



# Troop Finance Guide

This guide was developed for Girl Scouts of Hawai'i volunteers to insure that they have the necessary information to manage troop and service unit funds. Please refer to this guide when managing accounts and making decisions regarding money earning activities.

QUESTIONS? Contact [customercare@gshawaii.org](mailto:customercare@gshawaii.org) | [gshawaii.org](http://gshawaii.org)

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Refer to the [GSH Volunteer Essentials](#) for supplemental information.

## Volunteer Finance Roles

Click on the links for more details about these Volunteer Finance Roles.

### **Troop Co-Leaders**

Coordinate and deliver Girl Scout program for a troop/group through progressive, fun, and contemporary learning experiences leading girls toward the goals and ideals of Girl Scouting. The Troop Leader, in partnership with the troop leadership team, ensures a safe and quality program for girls.

### **Troop Treasurer**

Maintains the troop treasury and ensures that all troop financial procedures are followed according to council and troop guidelines.

### **Troop Bank Signatory**

Act as Bank Signatory Co-signor for all troop financial requirements and work with Treasurer to ensure procedures are followed according to council and troop guidelines.

### **Troop Cookie Manager**

Promote and coordinate the annual Girl Scout Cookie Program in a Girl Scout troop.

*Thanks for the important roles you have as Girl Scout Volunteers. It means a lot to us!*

# Money Earning Activities

Helping girls decide what they want to do, and coaching them as they earn and manage money to pursue their goals, is an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). Your Girl Scout group plans and finances its own activities, with your guidance. At the same time, the girls learn many valuable skills that serve them throughout their lives.

Girl Scout groups are funded by a share of money earned through council-sponsored product sale activities (such as Girl Scout cookie activities), group money-earning activities (council-approved, of course), and any dues your group may charge. This guide will give you the ins and outs of establishing a group account and helping girls manage their group's finances, practice successful product-sales techniques, and understand how to collaborate with sponsors and causes.

For information and guidance on safety related to product sales see [GSH Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activities Checkpoints](#).

## **Groups earn money for their troop in two distinct ways:**

The Girl Scout Cookie Program and other sales of Girl Scout-authorized products (such as Girl Scout cookies), organized by your council and open to all Girl Scouts. All girl members who take part in any way of Girl Scouting (troop, camp, travel, etc.), including Daisies, are eligible to participate in council-sponsored product-sale activities, with volunteer supervision. Please remember: volunteers and Girl Scout council staff don't sell cookies and other products—girls do.

**“Money Earning Activities”** refers to activities organized by the group (not by the council) that are planned and carried out by girls (in partnership with adults) and that earn money for the group.

Girls' participation in council-sponsored product sale activities and additional troop money earning activities is based upon the following:

- Voluntary participation
- Permission to participate in product sales checked yes on annual permission form
- An understanding of (and ability to explain clearly to others) why the money is needed
- An understanding that money-earning should not exceed what the group needs to support its activities
- Observance of local ordinances related to involvement of children in money-earning activities, as well as health and safety laws
- Vigilance in protecting the personal safety of each girl
- Arrangements for safeguarding the money

There are a few specific guidelines—some required by the Internal Revenue Service—that ensure that sales are conducted with legal and financial integrity. To that end, the following reminders must be followed:

- All rewards earned by girls through the product-sale and all money earning activities must support Girl Scout program experiences (such as camp, travel, and program events, but not scholarships or financial credits toward outside organizations).
- Cookie Program Rewards are based on sales ranges set by council and may not be based on a dollar-per-dollar calculation.
- Troops and Groups need to participate in council cookie product sales as their primary money-earning activity before including other options. Any group money-earning shouldn't compete with the Girl Scout Cookie Program or other council product sales (from January 1 - April 30).

- Obtain written approval from your council before a group money-earning event; by submitting a [Money Earning Project request](#) for approval one Month to 45-Days prior to the proposed activity.
- Girl Scouts discourages the use of games of chance. Any activity which could be considered a game of chance (raffles, contests, bingo) must be approved by the local Girl Scout Council and be conducted in compliance with all local and state laws.
- Girl Scout Blue Book policy forbids girls from the direct solicitation of cash. Girls can collect partial payment towards the purchase of a package of Girl Scout Cookies through participation in Council approved product sale donation programs.
- Girl Scouts forbids product demonstration parties where the use to of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business (For example: In-home product parties). Any business using the Girl Scout trademark must seek authorization from GSUSA. Any business using the Girl Scout of Hawai'i trademark must seek authorization from Council.
- Group money-earning activities need to be suited to the age and abilities of the girls and consistent with the principles of the GSLE.

Money earned is for Girl Scout activities and is not to be retained by individuals. Girls can, however, be awarded incentives and/or may earn credits from their Girl Scout product sales. Funds acquired through group money-earning projects must be reported and accounted for by the group, while following council procedures.

The best way to earn money for your group is to start with Girl Scout cookie activities. From there, your group may decide to earn additional funds.

Approved Money Earning Activities Include:

- Cookie Sales
- Garage Sales
- Lemonade Stands
- Recycling Drive
- Car Washes
- And more!

### **Unapproved Money Earning Activities Include:**

- Any form of gambling, including raffles, bingos etc.
- Sale of any merchandise, other than Girl Scout cookies.

## **How to request for Money Earning Project Approval**

The Girl Scout Cookie Program and other council-sponsored product sales are designed to unleash the entrepreneurial potential in your girls. From there, your troop may decide to earn additional funds on its own. If a troop wishes to do another money-earning project, the troop has to participate in the cookie program the previous year at 55% participation (the same for troop proceeds) and also commit to participate in the coming Girl Scout Cookie Program at 55% girl participation. After that, the other activities can be approved by Council (i.e. Troops can't do another money-earning project instead of the Cookie Program). The Cookie Program however is not mandatory and is optional but this is the way Troops earn money (i.e. badges, supplies, outings, community service, events, etc.). If a Troop wishes to seek approval from Council to earn additional money, there is a ["Request for Money Earning Project"](#) form and process to get Council approval. There are also 'blackout dates' when no money earning projects can be held a) during the public facing Cookie Program dates i.e. Jan - March annually or b) during another GSH supported fundraiser or c) during local United Way blackout dates.

[Volunteer Essentials](#) has all the information for troops regarding finances, activities, safety activity checkpoints, etc.

# Collaborating with Sponsors and Other Organizations

Local sponsors can help councils power innovative programs for Girl Scouts. Community organizations, businesses, religious organizations, and individuals may be sponsors and may provide group meeting places, volunteer their time, offer in-kind donations, provide activity materials, or loan equipment. Encourage your girls to celebrate a sponsor's contribution to the troop by sending thank-you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project.

For information on working with a sponsor, consult your council, which can give you guidance on the availability of sponsors, recruiting guidelines, and any council policies or practices that must be followed. Girl Scouts of Hawai'i may already have relationships with certain organizations or may know of some reasons **not** to collaborate with certain organizations. Any group money-earning shouldn't compete with the Girl Scout Cookie Program. As such, **Troops cannot engage in a money-earning activity from January 1 - April 30.** If the proposed money-earning activity falls within these months, Council will review [requests](#) on a case-by-case basis. When collaborating with any other organization, keep these additional guidelines in mind:

## **Avoid Fundraising for Other Organizations**

Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, you and your group can support another organization through Take Action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals are able to participate in whatever events they choose as long as they're not wearing anything that officially identifies them as "Girl Scouts." Any group money-earning shouldn't compete with the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

## **Steer Clear of Political Fundraisers**

When in an official Girl Scout capacity or in any way identifying yourselves as Girl Scouts, your group may not participate, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign or work on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. Letter-writing campaigns are not allowed, nor is participating in a political rally, circulating a petition, or carrying a political banner.

## **Be Respectful When Collaborating with Religious Organizations**

Girl Scout groups must respect the opinions and practices of religious partners, but no girl should be required to take part in any religious observance or practice of the sponsoring group.

## **Avoid Selling or Endorsing Commercial Products**

A commercial product is any product sold at a retail location. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products.

Refer to GSH Council Volunteer Policies and Procedures at the end of this document. When collaborating with any other organization, keep these additional safety guidelines in mind.

# Safety in Girl Scouting

The emotional and physical safety and well-being of Girl Scouts is our top priority. [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) outlines the Safety Standards and Guidelines used in Girl Scouting, which apply to all Girl Scout activities. All volunteers should review the Safety Activity Checkpoints when planning activities with girls in order to manage safety and risk in Girl Scout-sanctioned activities.

In [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) you'll find:

- Girl Scout Activity Safety Standards and Guidelines with requirements for adult supervision, permission slips, preparation, field trips and overnight trips, and other vital information
- Activities that are not permitted by Girl Scouts of the USA and actions that girls and volunteers should not take
- Policies surrounding chartered aircraft trips and aviation
- First-aid and overall health information you'll need from the girls
- Standards for well-being and inclusivity, including working with Girl Scouts with disabilities and ensuring emotional safety
- A breakdown of specific activities—such as camping, internet use, and water sports—and their individual safety checkpoints
- Age-appropriate activities and participation by grade level
- Whether prior approval from your council is required before girls participate in a specific activity.

# Who Can Manage Funds

## Troop Leaders, Troop Treasurers, Troop Cookie Managers Service Unit Managers, Service Unit Treasurers

Girl Scouts of Hawai'i requires that all adults handling Girl Scout money are currently registered members of Girl Scouts and have completed a background check. Troop/group leader/adult-in-charge may appoint a Group Committee Member or Troop/Group Treasurer to handle group funds and the bank account.

As the troop's treasurer or leader, you are responsible for ensuring funds are spent wisely and that excellent records are kept (copies of all receipts in a binder or folder), and tracked all income too. For older Girl Scouts, your role is to oversee their work, as they learn to keep impeccable records. Reconciled troop bank statements and/or the annual Troop Finance Report should be available to parents and Girl Scouts upon their request to review at each troop meeting. It is good practice to share troop finances with parents and Girl Scouts quarterly to facilitate full disclosure on how much has been earned and where funds were spent. Troops and groups must retain financial records for three (3) years and can be viewed by anyone including all Girl Scouts, caregivers, Volunteers, Service Unit Volunteers, and Council. Council may ask for further receipts and documentation to support your annual Troop Finance Report.

## Financial Management & Product Program Abilities by Grade Level

As with other Girl Scout activities, girls build their financial and sales savvy as they get older. Every girl will be different, but here you'll find some examples of the abilities and opportunities for progression of girls at each grade level.

### Girl Scout Daisies

The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and does all group budgeting.

Parents/guardians may decide they will contribute to the cost of activities.

Girls can participate in Girl Scout Cookie activities and other council-sponsored product programs.

Daisies are always paired with a volunteer when selling anything. Girls do the asking and deliver the product, but volunteers handle the money and keep the girls secure.

Girls should be given the opportunity to practice identifying money and counting back change with an adult during each transaction.

### Girl Scout Brownies

The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and shares some of the group-budgeting responsibilities.

Girls discuss the cost of activities (supplies, fees, transportation, rentals, and so on) with guidance from their volunteer(s).

Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product programs.

Girls may decide to pay dues to contribute to the cost of activities.

## Girl Scout Juniors

The group volunteer retains overall responsibility for long-term budgeting and record keeping, but shares or delegates all other financial responsibilities.

Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product programs.

Girls decide on group dues, if any. Dues are collected by girls and recorded by a group treasurer selected by the girls.

Girls budget for the short-term needs of the group based on their plans and income from the group dues.

Girls budget for more long-term activities, such as overnight trips, group camping, and special events.

Girls budget for Take Action projects, including the Girl Scout Bronze Award, if they are pursuing it.

## Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors

Girls estimate costs based on plans.

Girls determine the amount of group dues, if any, and the scope of money-earning projects.

Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product programs.

Girls carry out budgeting, planning, and group money-earning projects.

Girls budget for extended travel, Take Action projects, and leadership projects.

Girls may be involved in seeking donations for Take Action projects with council approval.

Girls keep their own financial records and give reports to parents and group volunteers.

Girls budget for Take Action projects, including the Girl Scout Silver or Gold Awards, if they are pursuing them.

## Helping Girl Scouts Manage Money and Reach Their Goals

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is so well known in communities, it's likely that your girls will already know a bit about it and want to get out there to start selling as soon as possible. But it's important that the girls have a clear plan and purpose for their product-sale activities. One of your opportunities as a volunteer is to facilitate girl-led financial planning, which may include the following steps for the girls:

- Set goals for money-earning activities.
- Create a budget
- Determine how much the group needs to earn
- Make a plan
- Share the troop's finance report annually or upon request.

# Establishing an Account

Each Girl Scout troop/group is required to open and manage a Troop bank checking account with at least **two (2) registered adults to be signatories** on the account (signatories cannot be related) with valid (not expired) driver's license, state identification card, or passport, and currently registered Girl Scout adult membership with current background check on file with Council.



**AMERICAN**  
Savings Bank

Girl Scouts of Hawai'i and **American Savings Bank** has established a relationship that allows troops/groups to open and maintain troop/group accounts with ease. All troops/groups are encouraged to bank at their nearest branch of ASB.

## Troop Bylaws

All troops must agree to & sign the [Troop Bylaws](#). These bylaws are an agreement between troops and American Savings Bank & Girl Scouts of Hawai'i. Troop Bylaws detail fund management guidelines and outlines bank account restrictions.

To establish a new troop account or changes to an existing Troop account, complete Troop Bylaws. List all names to be authorized on the account and obtain approval from an authorized representative of GSH Council by submitting completed Troop Bylaws to [customercare@gshawaii.org](mailto:customercare@gshawaii.org). Present the approved Troop Bylaws to any American Savings Bank Branch and establish the account with a \$5 opening deposit.

All troops must maintain current account signatories with American Saving Bank. Any changes in Troop leadership or the list of authorized signers will require a new Troop Bylaws listing all names and approved by Council.

Troops/groups may not utilize debit cards because withdrawals by debit cards do not require more than one signature to authorize the transaction. To withdraw funds, the leader/adult-in-charge must utilize an account check or a withdrawal slips from the bank, both of which will **require two (2) signatures**.

All group funds are used for group activities and may not be distributed to individual girls. Exception: A group may elect to give financial assistance from troop funds to a girl who has been selected to participate in a Girl Scout destination or is working on a Gold Award project.

## Closing a Bank Account

Unused Girl Scout money left in accounts when groups disband becomes the property of the Council. Prior to disbanding, the group may decide to donate any unused funds— see Troop Disbanding section. Be sure all checks and other debits have cleared the account before disbanding. Contact [Customer Care](#) to manage this process and confirm details ASAP.



# Managing Troop Funds

## Account Minimum Balance

All troop and service unit accounts must have funds in their accounts at all times. Girl Scouts of Hawai'i and American Savings Bank have an agreement to waive the monthly minimum balance when enrolled in online banking. Troop accounts that do not enroll in online banking will have a monthly \$5 fee charged to their account for paper statements.

## Balance: Carryover Exemption

Troops are allowed to carryover funds from one membership year to the next to facilitate the participation in program opportunities year round. However, the carryovers of large balances are discouraged, as the funds should be expended on a timely basis to encourage girl's participation in troop activities. If the ending balance exceeds the troop carryover limit, please provide an explanation of intended use and estimated time frame in the annual Troop Finance Report. The table below outlines the carryover limits per Girl Scout.

LEVEL	CARRYOVER LIMIT per girl	EXAMPLE: Group of 5
Daisy	\$100	\$500.00
Brownie	\$200	\$1,000.00
Junior	\$300	\$1,500.00
Cadette	\$500	\$2,500.00
Senior / Ambassador	\$500	\$2,500.00

## Checks and Balances

Checkbooks are available to:

- Troop Leaders
- Troop Treasurers
- Service Unit Treasurers
- Service Unit Managers

All checks submitted for deposit must have **2 signatures** on it.

In order for any member to receive a reimbursement, they **MUST** present a receipt to the person dispersing funds. This receipt can be electronic or hard-copy and must be submitted at the time of reimbursement. Reimbursements requested without a receipt will be further investigated by Girl Scouts of Hawai'i Council.

## Tracking Troop Funds

Whether it's in a notebook or spreadsheet, all money managers must keep track of all income and expenses. Tracking your troop or service unit finances weekly or monthly will save you time. Find what method of tracking works best for you and stick to it!

# Reporting Finances

## Financial Reporting

Girl Scouts of Hawai'i Council is responsible for money collected, earned and spent within its jurisdiction in the name of the troop/group or the council. Each troop and service unit files an annual [Troop Finance Report](#) for council to review.

Account information is reported for the period from **June 1st of last year through May 31st** of the current year. The report includes transaction details. The ending balance needs to match the May statement. Mahalo!

### **The detailed cash record will look like this:**

DATE	ITEM	INCOME	EXPENSES	REMAINING BALANCE
6/1	Balance from Previous Year			\$175.00
6/15	Deposit of Troop Dues	\$50.00		\$225.00
6/20	Charge for Venue Fee		\$20.00	\$205.00
6/25	Food for Event		\$100.00	\$105.00

This report is given to the troop's Service Unit Manager/Treasurer **by your unit's respective deadline**. The SUM or Treasurer will then submit the report to **submit report to [customercare@gshawaii.org](mailto:customercare@gshawaii.org) by June 30th** of each year or when the troop disbands.

A copy of the Troop Finance Report form should be kept with your troop files for **three (3) years**. This record, or a copy of it, should be transferred from one Leader to another as the leadership of troop changes; from one Treasurer to another as the office changes.

Failure to file a Troop Finance Report may result in withdrawal of permission to use the Girl Scouts of Hawai'i Taxpayer Identification.

A copy of the Troop Finance Report must be furnished to Girl Scouts and families. Many problems can be avoided if the person(s) responsible for maintaining the bank account reports more often (monthly or quarterly, as appropriate for your troop).

### **Avoid the possibility of having your financial practices being called into question by following these best practices:**

- Keep good financial records, including receipts for every expenditure, no matter how small, with troop files for three (3) years.
- Involve Girl Scouts (and sometimes parents) in financial decision-making. The more they know, the better!
- Remember that charging a Girl Scout for opting out of participating in product program or other troop activity, or setting a minimum, is not allowed.
- Remember all troop and service unit money legally belongs to the council to be used by the troop to pay for their Girl Scout activities. Everyone should understand that if they leave the troop that the money is not their personal property; under no circumstances would an individual take any portion of funds with her to use for non-Girl Scout purposes, including funding her college education. Further, the IRS has issued an advisory that non-profit organizations may NOT track individual "girl accounts".
- Troop proceeds for Product Program participation belong to each troop that participated in the program.

**Adult volunteers operate in a position of trust, and must avoid any appearance of financial impropriety:**

- Girl Scout funds must never be held in personal accounts, even temporarily.
- Under no circumstances is it appropriate to borrow Girl Scout money for personal use.
- Girl Scouts of Hawai'i reserves the right to pursue collection efforts for unpaid money owed and/or prosecute to the fullest extent allowable under the law. Individuals involved in delinquencies, theft, or misuse of troop funds (such as borrowing funds from the troop account for personal use) will face release from their Girl Scout position.

## Troop Disbanding & Unused Funds

As a troop, decisions on spending remaining funds of a disbanding or merging troop must always be girl-led. The group may decide to spend any portion of the remaining funds on a final trip, troop activity, a Girl Scout Program such as camp, or to continue their Girl Scout Experience by renewing their membership for the coming year, buying uniforms and Girl Guides to Girl Scouting, and other Girl Scout related expense. As a troop, decisions on spending and/or donating the remaining funds of a disbanding or merging troop must always be girl-led.

- No funds may be given to another troop, service unit, or donated to another organization.
- No amount of remaining funds may be given directly to girls, parents, or guardians. This includes any form of cash, check, or cash equivalents such as gift cards.
- All transactions and any use of troop funds must be completed while girls and volunteers have current memberships. In the event the troop disbands the troop must submit a Disbanding Troop Report, and troop finance records must be surrendered to the Service Unit Treasurer or to Council within 60 days.
- A copy of the Troop Finance Report form should be kept with your troop files for three (3) years. This record, or a copy of it, should be transferred from one Leader to another as the leadership of troop changes; from one Treasurer to another as the office changes. Failure to file a Troop Finance Report may result in withdrawal of permission to use the Girl Scouts of Hawai'i Taxpayer Identification.
- All remaining funds not spent as a troop are to be returned to council.
- A final Troop Finance Report is due to Council upon disbanding along with completion of the Disband Form to notify council.

## Mahalo for leading with the Girl Scouts of Hawai'i Council!

*If you have questions or need assistance with the information in this document, contact [Customer Care](#).*