

BANK ACCOUNTS & TAX ID NUMBERS

Common Questions and Answers

Question: Our group needs to open a bank account and we were asked for an "I.D. number". What is that?

Answer: The I.D. number asked for is an EIN, or Employer Identification Number. It is required for an organization to do things like open a bank account number. You may obtain one quickly and easily for "banking purposes only".

Per AA Guidelines for Finance, individual groups are **NOT** allowed to use GSO's EIN or their 501c3 (non-profit tax status). That EIN and status are **SPECIFIC to AA GSO**. For spiritual as well as legal reasons, no local A.A. organization may use the tax-exempt status or identification number of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., since *each entity is autonomous in financial matters*.

https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/mg-15_finance_0.pdf

Question: How do I obtain an EIN for my group?

Answer: Obtaining an EIN is a quick process and can be done in a matter of minutes at:

<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>

Detailed instructions on filling out EIN application can be found at the end of this document.

Question: Getting an EIN requires someone to be the responsible party, what happens when we get a new treasurer?

Answer: When your group gets a new treasurer, you will need to file a Form 8822-B. It's a simple form:

<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-8822-b>

Question: Does this mean we will need to pay taxes?

Answer: AA is in no way attempting to give tax advice for single A.A. groups or other entities. This information relates to the United States only, and does not apply to Canada. Always consult a professional.

- The A.A. Guidelines on Finance Doc provides high level tax information relating to required annual filings.
- Some large A.A. Groups or Intergroups/Central Offices apply for tax exempt 501(c)(3) status when their gross annual receipts exceed \$5,000. Consult a local tax professional if you plan to go this route.
- If your A.A. Group takes in less than \$5,000 annually (i.e., less than \$100 a week) it is not required to apply for 501(c)(3) status and it is exempt from taxes.
 - IRS publication 557 (revised 2020) Page 24 Chapter 3 Section 501(c)(3) Organizations <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf>

Instructions for obtaining an EIN:

How to Obtain an Employer Tax ID (EIN) Number You could do this by contacting the IRS to request Form SS-4: "Application for Employer Identification Number."

Beginning January 6, 2014, the IRS now refers all domestic EIN requests received by phone to the EIN Online Assistant. **THE BEST WAY** is to do this online:

1. Access the online EIN Application.
<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>
2. Scroll below Steps 1, 2, and 3 and click on "APPLY ONLINE NOW".
3. On the next screen, click on the "Begin Application" button.
4. On the next screen, scroll down the list and click on "View Additional Types, Including Tax-Exempt and Governmental Organizations". Click Continue.
5. On the next screen, click on "Community or Volunteer Group". Click Continue.
6. On the next screen, click Continue.
7. This takes you to the "Responsible Party" screen. This requires entry of a group member's name and SSN. This can be any member of the group (does not have to be the treasurer, etc.). After entry of SSN, you have a choice of clicking "I am a member of the group...", or "I am a third party applying ...". I recommend you choose "I am a member...". Click Continue.
8. On the next screen, enter the address info for the individual. Click continue.
9. On the next screen, enter the name of the group, county, State and month/year group started. The month/year info is not critical info.

10. On the next screen, "Tell us More about the Community or Voluneer Group", click No for each question.
11. On the next screen, "What does your Business or Organization Do?", click OTHER at the bottom.
12. On the next screen, click Other at the bottom and enter "Self Help"
13. On the next screen, "How would You Like to Receive your Confirmation Letter?", click "Receive Letter Online" and Continue
14. The next screen will show you a summary of your entries. If everything is OK, click Submit at the bottom.
15. In a few minutes, you will have access to a PDF document that provides your official IRS EIN number for the group. Print out a copy of this info to take to the bank to open the new checking account.