

Financial Stewardship for Scouting Units

As a leader in your unit, you have a fiduciary responsibility to provide sound financial leadership for the funds entrusted to your care. Units that have problems concerning money, generally do not have well thought out procedures. Please use the suggestions below as you formulate your unit's cash handling procedures:

- Financial need - Scouting is open to all; financial need should not preclude a boy from fully participating. Does your unit have a policy to address the financial needs of your Scouts? Some families may not be able to afford registration fees, uniforms, or be able to pay for unit outings. Who in your unit is authorized to pay these expenses, out of the unit treasury, on behalf of the family? What is the procedure for families to apply for such assistance?
- Many units have "Scout Accounts" for their members. Does your unit have a written policy for the use of these funds? What type of activities or purchases may a boy use his "Scout Account" money for? What happens to a boy's "Scout Account" money if he transfers to another unit? What happens if he quits Scouting? Having a written policy in place before an issue arises is the best plan.
- Units collect a lot of money from its members throughout the year. Your unit should have a policy on how these funds are handled. Some suggestions:
 - Always issue a receipt for money and checks collected. This not only starts a paper trail for the money but allows for information such as the purpose of the money to be recorded. This will greatly aid the treasurer in crediting payments.
 - All receipts should have at least one carbon copy. The original of the receipt goes to the person submitting the money and the carbon copy gets turned in with the money to the treasurer. Numbered receipts are a great way to ensure all receipts and money have been accounted for.
 - When money is deposited into the bank, all receipts should be attached to the deposit slip as an easy way to identify and verify deposits.
 - Never pay expenses out of cash collected. 100% of money collected should be deposited (for easy verification) and all expenses should be paid by unit check. Mixing these two activities together can only lead to confusion.
- We recommend that all checks be signed by two, non-related, people, authorized by the unit committee as check signers. Even if your bank does not allow for two required signatures, this is a good practice.
- All bank statements, cancelled checks, and deposit slips should be available at every unit committee meeting for review by any member of the committee. The treasurer should prepare a financial summary report for each meeting. Most financial problems within a unit are caused by perceived "secrecy" regarding financial matters.
- We recommend that at least annually non-check signing members of the unit committee conduct an "audit" to verify that proper cash handling procedures in the unit are being followed.

Our leaders are great people who teach and live the Scout Oath and Law daily. Disputes and problems concerning money generally occur not through nefarious means but rather through sloppy or unclear procedures. We encourage your unit to review its cash handling procedures annually.