

Bank Account Basics

Volunteer Guide

Girl Scouts Carolinas Peaks to Piedmont (GSCP2P) troop/SU bank accounts are connected to the GSCP2P tax identification number and are a part of council business. Bank accounts are required to participate in our product programs (Fall Product Program and Girl Scout Cookie Program). They are not personal checking accounts but instead are used exclusively for activity within the council.

Banking Specialists are troop/SU volunteers that are responsible for maintaining the troop/SU bank account. GSCP2P has the authority to close or make changes as necessary. Frequent and clear communication between the signers, troop/SU members, parents and the council is imperative.

How to Establish a Troop/SU Bank Account:

1. **Determine two (2) signers for your troop/SU bank account** – these will be the Troop/SU Banking Specialists. These signers should be unrelated, from separate households, and approved Girl Scout volunteers in good standing with the council. Both must be a registered member of GSUSA and pass a criminal background check.
2. **Decide which bank you will use** - GSCP2P has a corporate relationship established with Truist and First Citizens Bank. **The use of Truist or First Citizens Bank for troop/SU accounts is required** unless neither of these banks are accessible. The use of another bank must be approved by GSCP2P's finance department prior to opening.
3. **Get the needed forms from Girl Scouts** by submitting this [New Bank Account Request Form](#) online. The Business Operations Team will complete any membership and background checks, and your Engagement Manager will assign any new signers the **Banking Specialist training** in gsLearn. Once completed, they will prepare and email your personalized **Bank Authorization Form** and send a blank **Troop/SU ACH Authorization Form**.
4. **Visit your local bank branch to open the account.** All approved signers must be present with their IDs and their personalized **Troop/SU Bank Authorization Form** to set up the new account. Truist and First Citizens have established procedures for opening a Girl Scout account in their system and typically do not require a deposit. Please call ahead to request an appointment with someone experienced in setting up Girl Scout accounts.
5. **Return the completed Troop/SU ACH Authorization Form** to info@girlscoutsp2p.org within two weeks. This signals the completion of the troop/SU banking process and will initiate the \$50 new troop/SU startup funds (if applicable, first-time new troop/SUs only).

If you have any questions or problems related to establishing your bank account that you could not resolve with the bank, please contact us at info@girlscoutsp2p.org with as much information as possible, including the bank, branch location, banker name.

New Troop/SU Startup Funds:

GSCP2P understands that there are expenses in starting a new Girl Scout troop/SU and would like to help! The finance team will use the submitted **ACH Authorization Form** and transfer \$50 into the troop/SU's bank account for startup funds. These funds may be used for things like meeting supplies, first aid kit, receipt book checks, Girl Scout curriculum and more. *New troop/SUs will follow the same procedures described above to establish a troop/SU bank account.*

How to Add or Remove Bank Signers:

GSCP2P understands that volunteer roles change. When a Banking Specialist needs to change, the Troop/SU or Service Unit Leader can fill out this [Bank Change Request Form](#) online.

The Business Operations Team will email the new/retained Troop/SU Banking Specialists a **Bank Authorization Form** and **change request letter** to remove the existing signers and add the new signers. *Just a heads-up: there's a bit of processing time and training involved when bringing new Banking Specialists on board. Because of that, we're not able to accommodate same-day or next-day requests.*

All retained and new signers will need to visit the branch together. When at the bank, it is important to make sure the bank updates the signer names and contact information, online banking access (for Truist, GSCP2P can assist First Citizens Bank), and orders new debit cards and/or checks (if needed).

Once the updates are made, no later than two weeks after changes, return the new completed **ACH Authorization Form** to info@girlscoutsp2p.org. This signals completion of the changes and will allow us to update our records.

Best Practices - There are several things that will help maintain the troop/SU finances. These include:

- Maintain two (2) signers for the bank account. One (1) signer should be the primary debit card holder and make the majority of purchases for the troop/SU. The second (2) signer should receive an online banking login to review and reconcile the bank statements monthly. *The signers must be unrelated, approved Girl Scout volunteers in separate households.*
- Maintain accurate contact information with the bank. *e.g., Account signers, contact information mailing address (which is the 2nd signer's mailing address – not GSCP2P), etc.*
- Only keep a single troop/SU's funds in the account for financial transparency and reporting. Each troop/SU should have their own account.
- Deposit money as soon as possible and at least weekly.
- Never sign blank checks or write checks payable to yourself. Reimbursement checks must be made payable to one signer, and the second signer must sign the check.
- Reconcile the troop/SU account to the bank statement EACH MONTH. Troop/SU accounts are subject to audit on a quarterly basis or as needed.
- Regularly report troop/SU financial activity and current cash balance to the troop/SU and parents. Transparency is key to successful troop/SU treasury management.
- Understand the Fall Product Program and Girl Scout Cookie Program processes and ACH timelines – ensure there are sufficient funds available before ACH draft dates.
- Prepare and submit the annual troop/SU EOY financial report by the deadline.
- Submit an updated troop/SU ACH Authorization Form annually.
- Use the troop/SU debit card or checks whenever possible. If cash must be withdrawn, submit matching documentation to the Banking Specialist within one week for accurate tracking.
- Communicate with your Engagement Manager if there are questions or concerns.

Troop/SU Payment Options & Fees:

Rallyhood Stripe account

- No cost to troops to use, Premier plan included because of GSUSA partnership
- Troops/SUs decide by event/charge if the payer or troop/SU pays the fees
- Credit/debit cards: \$0.45 + 3.5% per transaction fee
- eChecks (ACH): \$0.45 per transaction fee
- \$0.30 + 5.8% per transaction fee

Cheddar Up Stripe account

- No cost to troops to use, Teams plan included because of GSUSA partnership
- Customer/payer is charged the fees
- Credit/debit cards: \$2.9% + \$0.30 per transaction fee
- eChecks (ACH): 0.5% + \$0.59 per transaction fee
- Free withdrawals to linked bank account without fees

Truist troop bank account Zelle – *All fees charged to troop/SU*

- Money out: No charge to send money
- Money in: 1% of total received fee (max fee of \$15 per transaction)
- Sign up under online banking portal/app

First Citizens bank account Zelle – *All fees charged to troop/SU*

- Money out: No charge to send money
- Money in: \$2 per transaction fee
- Send request to info@girlscoutsp2p.org to have our finance team activate your profile

Digital cookie for cookie product sales – training and set up during Product Program onboarding

*****Troops should NEVER use personal Zelle, Venmo, CashApp, PayPal, etc.*****

Yes, all the options listed all have fees, but that's because the troop bank accounts are classified as business accounts, not a personal ones. Maintaining a troop/SU bank account is a required part of our financial structure. To ensure fiscal accountability, we ask troops and SUs to use one of our designated banking partners, Truist or First Citizens Bank. Since all banking falls under our shared EIN, this setup enables us to provide direct support for any banking issues and conduct reviews or audits as needed.

Quick Links:

- **Troop & SU ACH Authorization Form:** <https://bit.ly/P2PACH>
- **New Bank Account Request Form:** <https://bit.ly/P2PNewBank>
- **Bank Change Request Form:** <https://bit.ly/P2PBankChange>