

Money-Earning Guidelines

Ways to Fund Girl Scout & Troop Experiences

Providing amazing experiences for our Girl Scouts and troops requires financial resources. Troops are mainly funded through a share of money earned from council-sponsored product programs.

To ensure our Girl Scouts have access to the best opportunities possible, volunteers can inspire and support troops in product programs or other money-earning efforts. Whether it's for everyday activities, a special Take Action project, or an exciting travel opportunity, there are many creative ways to fund these experiences and make their dreams a reality.

Quick Summary of What You Can Do

- **BFF (Badgerland Fall Fundraiser) Program:** Participate in the October BFF program to earn money for your troop.
- **Cookie Program:** Engage in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, our signature girl-led entrepreneurship program, and a major source of troop funds.
- **Troop Dues:** Collect regular dues from troop members to build a steady fund.
- **Group Activities:** Organize fun and engaging group activities that can double as money-earning events.
- **In-Kind Donations:** Seek in-kind donations from local businesses or community members to support troop activities.
- **Financial Assistance:** Encourage family members to contribute directly to our assistance program. Badgerland provides funding to cover Girl Scout memberships, uniforms, and camperships each year, and the requests increase every year.

By using these strategies, you can help provide incredible experiences and opportunities for our Girl Scouts. This document will guide you through the basic rules and regulations that apply.

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Council-Sponsored Product Programs



Every year, the **Badgerland Fall Fundraiser (BFF)** and the **Cookie Program** open up exciting opportunities to earn money for Girl Scouts, troops, and service units.

These programs, organized by Girl Scouts of Wisconsin-Badgerland, are more than just fundraising—they're pathways to empowerment. By participating, our girls not only earn the funds needed to fuel their Girl Scout activities, but they also gain invaluable skills in entrepreneurship, teamwork, and leadership. These programs are your gateway to making every Girl Scout experience even more enriching and impactful. While the Girl Scout Cookie Program and BFF raises significant funds, they are considered program activities, not traditional fundraising.

Additionally, troops can raise dollars to give back in their community through the **Cookie Share program**. During the cookie sale, customers may donate to the Cookie Share program to support cookie donations to be given to military personnel, law enforcement, food pantries, and other great causes.

For detailed information on troop and service unit proceeds, as well as tips on how to engage Girl Scouts around earning rewards, be sure to check the product program resources. These resources will provide you with everything you need to maximize your efforts and create a fun, rewarding experience for your Girl Scouts.

Troop Dues

While the money earned from participating in Girl Scout product programs should generally cover troop activities, there may be times when additional funds are needed. In such cases, troops can request dues from family members to help finance activities until profits from the next product program are received. It's important for troop dues to be set collectively as a group, ensuring affordability, fairness, and transparency for all members. Dues should not create barriers for any Girl Scout to participate in their troop. If you have any questions about setting or collecting dues, **please check with council for guidance and support**.

Group Money-Earning Activities

If troops need funds above and beyond what they earn from council-sponsored product programs and troop dues, they can apply for permission to organize additional money-earning activities. To comply with regional and national (GSUSA) money-earning policies, all money-earning activities must be suited to the age and abilities of the Girl Scouts and be consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE).

Before Planning Your Activity

- **Daisies and Brownies** can only participate in council-sponsored product program activities. They are not allowed to collect money in any other way, except through troop dues and contributions from parents (per GSUSA Policy).
- **Troops** must participate in both council-sponsored product programs (Cookie and BFF programs) and sell at least \$500 in total to be eligible for additional money-earning activities. Exceptions apply to troops formed after the council-sponsored programs have ended.
- **During the council blackout periods** (from the start to the end of product programs), troops should not conduct any additional money-earning activities that involve selling a product. However, activities like car washes or spaghetti dinners are allowed with proper approval.
- **Troop leaders** must submit a Money-Earning Application (available online) at least four weeks before any money-earning activity. Approval from a Volunteer Experience team member is required before starting or promoting the activity.
- **All girls and adults** must be registered members of Girl Scouts before participating in any money-earning activity.
- **Troops** must have their most current financial record on file before any money-earning activity can be approved. The troop must demonstrate a justified need for additional funds, and the requested amount should be reasonable.
- **Troops** must follow all Safety Activity Checkpoints when planning and conducting money-earning activities.

Here Are Some Examples of Money-Earning Activities that Troops Can Organize

- **Car Washes:** Organize a car wash event in a community parking lot.
- **Bake Sales:** Host a bake sale featuring homemade treats.
- **Spaghetti Dinners:** Plan and host a community dinner event.
- **Yard Sales:** Gather gently used items and hold a troop yard sale.
- **Craft Fairs:** Create and sell handmade crafts or seasonal decorations.
- **Garage Sales:** Collect donations from troop families and hold a garage sale.
- **Recycling Drives:** Collect and recycle cans or bottles for cash.
- **Community Service Projects:** Offer services like supporting local events, clean-ups, and other services for donations.
- **Holiday Gift Wrapping:** Set up a gift-wrapping station at a local store or mall.
- **Themed Events:** Host themed events like a dance or movie night with an entry fee.



These activities can help troops raise additional funds while also fostering teamwork and community engagement.

In-Kind Donations for Troops

Girl Scout troops have the opportunity to solicit in-kind donations, such as material goods or services, valued at less than \$250. Donations over \$250 in value should be handled at the service unit or council level to benefit all members.

For example, your troop can request donations like popcorn or free movie tickets from a local theater, but asking for a cash donation is not allowed. To show appreciation, the girls can send thank-you cards, invite the sponsor to a troop meeting or ceremony, or collaborate on a Take Action project with the donor. These small gestures help build strong community relationships while supporting the troop's activities. *This option applies to troops, but exceptions may be made for Girl Scout Highest Award projects with permission. (See Gold Award Projects)*

Fundraising and Donation Policy

Girl Scout troops, service units, or individual adults are **not permitted to solicit monetary donations** from businesses, corporations, foundations, or individuals for the benefit of their troops or service units. However, there are instances where businesses, companies with matching gift programs, or individuals may choose to donate funds to a troop or group without being directly asked. These are known as "unsolicited donations." Even though these donations were not requested, they must still adhere to the Girl Scouts' donation policy outlined below.

By following this policy, we ensure that all donations are handled in a way that supports our mission and benefits all Badgerland Girl Scouts.

Handling Monetary Donations

When **unsolicited** and **unearned** monetary donations are received on behalf of a Girl Scout troop or service unit, whether from a foundation, corporation, organization, government entity, or individual, they must be processed through council. The handling of these donations varies depending on the amount and whether it is for a troop or a service unit.



IRS Rules

Only council, as the holder of the 501(c)(3) status, can solicit funds from businesses, corporations, foundations, or individuals for the benefit of the entire council. Troops and service units do not have their own non-profit status and therefore cannot solicit donations using the Girl Scout name for the direct benefit of their troop or service unit. This restriction applies even if the business, corporation, foundation, or organization indicates that they do not require a tax letter.

This is because the 501(c)(3) status is granted to council as a whole, not to individual troops or service units. Any fundraising activities must therefore be conducted under council's authority and in compliance with its policies to ensure proper handling and reporting of donations in accordance with IRS regulations.

For Troops

- **Donations up to \$250:** The full amount will be returned directly to the troop. Council will acknowledge the donation on behalf of the troop and provide the donor with documentation for tax purposes.
- **Donations greater than \$250:** Council will return \$250 plus 50% of the amount above that level to the troop. For example, a \$1,000 donation will result in \$625 going to the troop (\$250 plus 50% of the remaining \$750). The remaining balance will stay with council to support financial assistance for memberships, camp, events, and uniform expenses.

For Service Units

- **Donations up to \$1,000:** The full amount will be returned directly to the service unit. Council will acknowledge the donation on behalf of the service unit and provide the donor with appropriate tax documentation.
- **Donations greater than \$1,000:** Council will return \$1,000 plus 50% of the amount above that level to the service unit. For example, a \$1,500 donation will result in \$1,250 going to the Service Unit (\$1,000 plus 50% of the remaining \$500). The remaining balance will stay with council to support financial assistance for memberships, camp, events, and uniform expenses.

Important Note for Troops and Service Units

If you believe that Badgerland Girl Scouts will receive a donation directly, please notify council by sending an email to info@gsbadgerland.org. Notifying council helps ensure that both council and the troop or service unit can properly track and manage these funds.

Fundraising within Girl Scouts is primarily the responsibility of adult members, who support the Badgerland Girl Scout Council. Adults may participate in council-authorized fundraising efforts where council is the beneficiary. Importantly, girls are not allowed to engage in direct solicitation for donations, as specified in the Girl Scouts USA Blue Book of Basic Documents.

By following these guidelines, we can ensure that all donations are managed effectively and in accordance with Girl Scouts' policies, IRS rules, and donor intent, ultimately benefiting our Girl Scouts and their programs.

Other Fundraising Guidelines

Retail and restaurant chain fundraising opportunities to support Girl Scouting are allowable on a limited basis for service unit and council fundraising only. For example, McDonald's might sponsor a Girl Scout Day where 10% of proceeds are donated to Badgerland Girl Scouts. These activities must be carefully managed and approved by council.

Additional Rules:

- The service unit nor the council should not be solely responsible for promoting the event. It's important that it doesn't appear as though Girl Scouts is endorsing the restaurant or its products. Promotion should make it clear that the restaurant benefits from partnering with Girl Scouts.
- The restaurant must promote the event through their own channels, such as flyers for customers, social media posts, or posters. Badgerland may ask to see these promotional materials.
- This type of fundraising can be done alongside other council-approved money-earning activities for troops and service units.
- If a service unit organizes the event, all proceeds must follow Badgerland's donation policy.

Gold Award Projects

A Gold Award project is the highest achievement a Girl Scout can earn, and it often involves a significant community service project. Unlike other situations where girls are not allowed to directly solicit funds, a Girl Scout pursuing her Gold Award can fundraise specifically for her project. This is an exception to the general fundraising rules because the project is designed to address a community issue, has a sustainable impact, and requires significant planning and resources.



However, even with this exception, the Girl Scout must follow certain guidelines:

- The fundraising must be directly tied to the Gold Award project, not for general troop or personal use, and total fundraising should be less than \$1,000.
- The fundraising should focus on in-kind donations or project-specific needs, rather than soliciting large cash donations.
- The girl must get approval from the Higher Award Committee or council before starting any fundraising efforts and amounts over \$1,000.

- The Girl Scout should maintain transparency with donors, ensuring they understand that their contributions are directly supporting the Gold Award project.

This exception allows Girl Scouts to develop leadership skills and make a meaningful difference in their communities while still adhering to the overall principles of Girl Scouts fundraising policies.

Silver and Bronze Awards

Similar to Gold Award projects, troops and Girl Scouts pursuing these awards are allowed to fundraise specifically for their projects (see Gold Award requirements). This exception to the general fundraising rules is made because these projects address community issues and have a lasting impact, requiring significant planning and resources.

Employer Recognition and Matching Gifts

If an adult member's employer offers the opportunity to request a donation to Badgerland Girl Scouts in recognition of volunteer service, any funds received will be handled in accordance with the Badgerland Girl Scouts donation policy. In some cases, companies with matching gift programs may require the troop or group leader (volunteer) to complete an application. This is permissible and helps ensure that the donation is properly processed and attributed.

For More Information:

- Info@gsBadgerland.org
- 800.236.2710