

# Rules about when officers may use Amber Alerts

To the community,

The amber alert system has become a powerful tool for the community and law enforcement when it comes to protecting our children. One of the main criteria in order to “activate” the system is an abduction actually has to occur.

There are no procedures to use the system when an actual abduction has not occurred. I copied the below text from the CHP webpage which lists the criteria:

“Criteria for activating an AMBER Alert

Law enforcement agencies ensure these conditions are met before activating an AMBER ALERT:

The investigating law enforcement agency confirms an abduction has occurred.

The victim is 17 years of age or younger, or has a proven mental or physical disability.

The victim is in imminent danger of serious injury or death.

There is information available that, if provided to the public, could assist in the child’s safe recovery.”

We waited to release the information to the press about last month’s attempted abduction until we had the composite sketch completed. We wanted there to be a picture to go with the words so the public would have a better idea of what to look for.

We did notify surrounding law enforcement agencies when the incident occurred, and they assisted us with our initial

investigation and search for the suspect.

In the future we'll work to get the preliminary information out to the press more timely.

The safety and protection of members of our community – especially our children – is something the South Lake Tahoe Police Department takes very seriously.

We appreciate and are very thankful for the assistance provided to us from the community when these types of incidents occur.

Thank you,

**South Lake Tahoe police Lt. David Stevenson**