo booth</td>
<td>Placemats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfasts, lunches, dinners, teas, etc.</td>
<td>Face painting</td>
<td>Plays or concerts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car wash</td>
<td>Garage sales</td>
<td>Seasonal festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone or ink cartridge collection</td>
<td>Gift baskets</td>
<td>Service-a-thon (people sponsor a girl doing service; funds go to support trip)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas tree recycling</td>
<td>Gift-wrapping</td>
<td>Troop’s “own” cookbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft items</td>
<td>Grow/sell plants</td>
<td>Walking tours, nature hikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dances</td>
<td>Holiday cards</td>
<td>Workshops (badges, camp skills, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encampments</td>
<td>Luminarias</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appropriate number of money-earning projects by Girl Scout level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daisies (Kindergarten)</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>Brownies</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Cadettes</th>
<th>3*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daisies (First grade)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ambassadors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Additional projects for older girls may be approved by the council finance support specialist. Email troopbanking@sdbgirlscouts.org.

Money-Earning Projects That Aren’t Allowed

Some money-earning projects aren’t allowed. Games of chance, like a raffle, bingo, or a contest won’t work. Girl Scouts doesn’t allow these. Girls and volunteers also can’t solicit cash directly or hold product demonstrations where the presence of the Girl Scout brand increases sales for another company (e.g. in-home product parties like Avon, Pampered Chef, candle parties, etc.). They also can’t generate profits for another company (e.g., M&M, Krispy Kreme, See’s Candies, Pizza Hut or other restaurants). They can’t collect or raise funds that benefit other organizations or nonprofits.
Getting Your Troop’s Money-Earning Project Approved
Complete a Money-Earning Project Application and provide a copy to your service unit treasurer at least four weeks prior to the project date. Complete and submit these documents with your application:

- Event Budget Worksheet (submit to service unit treasurer)
- Event Approval Checklist (submit to service unit activity consultant)
- A copy of the flyer or announcement for the project (submit to service unit treasurer)

**If you think that the income from the project will exceed $500**, send the Money-Earning Application and supporting documents to the council finance support specialist rather than your service unit for pre-approval. The finance support specialist can be contacted at troopbanking@sdgirlscouts.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money-Earning Project Checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If your troop decides to do a money-earning project, use the checklist below to guide you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ensure that the project is:

- Voluntary (the girls aren’t required to do it).
- Age-appropriate and includes girl planning.
- Clearly defined and communicated to parents.
- Consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (a quality program experience that helps girls discover, connect, and take action).
- Solely funds Girl Scout activities (no money retained by individuals).
- Not scheduled during the Girl Scout Cookie Program or the fall product program.

Additional requirements—ensure that:

- Troop finances are up-to-date and the most recent Annual Financial Report has been submitted.
- The troop has a Wells Fargo bank account.
- The troop participated in the cookie program and the fall product program (in the same Girl Scout year as the proposed money-earning project).
- Parents have given written permission for girls to participate.
- The project takes place on single day (unless otherwise approved by the council finance support specialist).
- Project flyers or announcements follow council guidelines.
- Local city or county permits have been secured, if needed.
- Additional Girl Scout insurance has been purchased for any non-Girl Scouts attending.
- The Event Approval Checklist and the Event Budget Worksheet have been completed and reviewed by your service unit.
Find it! Search “Money Earning Application,” “Event Budget Worksheet,” or “Event Approval Checklist” at sgdgirlscouts.org/forms.

When you’ve wrapped up a money-earning project Complete the evaluation section of the Money-Earning Project Application and include it when you complete and submit your troop’s Annual Financial Report for the year. Don’t forget to reflect! Discuss the project with girls. Was the budget on target? What did they discover? With whom did they connect? In what way did they take action? What would they have done differently?

Helping Your Troop Reach Financial Goals
When your Girl Scout troop is ready to raise funds, it’s important for girls to have a plan in order to reach their financial goals. You can help them by guiding them through activities like those described below.

Step 1: Set Goals
Ask the girls what they hope to accomplish through their money-earning activities. Do they have goals in mind? Are the goals realistic? If not, help them define more realistic goals. How will they know when they’ve met the goals?

Step 2: Create a Budget
Create a budget with your troop. Tally up expenses (like needed supplies, admission fees, travel, etc.) and troop income from dues and proceeds from the cookie program and the fall product program.

Find it! Search “Troop Budget Planning Worksheet” at sgdgirlscouts.org/forms.

Step 3: Project Earnings
Subtract expenses from income to see how much money your troop needs to earn.

Step 4: Discuss Plans
Have the troop brainstorm to make decisions about future plans. Can the troop earn enough money through product programs? If not, what other ways might the troop earn what they need? Will they consider a money-earning project like a collection drive (used cell phones or ink cartridges)? Or Christmas tree recycling? Guide them to consider whether their ideas are possible and discuss safety.

Step 5: Write It Out
If the troop decides on a money-earning activity, fill out a Money Earning Application and submit it to your service unit along with the Event Budget Worksheet. Work on these with the troop. It’s a great way for girls to understand income and expenses.
Find it! Search “Money Earning Application” at sdgirlscouts.org/forms.

Help girls balance money-earning with other activities. Girls can enjoy other activities that don’t have an emphasis on money-earning and spending. Take Action projects, for example, give girls a chance to learn leadership and help in their communities without spending much money. Take Action projects are a part of each Girl Scout Journey. See page 23 to learn more.

Paying for Membership with Troop Funds
Paying for next year’s membership is an excellent use of Girl Scout troop funds because it guarantees girls another year of Girl Scout fun and helps out troop families too. It’s easy to renew memberships in your My GS account. Find instructions or learn more about membership at sdgirlscouts.org/renew.

How to Open a Troop Bank Account
All troop funds must flow through a troop bank account, not through a personal bank account. Troop leaders can set up a troop account at any Wells Fargo branch. Pick one that’s convenient!

You can open an account as soon as you have:

- Registered as a volunteer.
- Received a clear background check.
- Held your first troop parent meeting.

To open an account, you’ll need two signers (at least one must be the leader, co-leader, or troop treasurer). Signers must:

- Be registered Girl Scout members.
- Be unrelated to each other.
- Have a clear background check.

Step 1: Send an Email
Contact troopbanking@sdgirlscouts.org. Include your Girl Scout troop number, troop treasurer name, branch and address of the Wells Fargo you’ll be using, and the legal first and last names of both account signers. A council finance support specialist will email you an Account Open Request Authorization form and a Wells Fargo Girl Scout Account Check List. You will need this form in order to open an account.
**Step 2: Make an Appointment**
Plan to meet with the Wells Fargo branch to set up an account. Both signers must be present to open the account. Bring these with you:

- Girl Scout troop number
- Social Security number
- Driver’s license (or state-issued ID)
- Second ID (e.g., credit card, passport, military ID)
- Money for initial deposit ($50 if possible, but talk to the bank if your amount is smaller)
- Account Open Request Authorization Form

Confirm that you are setting up a simple business checking account with online statements. Decline additional services like bill pay and rewards. These aren’t available with Girl Scout troop accounts.

**Step 3: Sign up Online**
Make banking easy. Sign up for online banking at wellsfargo.com/biz once you have opened your account.

**Step 4: Keep an Eye on Your Account Balance**
You can open a troop bank account by depositing $50. If your troop has less, the bank will work with you. However, if your troop account has a zero balance for 30 days, it may be closed.

It’s a good idea to check your account each month. You can make sure that:

- All troop money is in the account.
- The account is being used according to Girl Scout guidelines.
- Your account isn’t overdrawn.
- Fees aren’t being applied.

**About Bank Account Fees**
Your troop account is a simple business checking account with online statements. No monthly service fee is charged to the account. If you are charged a $10 monthly account fee, visit the bank in person and ask to have the charge reversed. Only account signers can make this request, and it must be made within 30 days of receiving your bank statement.

If you make a deposit of more than $7,500, a fee of $.30 per $100 deposited will be applied to your troop account. It’s possible that your account may incur this fee, particularly during the cookie program and the fall product program. This fee is acceptable.
Add or Remove a Bank Account Signer
To add a signer, have the signer register as a Girl Scout member at sdgirlscouts.org. Once the membership and background check for the new signer are complete, email troopbanking@sdgirlscouts.org and request to add a new signer. A finance support specialist will process your request and email an updated Account Open Request Authorization (AORA) form. A current signer on the account and the new signer must visit the bank branch together and bring the updated AORA form.

To remove a signer, contact a finance support specialist at troopbanking@sdgirlscouts.org right away.

Close a Troop Bank Account
Close the Girl Scout troop account if your troop plans not to continue. Before you close the account, make sure all checks and other debits have cleared. If the account has a balance, the troop can decide what to do with the money that remains. See “When Your Troop Disbands” for guidelines. Then, visit the original bank branch to close the account in person. If your account has unspent funds, ask the bank to make out a cashier’s check to your service unit. Plan to provide the service unit with the check within three business days.

When troops choose not to continue, unused troop funds that are left in troop accounts become the property of Girl Scouts San Diego.

If Your Troop Account Is Dormant
Your troop account is dormant when you haven’t deposited or withdrawn funds in 90 days.

**If the account balance is under $100,** Girl Scouts San Diego will close the account and transfer the balance to our general fund. Troop members are not notified.

**If the account balance is over $100,** Girl Scouts San Diego will send an email to all registered troop members and the service unit treasurer. Troop members have 30 days to respond to the email.

- **Troops who respond to the email** can choose to continue with Girl Scouts and reactivate the account by withdrawing or depositing money. Or they can disband and close the account.
Here’s what happens when the troop account is dormant:

- 50 percent of the funds are transferred to the Girl Scouts San Diego general fund.

- A pro-rated amount is transferred to a new troop for any girl who wishes to continue in another Girl Scout troop. Girls who choose to continue in Girl Scouts as individually registered Girl Scouts do not receive a pro-rated portion of funds.

- Any remaining funds are transferred to the service unit. These funds are immediately available for the service unit’s girl program.

- **If a troop doesn’t respond to our email**, we will close the account and transfer any remaining funds to the Girl Scouts San Diego general fund.

**Using Troop Debit Cards**

Your Girl Scout troop bank account includes a debit card and one box of free checks. You’ll receive the card within 5 days of opening a troop account. Use the debit card or the checks issued with your account for all troop expenses. It’s important to manage your troop debit card use. Before accepting a troop debit card, be aware that:

- Only authorized troop account signers can use the debit card.
- You are responsible for all purchases and charges made with the card.
- You are responsible for service fees, unauthorized expenses, insufficient fund charges, and fees for lost/stolen/missing cards.
- If you misuse the card, you are responsible for money owed to the troop and you may lose your leadership role.
- If you have a personal account with Wells Fargo, you may want to customize the card.

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**Best Practices for Using Troop Debit Cards**

- Use the card for official Girl Scout business only. Using it for other purposes violates Girl Scout policy.
- Document spending with itemized receipts (not ATM receipts).
- Spend only within the limits of the troop budget.
- Reconcile spending monthly.
- Contact Wells Fargo if you lose the card or if it’s stolen.
Using Cash
Cash should be used sparingly. You may need to use some cash when you travel with your Girl Scout troop or when helping girls learn about money management.

Keeping Records
Girl Scout troop leaders or troop treasurers must keep records of their troop finances up-to-date and accurate. This means tracking all money received and spent in a timely manner. It also means organizing and holding on to these items for four years:

- Receipts
- Bank statements
- Checkbook register
- Cookie program and the fall product program reports and receipts

Share your troop’s finances with girls, volunteers, and troop families often. Sharing info about troop finances helps avoid conflict. Troop parents can see troop financials in their view of the Volunteer Toolkit or request to see records of the troop’s finances at any time. Girls, troop volunteers, service unit managers and treasurers, and Girl Scout San Diego staff can make this request too.

Tracking Troop Income and Spending
Track your Girl Scout troop’s financial data, including income, expenses, bank account balance, and product program money on the Troop Financial Tracking Worksheet. Update the worksheet often—anytime your troop makes a financial transaction or receives funds. It’s the easy way to stay on top of financial reporting.

Generally, troop treasurers use the worksheet to record troop finances. Treasurers should provide an up-to-date worksheet to the troop leader or assistant leader to aid them in completing the Annual Financial Report.

Find it! Search “Troop Financial Tracking Worksheet” at sdgirlscouts.org/forms.
Submitting Your Annual Financial Report

Girl Scout troop leaders or assistant leaders submit their troop’s Annual Financial Report on the Volunteer Toolkit Finances tab. The report is due by June 1. Attach these documents along with the report:

- Your Troop Financial Tracking Worksheet
- Your troop’s April bank statement
- Reconciliation Form (if your bank statement balance is different from your Financial Tracking Worksheet)
- Money-earning project application (if you’re troop did a money-earning project)
- Troop Disbandment Report (if your troop is aging out or won’t continue)

**Important browser and device info:** Be sure to use a desktop or laptop computer and Firefox or Google Chrome as your browser. Other devices and browsers aren’t supported and may not work.

**Find it!** Search “Troop Financial Tracking Worksheet” “Reconciliation Form” or “Troop Disbandment Report” at sdgirlscouts.org/forms.

**Don’t skip completing the Annual Financial Report.** It’s an important step. Troops who don’t supply a completed Annual Financial Report by June 1:

- Can’t apply for money-earning projects.
- Aren’t eligible for financial assistance for girls in need.
- May not have leader or troop treasurer roles renewed.

The Internal Revenue Service requires that you hold on to reports for four years.

Reimbursement for Troop Expenses

It’s best to use the troop ATM/debit card or troop checks for all Girl Scout troop expenses. However, if you’ve spent your own funds on behalf of the Girl Scout troop, complete a Check Request form. Have the form co-signed by a signer on the troop account (other than you).

Attach all receipts and keep the form for your records. Then have the co-signer write a reimbursement check made out to you.

**Complete the check request process within 60 days.** After 60 days, the Check Request form must be signed by your service unit treasurer or the finance support specialist at Girl Scouts San Diego.
An ATM receipt won’t work as a receipt for reimbursement. You’ll need a detailed receipt that shows how the cash was spent. Also, avoid making troop checks out to “cash.” That practice doesn’t meet IRS or financial guidelines.

Find it! Search “Check Request” at sdgirlscouts.org/forms.

Giving Girls Opportunities to Learn Finances
Girls of all ages can learn about finances. See “Financial Ability by Program Level” in “Chapter 6: Working with Girls” to guide you in giving girls age-appropriate opportunities to learn about working with money and financial recordkeeping.

Borrowing Money from the Troop Account
Girl Scout troop funds are not for personal use. Volunteers who misuse troop funds or product program proceeds for their own benefit will be released from their Girl Scout role and won’t be able to volunteer for Girl Scouts in the future. Girl Scouts San Diego may also pursue collection efforts to recover troop money. Girl Scouts San Diego may take other action, too, like filing a police report or referring the matter to the district attorney.

Fundraising for Other Organizations
Girl Scout councils sometimes enter into national partnerships to raise funds. However, it’s important to know that girls cannot raise money for other organizations in their role as Girl Scouts. They can support organizations through service projects, like making blankets for an animal shelter. See also Giving Donations.

Participating in Political Activities
Volunteers and girls may not participate directly or indirectly in political campaign work when in an official Girl Scout capacity or when representing themselves as a Girl Scout. Prohibited activities include letter writing campaigns, political rallies, circulating petitions, and carrying political banners.
This doesn’t mean that Girl Scouts can’t be civic-minded. See the Civic Action Toolkit, for appropriate methods of civic engagement.

**G.I.R.L. Agenda**

girl a•gen•da / noun / gərl əˈjəndə

A nonpartisan initiative to inspire, prepare, and mobilize girls and those who care about them to lead positive change through civic action.


**Selling or Endorsing Commercial Products**

Volunteers and girls operating in an official Girl Scout capacity cannot endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell commercial products. Commercial products are any products sold at retail.

**Soliciting Funds**

Girl Scouts San Diego maintains the official 501(c)(3) status as a nonprofit organization. Girl Scout troops and service units are not legal entities and are not nonprofit organizations. Have questions about soliciting funds? Contact the council finance support specialist at [troopbanking@sdgirlscouts.org](mailto:troopbanking@sdgirlscouts.org).
Receiving Monetary Donations
As a nonprofit, Girl Scouts San Diego has legal obligations regarding donation solicitation. To protect our nonprofit status, all donations must be routed through the Girl Scout San Diego accounting department to ensure that donations are properly recorded and accounted for. To satisfy Internal Revenue Service rules and sound accounting policy, all donations of $250 or more must be officially acknowledged by Girl Scouts San Diego. Here’s how donations work:

**If the donation is...**

**Then...**

$249.99 or less  
*Your troop can accept the full donation.* The donation is not tax deductible. The same donor cannot repeat the donation in the same membership year.

$250 or more  
*Send the full donation to Girl Scouts San Diego.* Donations of $250 or more must be received by council to comply with Internal Revenue Service laws. $249.99 will be sent back to your troop. Girl Scouts San Diego will send a tax receipt to the donor. The remaining funds will be used to benefit Girl Scout San Diego members and volunteers.

Have donors identify the troop along with their donation to ensure that it is clear who is to receive the gift.

Receiving In-Kind Donations
Organizations, businesses, and people can offer in-kind donations to a Girl Scout troop. These donations are usually equipment or materials, like remnants from a fabric shop or paint from a home improvement store. It’s a good idea to get a receipt that shows the value of the in-kind donation. Include this value as income on your Troop/Group Annual Financial Report.

Have the troop thank the donor with a card. Girls can also invite donors to a meeting or ceremony, or work with the donor on a Take Action project.

Giving Donations
Girl Scout troops can give some of their troop funds to organizations they want to support. The Girl Scout San Diego Campership Fund or Opportunity Fund, local or international service organizations, and environmental projects are options. All giving should be girl-led. Girls should discuss and vote on who will receive the funds and how much.
Financial Assistance

Let families know that all girls can participate in Girl Scouts. Financial assistance is available to help pay for items like these:

- First-year Girl Scout membership fees (subsequent year fees can be paid with troop funds)
- Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting or girl Journey book
- Basic uniform pieces
- Local service unit events
- Council-sponsored events (i.e., STEM events, Incredible Race, etc.)
- Council-sponsored resident and day camps

Adult members may also apply for assistance to cover training fees, startup costs for books, and some uniform pieces.

Financial assistance can’t be used to cover costs a troop can’t handle, like big travel. If the troop can’t pay for an activity, that’s a sign! The troop should plan a less expensive activity instead. Or the troop can plan ahead. If the troop has already participated in the cookie program and the fall product program, the girls might consider a money-earning project to help cover their annual membership, activity, and event costs.

Find it! See sdgirlscouts.org/financialaid to learn more and download an application.

Funding for Individually Registered Girl Scouts

Individually registered Girl Scouts can fund their Girl Scout experiences by participating in the cookie program and the fall product program. Instead of proceeds, however, individually registered Girl Scouts earn Cookie Bucks or Council Bucks from Girl Scouts San Diego. These can be used to fund Girl Scout experiences like camps and activities. Individually registered Girl Scouts can also apply for financial help. See “Financial Assistance” to learn more.

It’s important to know that individually registered Girl Scouts can’t:

- Open a Girl Scout bank account.
- Solicit money.
- Fundraise for other organizations when in their role as an individually registered Girl Scout.
Accepting Credit Cards
Your Girl Scout troop can accept credit cards for these items:

- Troop dues
- Family portion of activity or event costs
- Cookie booth activity
- Payment for money-earning project activity (e.g. a gift-wrapping booth)

You’ll use a mobile credit card reader to process this type of payment. You can accept the card and swipe it. If the sale is authorized, funds will transfer from your customer’s account to the processing company and then to your troop’s bank account.

Help your troop come up with the pros and cons of credit cards by discussing guidelines for accepting credit cards.

Guidelines for Accepting Credit Cards

- **Factor in credit card processing fees.** These fees are the troop’s responsibility. Make sure using the card is worth it.
- **Have adults (not girls) process the credit card.**
- **Use card readers at cookie booths,** but not when going door-to-door, unless all troop members have access to a card reader, all funds post to the troop account, and the troop agrees to accept all fees.
- **Don’t add on fees** like a $0.25 charge per customer. It’s against California state law.
- **Take care with cardholder info.** No writing, storing, photographing, or saving credit card data. Card readers should be encrypted and should not store data either.
- **Stay off public Wi-Fi.** It’s not safe for making credit transactions online.
- **Deposit funds into the troop bank account,** never into a personal account.
- **Consider chip or strip card readers.** Your troop is liable if you accept a credit card with a chip but read only the magnetic strip with your card reader. Keep in mind that the processing fees may also be higher for running the magnetic strip on a card that has a chip. Check with your vendor.

**If your troop decides to accept credit cards,** you’ll need a troop bank account in place to begin. Then, research credit card reader vendors. It’s a good idea to consider these points:

- Which vendor provides the best rate
- Which vendor has the best customer support
- The cost and fees of a swiper vs. EMV chip reader
- Whether the phone or tablet you’ll be using is compatible and the cost of standard data charges (data charges are the troop’s responsibility)
Once you’ve chosen a vendor, work with the vendor to get set up.

You may be prompted for your social security number during the setup process. Use the Girl Scout San Diego tax ID number (#95-1644585) instead.

**Using Third-Party Payment Providers**
Your Girl Scout troop may choose to use a third-party payment provider. If so, open an independent account, not an organizational or non-profit account. The account can be used for collecting dues and troop activity payments. The account cannot be used for cookie program or fall product program activity. Research the costs before you set up the account. All third-party payment provider fees are the troop’s responsibility. When choosing a provider, consider ease-of-use and their dispute resolution policies.

**Guidelines for Using Third-Party Providers**
- Set up an independent account, not a non-profit or organized account.
- Link the account to your troop checking account.
- Remember to deposit or transfer the funds to your troop checking account and include transactions on your Troop Financial Tracking Worksheet.
- Reconcile spending monthly.
- Don’t use the account to collect payments for the cookie program or fall product program.

**How Changes in the Troop Affect Troop Funds**
Leaders and troop treasurers often have questions about how changes in a Girl Scout troop affect troop funds. Check out the chart below to find out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If this happens:</th>
<th>Then:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A girl changes troops</td>
<td>Money remains with the original troop. A girl who joins an existing troop will participate in the activities planned by her new troop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troops merge</td>
<td>Funds from both troops are combined into one account.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A troop adds a new girl</td>
<td>• All girls benefit from the troop funds equally, including new troop members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If families in the troop contributed a startup fee, you can ask the family of the new girl to do the same. But you can’t turn a girl away from your troop if her family cannot pay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Troops planning an extended trip for several years should consider if it’s possible to include another traveler. If not, invite the new girl in the troop to pay her own way, or to join after the trip, or choose to join another troop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A troop bridges</td>
<td>The troop account is not affected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A troop divides</td>
<td>All troop assets are split pro-rata between the two troops, depending on girl membership at the time the troop divides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If this happens:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Then:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A troop disbands</td>
<td>Girls decide how to use remaining troop funds. Funds cannot be given as cash or in the form of gift cards or merchandise. See “When Your Troop Disbands,” to learn more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| A troop’s leadership changes | The troop account is not affected. However, the outgoing leader must:  
                                  - Contact your service unit or the finance support specialist at Girl Scouts San Diego.  
                                  - Submit an Annual Troop/Group Financial Report and/or Financial Tracking Worksheet prior to leaving the leadership role.  
                                  - Coordinate with the new leader to set up a new signer on the bank account. |
How Troop Funds Are Pro-Rated

**How is troop money pro-rated?**
If leftover troop money is given to the service unit and some of the girls decide to continue with another troop, a portion of the leftover troop funds will follow the girls to the new troop.

**Example:** A troop of 8 decides to disband. However, two girls decide to continue with another troop. 1/4 of the troop funds will follow the girls to the new troop (1/8 for girl one + 1/8 for girl two = 1/4 of troop funds to new troop).

If the troop does not reorganize within one year from the date of the troop’s last registration, the service unit will use the remaining funds to support Girl Scouts.

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**Step 3: Dispose of the Troop’s Equipment**

Let girls have a say about troop equipment. For example, if your Girl Scout troop owns camping equipment, the girls might decide to give it to a troop that is just starting out.

Service units often have a “help yourself” table at monthly meetings where Girl Scout items no longer needed are placed for troops who can use them.

**Step 4: Guide Girls to Use Remaining Troop Money**

Graduating high school students can get a lifetime Girl Scout membership. Or, the troop may decide to do a final activity. Or they can donate the funds to a charity they would like to support.

They can also donate to these options:

- Their service unit
- Another Girl Scout troop
- S.H.A.R.E.
- The Juliette Low World Friendship Fund

Troop and service unit funds are never given to girls or volunteers as cash. Nor can troop funds be used to purchase gift cards. Tax implications apply when cash or gift cards are given to an individual or another organization, no matter how nominal the amount.

**Need help making these decisions?** Contact your service unit treasurer or the council finance support specialist at troopbanking@sdbgirlscouts.org.
**Step 5: Close the Troop Bank Account**
Close the troop bank account after all checks and debits have cleared the bank. If money remains, have the bank issue a Cashier’s Check payable to your Girl Scout troop’s service unit. If you have girls who wish to continue in Girl Scouts, the service unit treasurer will distribute funds to the troops who accept the girls.

**Step 6: Complete Disbandment Documents**
Complete a Financial Tracking Worksheet and Disbandment Report. These notify the service unit about the disbandment and indicate plans for funds and girls.

![Find it!](search “Troop Financial Tracking Worksheet” or “Disbandment Report” at sdgirlscouts.org/forms.)

**Step 7: Submit Disbandment Documents**
Submit disbandment documents to the service unit treasurer within 30 days of your last Girl Scout troop meeting.

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**Disbandment Checklist**
Submit these documents to your service unit:

- **Financial Tracking Worksheet** (showing all troop income and expenses since the last time you filed a financial report)

- **Troop/Group Disbandment Report**
  - Check issued from the bank to the service unit for remaining troop funds (if your troop didn’t spend all its funds)

- The last four years of troop financial records (financial reports, receipts, bank statements, and the checkbook registers)