Use of checking accounts for group treasuries

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- Should an Al-Anon Family Group use a checking account?

A checking account may not be necessary if the amount that the group collects is small. Keeping the treasury with a small amount of funds by sending any excess funds to the A-Anon service arms may be an alternative. If a reserve is desired to cover room rent, it may be possible to pay the room rent in advance as an alternative. The prudent reserve often includes literature and GR expenses.

The 2010 – 2012 Service Manual, page 54 says, “Some groups choose to have a bank account. Although specific requirements may vary from bank to bank, our shared experience suggests that in order to open a bank account, groups in the World Service Conference (WSC) structure may need to state the purpose of the account and identify the person(s) responsible for its maintenance. One way to do this is by submitting a copy of the minutes from the group's business meeting that authorizes a designated representative permission to open the bank account along with the names of the account's co-signers. It is suggested that two to four persons be authorized to sign checks and that at least two people sign all checks. If a group chooses to have a bank account, banks in the United States require small entities such as Al-Anon and Alateen groups to obtain an EIN (Employer Identification Number) from the IRS. This is a permanent number that would stay with the group when the treasurer rotates or the group changes banks and is not to be confused with the WSO ID number.”

While obtaining an EIN does not confirm non-profit status, it may be sufficient to obtain a bank account.

- Can my group use our District, Area or WSO nonprofit ID numbers to obtain a checking account?

The 2010 – 2013 Service Manual page 55 says “The WSO cannot give its non-profit number to local groups because the WSO has no authority over local group funds. Individual Al-Anon and Alateen groups are not considered to be nonprofit organizations”. In addition on page 110 gives the reason for this, "Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters...have no knowledge or control over Assembly or group funds; neither is therefore in a position to furnish the financial statements required to be filed annually with the tax authorities in order to maintain tax-exempt status for groups."

This statement from the service manual also applies to the use of the NCWSA nonprofit number, and may apply for other incorporated districts, Intergroups and Al-Anon Information Service groups.