

## What are troop dues?

Troop dues are what girl scouts pay to support their troop. This is in addition to the annual membership dues paid to GSUSA. Running a troop cost money and it should never be at the expense of the troop leader.

There are many factors that come into play when considering troop dues:

- What upfront costs will need to be covered for the troop?
- Will the troop dues include uniform cost or will parent need to purchase these?
- Will the troop dues cover only earned patches or fun patches too?
- Will snacks be donated or bought? Troop dues are used to start up and financially support the troop.
- Are you planning on relying solely on fundraising techniques, such as fall product and cookie sales, to financially support your troop? If so, there will be a waiting period on when you can actually start purchasing supplies for the troop. This means the little supplies you will use at your regular meetings will have to wait.
- You also have to consider where you are holding your meetings and if there is a rental fee? Some public school districts charge a rental fee so make sure you check.

If you are starting up a brand new troop, you may want to consider collecting troop dues upfront in a lump sum. Your parent meeting is a good time to get to know your girls' families and discuss what works best for them. Don't forget your parents may also be a great resource for a troop sponsor or a free meeting space. Include your parents in the troop discussions so they can assist you. Troop dues should be based upon the planned spending for the troop.

## What can be covered under troop dues:

**Meeting Materials** - You can choose to do a supply round up and have each girl donate certain materials such as pencils, folders, paper, crayons, paint, etc. or you can just budget for this in the troop dues.

**Earned Badges and Pins** - Earned badges and pins that the troop would work on such as the Daisy flower petals pack, Journey badges, Membership pin.

**Fun Patches** - These are patches worn on the back of uniforms that represent a place or a thing girls did.

**Uniform/Girls Guide** - You might decide to include this cost or guide parents to purchase on their own.

**Snacks** - Some troops have snack at their meeting. You can have girls take turns bringing or you can budget for this in the troop dues.

## How to calculate the cost:

**How much and how often....**

One way to calculate the cost of dues is to count how many meetings you will have. Then set a realistic budget that you would allocate for each meeting. (Plan around \$1 to \$2 per girl, so if I have 12 girls in my troop figure around \$12 to \$24 a meeting). \*Keep in mind that the cost will vary each meeting, but if you have an average in mind that will help you stay on track and not over spend.

It's good to note that once you start buying supplies, such as crayons, markers, pencils, etc., your troop will have these for future meetings. So, your meetings may cost more in the beginning till your troop builds up their supplies.

### **Calculate the meeting cost:**

If your troop has 18 meetings, and you have set your budget at \$20 a meeting

$$18 \text{ meetings} \times \$20 = \$360$$

### **Calculate the earned awards:**

Example - Daisy petals pack, a membership pin, and one of the journey awards. Add these items together and multiply by number of girls in the troop.

For example, it would cost approximately \$12.50 per girl.

$$\$12.50 \times 12 \text{ (girls)} = \$150$$

$$\text{Your troop total is up to } \$360 + \$150 = \$510$$

Divide the total spending budget for the troop by the number of girls you have and that would equal...

$$\text{Total per girl} = \$510 / 12 \text{ girls} = \$42.50 \text{ per girl.}$$

Troop dues per girl: \$42.50 - You can collect this up front as a whole or perhaps splitting it into two payments.

## **Moving Forward**

Each year you should evaluate the budget for the upcoming year. Some troops will rely on the Council money earning programs to fully finance the troop, and others will continue to require troop dues. It is a decision to be made based on input from your girls' plan for their earned money, and discussion with your girls' parents. Some parents prefer to pay dues but less for other expenses, and others prefer no dues but pay more for other things. Each troop is different.