

Question	Answer
Why do we need a troop/Service Unit checking account?	Per GSDH Troop and Service Unit Funds Policy, Troop and Service Unit funds shall be deposited in an account with a federally insured financial institution as a way to manage the funds generated and expenses incurred by the troop/Service Unit.
Why does the troop/Service Unit account have to be a checking account? Why can't the troop/Service Unit have a savings account?	The Federal Reserve (governing body over banks) Regulation D limits the number of transactions a savings account can have in a month. To ensure that all troop/Service Unit accounts remain compliant and are not charged a Transaction Limit Penalty GSDH opted to only allow checking accounts.
How do we open a new troop checking account?	Please reference the How to Open a New Troop/Service Unit Checking Account document that can be found on the GSDH website by searching Opening a New Bank Account.
Why do all checking account openings and changes need to be authorized by GSDH?	All account openings and changes will be submitted online via the GSDH website for changes to be verified and authorized by GSDH. The authorization to open a single checking account or make changes to an existing account will only be sent to the volunteer after they have successfully passed a review by the finance department of the online Bank Account Authorization Request Form . It is best business practices to have financial oversight over those whom are transacting business on behalf of GSDH troops/Service Units.
Whose name is the troop/Service Unit checking account under?	The account shall be in the name of Girl Scouts - Dakota Horizons Troop ##### or Girl Scouts - Dakota Horizons Service Unit ### NAME as listed on your Bank Account Authorization Letter.
Why is each checking account opened with the Council Federal tax identification number on it?	Any troop/Service Unit affiliated with GSDH has no legal status, but are an extension of GSDH. Therefore, each troop and Service Unit account shall be opened with the Council Federal tax identification number on it.

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<p>How many authorized signers need to/can be on the troop/Service Unit checking account?</p>	<p>Each account shall have two (2) registered and approved Girl Scout adults from the Service Unit, not of the same family or living in the same household, as signers on the account at all times. The Council Chief Financial Officer and Controller will also be authorized on the account. Since moving to the two (2) troop co-leader, one (1) troop treasurer leadership structure GSDH will allow three (3) registered and approved Girl Scout adults from the Service Unit as signers on the account.</p>
<p>What requirements must be met to be an authorized signer on the troop/Service Unit checking account?</p>	<p>To be an authorized signer on the troop/Service Unit account one must be (1) a registered Girl Scout adult, (2) approved Girl Scout volunteer with a current criminal background check on file and (3) have no financial restrictions placed upon them.</p>
<p>How will the council know what our troop/Service Unit checking account information is?</p>	<p>Within ten (10) business days of account opening or making changes to an account the Account Signers must complete the Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form, which is submitted to the council. The Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form must also be submitted annually by October 1st.</p>
<p>Why do we have to submit the Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form annually by October 1st?</p>	<p>The Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form must be submitted annually at the recommendation of our bank that we process our ACH's thru. The council chose October 1st as the deadline as that is the start of our membership year.</p>
<p>What do we do if we just opened our checking account and do not have our checks yet?</p>	<p>Depending on the bank, you can request bank counter checks, an account card or a bank letter confirming the name on the account, the bank routing number and the bank account number.</p>
<p>Why do we have to submit a check copy with our Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form?</p>	<p>The main purpose of the check copy is so GSDH can verify the troop/Service Unit number, routing number and account number are entered into the Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form correctly prior to putting them into Product Sales Program systems and our accounting system. We find that about 10% of our Bank Account Confirmation / ACH Form submissions are sent with incorrect troop/Service Unit numbers, invalid routing numbers or incorrect account numbers.</p>

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<p>How many signatures are required on each check?</p>	<p>Only one individual signature listed on the account is needed to sign a check in the sum of \$500.00 or less. If a check is written in excess of \$500.00 a second signature is needed.</p>
<p>Can we have a debit card for our troop/Service Unit checking account?</p>	<p>Debit cards with a purchase limit of no more \$500.00 are permitted on accounts. Debit cards must not have a cash withdrawal availability.</p>
<p>Why can't our debit cards have a cash withdrawal availability?</p>	<p>It is best financial practices to not allow cash back on Point of Sale (POS) transactions or at an ATM. When issues have arose regarding the mishandling of troop/Service Unit funds, the number one area it is found is in cash transactions. This is because there are no checks and balances between the two authorized signers, nor receipts to support the withdrawals.</p>
<p>There are times that our troop/Service Unit needs to have cash on hand. How do we get the cash if we can't use our debit card to do so?</p>	<p>Best financial practice is to have authorized signer one issue a check to authorized signer two and have authorized signer two cash the check at the bank. This allows there to be checks and balances between the two authorized signers and the troop/Service Unit is less likely to experience mishandling of troop/Service Unit funds.</p>
<p>What is expected of an authorized account signer?</p>	<p>Please reference the Troop & Service Unit Account Authorized Signer Responsibilities document that can be found on the GSDH website by searching Authorized Signer Responsibilities.</p>
<p>What is the Annual Finance Report?</p>	<p>The Annual Finance Report is a recap of your troop/Service Unit income and expenses from the reporting year (June 1st to May 31st) that is to be completed in its entirety by June 15th of each year with a copy of the current year May bank statement attached. Also, a check register will be required to be maintained throughout the year and attached to the Finance Report.</p>

Why do we have to submit an Annual Finance Report?

There are three main reasons why an Annual Finance Report is required to be submitted annually.

1) GSUSA requires troops/Service Units to report their income and expenses back to their council annually.

2) Since day-to-day custodianship of troop/Service Unit funds is delegated to the Account Signers, the finance department oversees all troop accounts by completing an annual review of the Annual Finance Reports. GSDH also uses the Annual Finance Reports to make sure that troops/Service Units are following Troop and Service Unit Funds Policies and see how troops/Service Units are earning and spending their money to aid in council business decisions. In addition, GSDH uses the Annual Finance Reports to determine if the Troop and Service Unit Policies need to be updated and if there are areas where more education and training is needed.

3) Since a troop/Service Unit affiliated with GSDH has no legal status, but are an extension of GSDH and troop/Service Unit accounts are opened with the Council Federal tax identification number on it, GSDH must report the troop/Service Unit account balances on its audited financial statements.

<p>I don't have access to a computer. Can I send in a paper copy of my Annual Finance Report and bank statement?</p>	<p>Many departments within GSDH use the Annual Finance Report for different reasons. Electronic submission is the preferred method of submission as we are able to view all submissions in one collective report instead of each individual submission. If you do not have a computer please explore these options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Allow your troop co-leader to submit the Annual Finance Report. 2) Each council district office has an extra computer that is available for you to use. 3) Check with your Service Unit to see if they have a computer that is available for you to use. 4) Most public libraries have a computer available for public use. The Annual Finance Report is now submitted thru the VTK, which is a secure website. Bank websites are also secure websites. Just make sure you save any documents you are working on to a portable flash drive, which can be purchased at any Walmart, Target, Walgreens, etc. relatively cheap.
<p>We heard that GSDH audits troop/Service Unit accounts. How do you determine which troop/Service Unit accounts to audit?</p>	<p>An audit of your troop/Service Unit account can be initiated in one of three main ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) GSDH sees Troop or Service Unit Funds Policy violations or questionable use of troop/Service Unit funds in the annual review of the Annual Finance Report. 2) GSDH will randomly audit a certain percentage of accounts each year based on the number of active troops/Service Units and the balance in those accounts. 3) A parent/sponsor/bank brings a financial concern to GSDH's attention regarding questionable use of troop/Service Unit funds or lack of reporting on the use of troop/Service Unit funds.
<p>Do we need to retain our receipts?</p>	<p>Account Signers are to retain bank statements and receipts on accounts for two years.</p>
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<p>What can we spend our troop/Service Unit funds on?</p>	<p>Since a troop/Service Unit affiliated with GSDH has no legal status, but are an extension of GSDH and opened with the Council Federal tax identification number on it, troop/Service Unit funds are the property of the Council. The troop/Service Unit may decide how its money is used for well-balanced program activities. However, troop funds may not be used for any non-Girl Scout purpose. Under no circumstance shall the money be divided among members of the troop/Service Unit for personal use, used by the Account Signers for her/his personal use, or donated to another organization.</p>
<p>Can we have overdraft protection attached to our troop/Service Unit checking account to prevent our checking account from going NSF at the bank?</p>	<p>GSDH does not allow overdraft protection, credit cards or borrowing of any kind. Furthermore, the troop is required to pay its bills in a responsible, timely manner. Troops may not under any circumstances issue NSF (non-sufficient funds) checks. Account Signers who overdraw their account can be dismissed.</p>
<p>Why do we have to submit funds exceeding \$400.00 to the council?</p>	<p>In the past, if the account balance exceeded \$400 you were required to submit your "Excess Troop Funds" to council as a way to safeguard the troop/Service Unit funds. This policy has since been updated. Currently, the Board of Directors recognizes the need for individual troops/Service Units to maintain nominal account balances to fund day-to-day activities for girls and adults. If the account balance exceeds \$400, an explanation of how funds will be spent needs to be submitted with the Finance Report. If funds over \$400 are not going to be used or an adequate reason for use is not submitted, the troop may be asked to submit the funds to the council. This will be up to the discretion of the Controller or Chief Financial Officer.</p>
<p>How do we get back Excess Troop Funds that have been previously submitted to the council?</p>	<p>You can request your Excess Troop Funds by completing the Excess Funds Request Form which can be found under Forms on the GSDH website.</p>
<p>What do we need to do if our troop/Service Unit decides to no longer continue or "disband"?</p>	<p>Please reference the Disbanding Troop Procedure that can be found on the GSDH website under Forms by searching Disbanding.</p>

My girl is going to split off from the troop. How do we get the money she earned from the troop checking account?

Girls earn money only for the group, never for themselves. Groups may not track individual girl balances within the group account. Girls may not receive individual credit for the amount of funds or the portion of the group account that resulted from their contributed group dues, or their money earned on product sales program group proceeds. The IRS has issued an advisory that non-profit organizations may NOT track individual "girl accounts". Per the IRS "a section 501(C)(3) organization must not be organized or operated for the benefit of private interests. No part of the net earnings of a section 501(c)(3) organization may inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual." The IRS took the position that using the money raised in various fundraising activities to further the Scouting program was in accordance with their exempt purpose, but the creation of a reserve fund for individual girls within a group (earmarked accounts) is not allowed and those organizations may be required to pay unrelated business income tax or lose their tax exempt status. You can ask your troop if they are willing to donate troop funds to your girls new troop or to the Service Unit if your girl is going to be an IRM, but it must be a range not a dollar for dollar calculation. Funds may not be given directly to the girl.

We have a new co-leader. Do we both need to go to the bank and change signers on the checking account?

This depends on the bank you are banking with. Some banks require a new signature from each authorized signer on the troop/Service Unit bank account, while some banks require a signature from only the new authorized signer on the troop/Service Unit bank account. If in question, it is best to reach out to the bank to see what their process is.

<p>Where does the bank send documents that need council employee signatures?</p>	<p>Documents that need council employee signatures can be securely e-mailed to finance@gsdakotahorizons.org, faxed to 605.336.6841 or physically mailed to our headquarters office (see below). We will return signed documents by the means in which we receive them, unless directed otherwise.</p> <p>Girl Scouts - Dakota Horizons Attn: Accounting Manager 1101 S. Marion Rd Sioux Falls, SD 57106</p>
<p>Can we have online banking access to our troop/Service Unit checking account?</p>	<p>Yes, you can have online banking access to your troop/Service Unit account. This request should be directed to your financial institution. There are a handful of financial institutions that require GSDH to maintain online banking access for the council. If your financial institution tells you that GSDH needs to set this up for you, please submit your request to finance@gsdakotahorizons.org.</p>
<p>Can we write a personal check for a troop expense and then reimburse ourselves?</p>	<p>While this is not best financial practices, GSDH does realize that you may not always have your troop/Service Unit checks or debit card with you at all times. If you do need to write a personal check for a troop expense, make sure you provide the receipt for the troop expense to another authorized signer on the troop/Service Unit bank account and request that they issue you the check for reimbursement. This allows there to be checks and balances between the two authorized signers and the troop/Service Unit is less likely to experience mishandling of troop/Service Unit funds. Under no circumstance should an authorized account signer be issuing payment to themselves.</p>

<p>Can we track troop funds by individual girl within our troop?</p>	<p>Girls earn money only for the group, never for themselves. Groups may not track individual girl balances within the group account. Girls may not receive individual credit for the amount of funds or the portion of the group account that resulted from their contributed group dues, or their money earned on product sales program group proceeds. The IRS has issued an advisory that non-profit organizations may NOT track individual "girl accounts". Per the IRS "a section 501(C)(3) organization must not be organized or operated for the benefit of private interests. No part of the net earnings of a section 501(c)(3) organization may inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual." The IRS took the position that using the money raised in various fundraising activities to further the Scouting program was in accordance with their exempt purpose, but the creation of a reserve fund for individual girls within a group (earmarked accounts) is not allowed and those organizations may be required to pay unrelated business income tax or lose their tax exempt status.</p>
<p>How do we pay for events online for the troop with our checking account?</p>	<p>Debit cards with a purchase limit of no more \$500.00 are permitted on accounts. Debit cards must not have a cash withdrawal availability.</p>