

## Collecting Virtual 7th Tradition Contributions

With more AA meetings being held online or in a hybrid format, many groups need to support 7th Tradition collections for members attending virtually. This guide is an introduction to collecting contributions online.

**Note:** We do not recommend any service or bank. Any examples shown are illustrative only. Some groups use a group member's bank account to collect funds and to make payments on behalf of the group. Other groups require that contributions be kept in a separate account. Any arrangement chosen should reflect Group Conscience.

Your Group Conscience should determine how your group manages its contributions:

- Establish a bank account, which may require a tax ID number for the group.
- Establish a payment portal (e.g., PayPal, Venmo) linked to a bank account.

Groups must also decide how to administer the account(s); i.e., who will have account access, signatories on the account (the group treasurer and/or other trusted servants). Group Conscience should also dictate how account balances, collections, and disbursements are reported.

### Establishing a Bank Account

If your group does not have a bank account and has decided to get one, the process is covered in detail in the AA General Service pamphlet "*The AA Group Treasurer.*" The steps are as follows:

- a) Get a tax identification ("ID") number ("Employer Identification Number" or "EIN") for your group (such a number is for organizations with or without employees). You may apply for an EIN online [here](#) or via the mail using [form SS-4](#). Your group may want to file for tax-exempt status based on how much it will keep on deposit (if you have questions about filing, we recommend consulting an accountant). Please note even if your group's funds are kept in a non-interest-bearing account, your group may still have to file. Note: Each A.A. group must get its own EIN; there is no EIN for Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

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- b) Get an email address for your group to take advantage of online banking, or to use one or more of the services described below. Note: Your Group Conscience should decide who keeps the password to the email address, any phone number(s) attached to account, and the security questions and answers. It is recommended more than one group member have this information. Please also ensure you keep a record of your EIN.

### Setting Up a Virtual Collection

Groups have options for online contributions. Some of these are introduced below. Once setup, the meeting chairperson can share online contribution information, by posting a link in the “chat” or by displaying a QR Code. Some groups use a photo of the normal physical location of their meetings as a profile picture. A tax ID (e.g., EIN or member’s social security number) may be required for using these services.

Making online contributions may require installing an app on a phone or other device.

**Note:** Ensure your group treasurer studies app privacy settings and encourage members to disable features that compromise anonymity. For example, Venmo users should set the default privacy setting for all payments to private (making all transactions visible to the sender and recipient only).

### Venmo

Groups using Venmo must have a cell phone with a US phone number that may send/receive text messages. Some groups use the Venmo account of a member of the group. Other groups use a smart phone with a dedicated phone number onto which the Venmo app may be loaded. Sign-up information is here. The group will have a Venmo identifier (e.g., @myhomegroup) into which members may make contributions.

Note: A phone number may only be linked to one Venmo account. The advantage to having a separate group cell phone and number is that the phone may be passed along to the next treasurer (in keeping the principle of service position rotation). If the group has a bank account, it may be linked to the Venmo account to transfer collections.

Cost: Venmo doesn’t charge fees for most transactions.

Anonymity: Group treasurers will be able to see who contributed and how much. Group members who contribute using Venmo should ensure their privacy settings are set to sender and recipient only.

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### Google Pay

Google Pay requires a credit or debit card to sign up. A member's personal card may be used, or a debit card linked to the group's bank account. Sign-up information is here.

Cost: There are no fees to use debit cards or make bank transfers; payments made by credit card cost 2.9% of the transaction.

Anonymity: Group treasurers will be able to see who contributed and how much.

### Other Services

Other options groups may explore include PayPal, Apple Pay, Zelle, Cash App, DonorBox, GiveButter, and Stripe.

### Members' Banking Apps

Many members will have their own banking apps on their smart phone or other device and can make payments directly to a group's bank account if they have the relevant information (generally, bank routing number and group's bank account number). Charges, if any, vary.

### Using QR Codes

Payment apps often include the ability to generate and scan QR codes. Groups may wish to simply display the QR Code for a particular digital platform or platforms on screen at the meeting. (Some meetings will have one of the co-hosts screen-share the code during the announcement of the Seventh Tradition.) Meeting attendees may open the app on their phone, read the QR code, and make a contribution. The app needs to be installed on the member's smartphone for this process to occur. QR codes may also be shared via email or text message.

***When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.***