



# Donor Advised Fund

Start Up Guide

# Welcome to The Signatry!

I am glad to welcome you to our community as you serve your clients with world-changing generosity solutions. It is a privilege to partner with you in this process, and I look forward to all God will do.

To support you and your clients in your next steps, we have put together this introductory guide to donor advised funds (DAFs). In here, you will learn more about:

1. Opening a donor advised fund
2. Beginning to use a donor advised fund
3. Recommending grants
4. Making contributions
5. Understanding fee types

If you have more specific questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. My team and I regularly assist with questions, creative strategies, and other needs you may have.

We are grateful for your partnership. Over and over, we see what an incredibly valuable role financial advisors play in clients' lives. You hold a pivotal seat to point clients in the right direction, and generosity can become a powerful tool to adding even greater depth and purpose to their plans. We are praying God will give you great favor in your conversations.

Blessings,



**Kim Harris**

VP of Donor Care

[donorcare@thesignatry.com](mailto:donorcare@thesignatry.com)



## Benefits of Donor Advised Funds with The Signatry

As you begin to offer this tool to your clients, here are a few features to know about that can help support you and your clients.

- 1. DAFs provide one contribution statement at tax time.** Instead of needing to find charitable receipts from every organization your client gives to, they have the benefit of a single contribution statement at tax time.
- 2. Our Donor Care team is accessible for your questions and reporting needs.** We can assist in DAF support, custom reports, grant set-up and more. We ease the administrative burden for you and your clients.
- 3. We handle vetting of organizations** to ensure they are in good standing with the IRS and have current 501(c)(3) status.
- 4. We provide biblically responsible investment (BRI) options for donors who wish to potentially grow their charitable dollars.** BRI is an investment philosophy that invests in companies that do not conflict with biblical values and that also seek to create value in the world. The returns on BRI pools are competitive to other industry standards.
- 5. DAFs can receive a variety of assets beyond cash, including publicly traded securities.** Donors can maximize their generosity by giving from their resources beyond cash through a DAF. We handle the intake and liquidation process, which simplifies the process for you and your client.

### TIP

Contact the Donor Care team to set up a walkthrough of a donor advised fund. We will demonstrate the platform and its various tools.



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# Starting a Donor Advised Fund

**When you start a DAF, here are a few important aspects to ensure your clients understand:**

- Money or assets contributed to a DAF are irrevocable. Once received, these assets are legally owned and controlled by The Signatry.
- Donors recommend the nonprofit or tax-exempt organizations where the funds are granted, and The Signatry ultimately approves grants.
- Grant recommendations are approved by The Signatry's legal and faith filters. The Signatry has thousands of pre-approved nonprofits.

## Opening a Donor Advised Fund

**There are two different options to open a DAF for your clients.**

1. Clients can go to [TheSignatry.com/Start](https://www.thesignatry.com/Start) and open a fund online, or
2. Clients can print a PDF or request an application and return it to [donorcare@thesignatry.com](mailto:donorcare@thesignatry.com)

## Starting a Fund Online

To start a fund online, visit [www.thesignatry.com/start](https://www.thesignatry.com/start) or click the Sign Up button on the home page. Your client will create log-in credentials and be guided through the set up of their fund. A couple points to note:

If your clients want to create fund credentials and complete the fund settings later, they can return to the fund using the Donor Log-In button at **TheSignatry.com**. The online Help Center will be available to finish the set-up process and complete fund settings.

- **Additional Roles:** During set-up, your client can recommend other authorized users to be added to the DAF. Once the DAF has been set up, the client will have the ability to add other role options with certain access levels. See more on how to add fund roles in the "Using Your Fund" section.
  - **Grant Advisor:** These are primary people who have full access to the DAF to make grant recommendations and other DAF changes.
  - **Successor Grant Advisor:** These are individuals your client recommends to receive access to the DAF when the Active Grant Advisor passes.
  - **Fundholder:** These are individuals your client recommends who have limited access to the DAF.
- **Investments:** You and your client can work to recommend the investment strategies that best fit their needs, or they can recommend investment options at a later time. Funds without investment options recommended will be placed in the Money Market pool by default.

If your client wishes to set up an advisor managed account, do not choose investment pools. Please contact **Elizabeth Bickley** at [investments@thesignatry.com](mailto:investments@thesignatry.com) for help with the advisor managed DAF process.



## Paper Applications

For clients who may prefer to use paper forms or a fillable electronic document, we provide the donor advised fund application in PDF form. The form is available at [TheSignatry.com/Forms](https://thesignatry.com/forms) if you wish to save the form for later use.

- **Fund Roles:** In the “Adding an Authorized Person” section of the PDF, your client can recommend adding their advisor to the DAF and select the level of access to the DAF. This can be changed later after the DAF is set up as well.

**Advisor Managed Accounts (AMAs):** If your client is wanting to set up an advisor managed account, this can be chosen on the Investment Options page of the PDF application under “Investment Manager.” Do not make investment pool selections. For more information on the process, contact **Elizabeth Bickley** at [investments@thesignatry.com](mailto:investments@thesignatry.com).

- **Submission:** Once your client has completed the form, please send it to The Signatry Donor Care team using the contact methods provided on the form.
- **Timeline:**
  - It typically takes two business days to process the DAF application once it has been received.  
*Note: If you are setting up an AMA, this process takes additional time.*
  - The donor will receive an email invite from [donorcare@thesignatry.com](mailto:donorcare@thesignatry.com) to set up their credentials for the online fund platform.



# Beginning to Use a Donor Advised Fund

Now that your client has successfully set up their DAF, they are ready to begin utilizing its features. Some important items on the DAF platform include:

- **Email Notifications:** In the upper right-hand corner, your client can hover over their name and click "Profile" and then "Settings" and find "Email Preferences." Make sure they choose which notifications they prefer to receive.
- **Fund Roles:** Under "Settings" and the "Account Holders" tab, your clients can view and change roles on the DAF. If changes or additions are needed, you can make the selections in the platform or contact the Donor Care team for help.

## Role Definitions:

1. **Full Access :** Complete access to the fund
  2. **Read Only + Investments:** View only access plus updating investment settings
  3. **Read Only + Grants:** View only access plus recommending grants
  4. **Read Only:** View only access without the ability to recommend grants or changes to the fund
- **Documents:** By visiting their profile in the upper right corner and selecting the Documents tab, your client can view their quarterly statements of DAF activity as well as copies of contribution letters and grant letters. Under the "Manage Documents" tab, your client can select "Manage Statements" to indicate how they prefer to receive statements and who should receive the documents.
  - **Investments:** Your client can view and recommend any changes to their DAF's investments through this tab. Once allocations have been selected, it will take up to 30 days to move money into their chosen selections.  
*Note: Advisor managed accounts are not managed here.*

## For Other Common Fund Questions

The DAF Help Center is available in the lower right corner under the help icon.



## Recommending Grants

For a step by step guided tour to the grant recommendation process, point clients to the Help Center within the platform, located in the lower right corner.

- **Special Instructions:** Use this box to designate specific instructions or information to The Signatry staff on a grant. This information does not appear on the grant.
- **Recurring Grants:** In the Grant Details section, under Grant Timing, your clients can recommend if they would like the grant to recur and its frequency. If your client would like to recommend for the grant to continue indefinitely, they can select the end date as never.
- **Grant Minimums:** \$100 is the minimum grant amount.
- **ACH Grant Delivery:** If the charity has chosen to receive grants by ACH, grants will be sent via this method. An ACH form is available at [TheSignatry.com/Forms](https://thesignatry.com/forms) that your clients can provide to charities to complete if they wish to have their ACH information on file with us. ACH Delivery is our default method of grant distribution.
- **Grant Delivery:** If a ministry does not have ACH set up with The Signatry, the grant will be sent a check via postal mail.
- **Timeline:**
  - **Grant Processing:** Grants typically take 3–5 business days to process after submission.
  - **ACH Grant Delivery:** Grants sent via ACH are typically received within two business days. Charities will be notified via email of the ACH and grant information details.
  - **Check Grant Delivery:** If a grant is mailed, it will be subject to postal mailing times. Expedited mail delivery is available for a fee.
- **Grant Monitoring:** The grants tab is an excellent dashboard for monitoring upcoming or pending grants and viewing historical grant data.



# Contributing to the DAF

For a step by step guided tour to the contribution process, point your clients to the Help Center within the platform and choose the virtual walkthrough for How to Make a Contribution. A couple points to note:

## Contribution Types

The Signatry DAFs can receive contributions from a variety of assets. You can find all forms for contributions at [TheSignatry.com/Forms](https://TheSignatry.com/Forms) or follow the contribution instructions within the DAF platform.

- **Cash/Checks:**
  - Donations can be directly mailed to The Signatry with the fund name or ID number provided.
  - Checks should be made payable to "The Signatry."
  - Allow up to five business days for contributions to be posted to the fund.
- **eChecks/Wire/ACH:** Allow up to five business days for contributions to be posted to the fund.
- **Credit/Debit Cards:** Allow up to five business days for contributions to be posted to the fund.
- **Publicly Traded Securities:** Please use the "Stock Notification Form" to notify the Donor Care team of any expected stock gifts. We will acknowledge receipt of the form and confirm with the donor once the gift has been received.  
*Note: For stock contributions into AMAs, please contact Elizabeth Bickley.*
- **Complex Assets:** Contact our Assets Team at [assets@thesignatry.com](mailto:assets@thesignatry.com) to discuss gifts of business interest and real estate.





## Understanding Fees

One of our core values as The Signatry is integrity and transparency, so we prioritize making our fees clear and understandable. These cost allocations allow us to continue serving your clients and other donors with incredible resources for generosity. You can find detailed information on all the fee types at [TheSignatry.com/fees](https://thesignatry.com/fees).

### Primary fees include:

- **Annual administrative fee:** These are assessed on a monthly basis to your clients' DAFs.
- **Investment management fees:** These are separate from the administrative fee and assessed on a monthly basis.
- **Credit/Debit card fees:** A processing fee of 2.2% plus \$0.30 per transaction is assessed by the credit card provider and is subtracted by our payment processor. For American Express, the processing fee is 3.5% plus \$0.30 per transaction. The contributor will be receipted for the full amount of the contribution. The DAF available fund balance will reflect the gift amount minus the fees.
- **eCheck fees:** A processing fee of 0.80% applies on eCheck transactions, with a max fee total of \$5. The contributor will be receipted for the full amount of the contribution.
- **Expedited grant requests:** If a grant request is asked to be expedited via wire, a \$25 bank fee is assessed. If a grant request is asked to be expedited via check, a \$25 FedEx shipping fee is assessed.

*Note: On advisor managed accounts, you will be able to assess your advisory fees.*

## Next Steps

We hope this information is helpful as you and your clients endeavor through this generosity journey. Our goal is to serve you and your clients according to each of their unique needs. Whether they just are getting started or have been long-time DAF users, we are here to support.

A few ways we can serve:

- We can come in person to meet with you and your clients to answer questions or walk through funds.
- We can set up grants and assist with other fund needs via phone and email as well.
- We provide fund demos of the online DAF platform to help highlight features.

**Please always feel free to reach out with questions!**

**We have many resources available to support you in these generosity solutions.**

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Disclaimer: The Signatry does not provide legal, tax, financial, or other professional advice. You should consult professional advisors concerning the legal, tax, or financial consequences of your charitable activities.

