

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS- Finance Policies**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho (GSEWNI)

### **Q. Which institutions are GSEWNI approved?**

- A. Three main institutions have been identified. They are Washington Trust Bank (WTB), Sterling Savings Bank (SSB), and Numerica Credit Union (NCU). (Numerica is a part of the Shared Branch Network, which is a cooperative of credit unions working together to provide service and convenience to members. There are more than 2,400 Shared Branch locations.) With the new council we will be looking at possible adding a few more financial institutions.

### **Q. How were these financial institutions chosen?**

- A. We engaged in an extensive "mapping" of bank locations compared with existing service unit/troop accounts. These institutions provided us with the most location options as well as the willingness to work within GSEWNI financial guidelines.

### **Q. Will I get to choose which financial institution to use?**

- A. Yes. All you have to do is complete a "Financial Institution Request" (FIR) form and indicate your choice. (Remember, if you do not have a Numerica Credit Union in your town, you will most likely have a Credit Union that is a member of the Shared Branch Network.)

### **Q. What if none of the institutions are close to me and the local credit union is not a member of the Shared Branch Network?**

- A. The way the new finances are set up, being close to the institution you bank with will not be necessary. The ATM card will work virtually anywhere.

Here are your options: (1) Choose Sterling Savings Bank as your financial institution and there is no fee to make deposits (including cash) at any ATM. Sterling customers will also not be charged for withdrawals at any ATM, though there may be a charge from the bank that owns the ATM. (2) You may make deposits via the mail and should you have any cash to deposit (which you should not put in the mail), all you have to do is to go to any financial institution you choose, give them the cash and they will write a bank check/money order/draft, which you will then mail to your troop account at a GSEWNI approved institution. So, you see, you can still use a bank you're comfortable with when dealing with cash.

As the policy was previously written, troops/service units/day camps had to have checks which would cost the troop/service unit/day camp account anywhere from \$14 and up. (That same cost would cover the mailing for 36 separate deposits.) When there was a change of signers, the banks were requiring new checks. (For established troops who have not had a change in signers, the cost had been absorbed.) Then there are the costs for the accounts when they are overdrawn. Sterling Savings also provides postage paid envelopes for banking by mail. When making policies, we must look at the benefits for the bulk of our almost 600 troops. When that happens, we are empathetic that it may not be as easy for some. Funds in troop/service unit/day camp accounts are to be used for Girl Scouting. Maintenance of these accounts is for Girl Scouting.

### **Q. What if our account is already at one of the identified institutions?**

- A. All service unit, troop, and day camp accounts will need to be closed and re-opened under the newly established GSEWNI corporate account. (You certainly may stay with your bank, though the account will be transferred into a new account number.)

**Q. Do I need to close my old bank account?**

A. We will close as many bank accounts as possible though the main office in Spokane. Occasionally, it is more efficient for you to close the old account; in that case you may contact us and let us know that you are willing to close your old account.

**Q. Will I have to go to the bank and open the new account?**

A. No, all of that will be taken care of from the main office in Spokane.

**Q. What is the timeline for converting the accounts to the new institutions?**

A. We ask that you complete the "Financial Institution Request" form **right away (no later than \_\_\_\_\_.)** Sending it electronically will be the quickest, most efficient, and save costs. You will receive the form via email, or you may download the form from the website [www.gsewni.org](http://www.gsewni.org).

Once we receive your FIR form, we will begin the process of close your existing account, establish your new account, and order your ATM card. This process should take between 7 to 21 days, so please plan accordingly. You will be notified when the account is scheduled to be closed. It is our goal to have ALL accounts converted **no later than \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Q. Since no checks will be issued for these accounts, how will I make reimbursements to an individual, if necessary?**

A. We discourage reimbursements to individuals however, when necessary using bill pay through online banking is a great option. When you have bill pay set up, you can enter the name and address of the person you need to reimburse and the bank will mail them a check using the funds you set aside in your online bill pay account.

**Q. Will I need to sign anything?**

A. You will not go to a bank to sign anything. Should there be a need to obtain your signature, it will be done through the Spokane office and we will notify you. You will be considered an "authorized debit card holder" therefore you are not a "signer" on the new accounts.

**Q. How many ATM cards will be issued per troop?**

A. We will issue up to two cards for each troop provided the individual meets the following criteria:

- √ Currently a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- √ Passed a GSEWNI criminal background check (updated every 2 years)
- √ Signed Financial Agreement on file (a different form than the cookie agreement)
- √ Individuals must be unrelated and reside in separate households

**Q. What do I do if my ATM is lost or stolen?**

A. Simply notify Chris Abghari ([cabghari@gsewni.org](mailto:cabghari@gsewni.org)), your membership coordinator, or Janet Davis ([jdavis@gsewni.org](mailto:jdavis@gsewni.org)). We will contact the bank and have them cancel the card and re-issue a new one.

**Q. How will I find out which Credit Unions are a part of the Shared Branch Network?**

A. You may visit their website at [www.cuswirl.com](http://www.cuswirl.com) or look at the list on our website at [www.gsewni.org](http://www.gsewni.org).

**Q. Are there fees in the Shared Branch Network?**

A. All shared branching outlets must follow guidelines and fee schedules set forth by the network.

- There are no fees for cash deposits.
- In any one deposit, the first 10 checks are free. In the rare instance where you would have to deposit more than 10 checks at one time, there is a fee of \$0.17 per check.
- Another safe and easy depository option is the ATM. You may deposit at any Numerica ATM absolutely free of charge. There is a fee of \$0.50 when you use ATM's other than those located at a Numerica branch.

- If you deposit at any CO-OP ATM, you will NOT be charged a surcharge from the owner of that ATM.
- To locate a COOP ATM near you, visit the website  
<http://www.co-opfs.org/public/locators/ATMlocator/index.cfm>

**Q. May we deposit cash into an ATM?**

A. Depositing cash and checks into the ATM is completely safe. The envelopes are fed into a vault that can only be opened under dual custody and all deposits are verified in dual custody. DO NOT MAIL CASH.

**Q. What about banking by mail?**

A. The financial institutions will provide self-addressed deposit envelopes. Again, DO NOT MAIL CASH. Sterling Savings provides pre-paid envelopes.

**Q. We used to provide financial reports once a year, now it is three times. Why the change?**

A. This change is in response to suggestions from by troop leaders. It will be easier to complete a report in increments rather than one large report once a year.

**All of these documents can be viewed online at  
[www.gsewni.org](http://www.gsewni.org)**