

# Employee accused of stealing from Incline women's center

By Kathryn Reed

An employee of Tahoe Safe Alliance has been accused of embezzling about \$15,000 from the nonprofit.

The woman, whose name has not been released, was fired from the North Shore organization in December. A criminal complaint was filed Feb. 15 with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office.



The woman had worked in the Incline Village office. The 28-year-old organization also has offices in Kings Beach and Truckee to help people with domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse issues.

"None of our programs are or will be affected by this loss," Executive Director Karen Carey told *Lake Tahoe News*.

She also said based on the internal investigation that no one else is believed to be involved. The alleged theft occurred for about the last six months of 2012.

"We have a \$1.4 million budget. Even one dollar stolen from us we take very seriously," Carey said.

The goal is to get the stolen money repaid by the woman who had been a longtime employee.

"It was fundraising and donor dollars. We respect them and value them. That is one of the reasons why we are going to make every effort to get the money back," Carey said. No grant money was taken.

A letter has been sent to donors explaining the situation and Carey has met individually with more than two dozen people to answer questions.

“A positive outcome of these events is that we know that our current financial safeguards worked – allowing us to uncover this theft. With that said, a forensic accounting team will review our financial records to gain deeper understanding of the situation. We commit to review and strengthen our internal policies, procedures and processes as needed,” the letter says.

While Tahoe Safe Alliance thought it had enough protocols in place for something like this not to happen, the holes that were uncovered have been sealed.

When the matter is behind the group, Carey hopes to be able to share Tahoe Safe Alliance’s experience with other nonprofits in hopes they don’t have to go through the same thing.