

Topic: Finances

What is a Short and Snappy?

- A short interactive group discussion provided at a Service Unit meeting for volunteers to share at the troop level.
- Any Service Unit team member, volunteer, or learning facilitator may guide a Short and Snappy.
- Ideas for presentation: One person can facilitate to a group, or small groups can present an assigned section to the room.

Troop Funds Are for The Girls

Managing troop finances is one of the most important roles you have as a troop treasurer. Ultimately, as a troop treasurer, it is your job to handle troop funds. Managing money can seem very stressful but here are some best practices and [tips](#) you can use to manage your troop funds with less stress. Earning funds as a troop isn't about the money itself- it's about the fun of participating in Girl Scouts and having the Girl Scout experience. You can use the [budgeting your dreams worksheet](#) and the [making it happen worksheet](#) to help plan what your troop wants to do with the money they raise.

It is mandatory for troops to submit the financial report each year to remain in good standing with GSofSI. [This link](#) will walk you through that process. You will need to submit your reports during June with copies of your first and last bank statements. When using the [Troop Financial Report](#) form, the Troop Finance Tracking Spreadsheet is a helpful tool that can be found on the [GSofSI website](#).

Maintain Your Bank Account

Use the bank suggested by your service unit. In addition to your service unit treasurer (which is required), you need to have two unrelated signers from your troop on the account. The troop account can have up to two debit cards for use. Deposit all money as soon as possible and keep copies of all deposit slips and receipts. Pay for everything with checks or debit card, don't keep cash on hand. Reconcile your bank statement monthly so you are aware of the current balance. Notify your bank immediately if you see any suspicious activity on the account.

Forms and Resources

We already talked about the Troop Financial Report and the Troop Finance Tracking Spreadsheet but there are a few other forms and resources that you'll need to know about to tackle handling troop finances. All these forms can be found on the GSofSI website under [volunteer forms and resources](#) but let's walk through a few of them here. The first form you will need to fill out is the [ACH Authorization Form](#). This allows your troop to authorize ACH debit/credit authorizations between the council office and the troop checking account. This form needs to be completed every year.

Protect Your Account

Every signer on the bank account, as well as anyone in the troop that handles troop funds (product program manager), must be registered and have a current background check. Make sure your troop account has been signed up for CHECKredi. Review your bank statement monthly and send a copy to all signers. Notify your bank immediately if you see any suspicious activity on the account. Do not use troop funds to cover unpaid cookie debt by an individual. If given a cash payment, provide a receipt to the person and keep a copy for troop records.

CHECKredi is a program we use that will provide reimbursement to a troop account for any returned checks at no cost to the troop. There are a few CHECKredi specific forms you will need to fill out: [CHECKredi Sample Instructions](#) will help you get started, the [CHECKredi Girl Scout Agreement](#), the [CHECKredi Bank Mail Release Form](#), and the [CHECKredi Direct Deposit Form](#) all need filled out. If you need help with any of these forms, GSofSI customer care will help you with them! Reach out to them at customercare@gsofsi.org.

Money-Earning Basics for Troops

Troops flex their financial muscles in two distinct ways. One is the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product organized by the GSofSI council. All youth members are eligible to participate in the council-sponsored product programs each year with volunteer supervision. The other way troops can earn money is through Group money-earning activities organized by the troop, not by the council. These activities are planned and carried out by Girl Scouts, in partnership with volunteers. Some examples of sample money-earning activities could be hosting electronic (old cell phones for refurbishment, ink cartridges, etc) collection drives. Themed meals can be girl-led events that can be used to raise funds if the troop is planning a trip, the meal can be themed to the destination. For example, if your troop is going to Paris, you could have a crepe bar. It can work for smaller trips too. If your troop is traveling to the East Coast, you could have maple syrup and pancake bar or salt-water taffy grab bag event. The troop can make posters and flyers for whatever event you decide to do!

Finances and Your Troop

Troop income should be used to serve all girls in the troop. Troop funds are shared by all members and cannot be given directly to any one girl in dollar or percentage amounts. Troop members and families may vote to use the proceeds for membership dues, training fees, girl program fees, Journeys, Girl Guides, etc. The [Financial Assistance application](#) can be used to aid Girl Scouts who could not otherwise attend a council event because of lack of funds. [The Girl Scout Experience Fund](#) is another great resource to help aid Girl Scouts in getting to experience activities that build courage, confidence, and character without having a financial barrier in the way.