

**Fairbanks Youth Advocates
Media and Communications Plan for April 2021 Misuse of Funds Incident**

Communications Team & Roles

Role	Duties	Assigned To:	Contact Information
Public Information Officer or Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinates communication response - Oversees message development - Coordinates media response 	Lanien Livingston	ak6450@icloud.com 907-987-4057
Chief Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convenes communications team as needed to develop strategies - FYA spokesperson to media - Final approval on all messages 	Jim Williams	Jimw101591@gmail.com 907-978-3320 907-459-1305
Legal Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal advice on communications strategies - Legal advice on messaging to stakeholders and agencies - Review messages before release 	Mike O'Brien	MOBrien@perkinscoie.com 907-378-8800
Communications Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify key issues and develop communications strategies 	Dave Miller Patrick Endres Marylee Bates, Rodney Gaskins Jim Williams	Bancorp12@gmail.com 907-460-7687 patrick@alaskaphotographics.com 907-750-4065
Stakeholder Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishes and coordinates with key interested persons or organizations - Serves as main, day-to-day and on-site contact - Speaks directly with stakeholders and/or key agencies, gathers concerns and relays to communications team - Keeps key stakeholders and agencies updated on new developments - Coordinates communications with VIPs - Relays Information Points for Internal Staff, VIPs, Partner Agencies. 	Marylee Bates Rodney Gaskins	marylee@fairbanksyouthadvocates.org 907-978-2332 rmbbusinessconsulting@gmail.com 907-750-1553
IT Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversees and deploys technology and multi-media tools, as needed - Updates web pages and social media pages as needed - Monitors web and social media comments 	Patrick Endres	patrick@alaskaphotographics.com 750-4065

Situation

WHAT happened?	A former employee improperly misused FYA funds.
WHERE did it happen?	In Fairbanks, at the Door youth shelter.
WHEN did it happen?	Between August 2020 and April 2021.
WHO was involved?	A former FYA employee.
HOW did it happen?	Credit card and checks
WHAT is currently being done?	The complaint has been referred to the local authorities. The Board has updated FYA internal financial control procedures.

Key Response Principles

- Only relay factual, vetted information to media outlets and key stakeholders. Vetted information is in this plan and this plan will be updated and shared with communications team members as needed.
- PIO or Chief Spokesperson will have document control of plan through the duration of communications incident
- Staff and Board members should never respond to information inquiries unless specifically addressed in this plan. Refer requests for information to PIO, Chief Spokesperson, or Agency Liaison
- When the FPD investigation has concluded, FPD will let FYA know when an arrest is imminent. At that time, FYA will communicate with external stakeholders.
- Internal staff – Agency Liaison will provide updates regularly as new information surfaces.
- Assumption is AW will be arrested and charged with a crime. If that does not happen, we need to re-work the plan.

Communications Logistics

Who is the main, day-to-day on-site contact? Who will staff contact or refer requests for information to?	Marylee and Rodney marylee@fairbanksyouthadvocates.org 907-978-2332 rmbusinessconsulting@gmail.com 907-750-1553
Where will the Communications Team meet?	Clearwater and/or Zoom (standing zoom link:)
Where will we host meetings or press conferences?	At Clearwater. Do not take media or other stakeholders into the shelter.
Where will we take VIPs or agency representatives?	Clearwater. Meet over Zoom. Or meet at their agency office.

Pre-Planned Messages

Initial Press Release

Lanien Livingston will coordinate release to all local media contacts.

June 11, 2021 (Fairbanks, AK) - The Fairbanks Youth Advocates (FYA) Board of Directors oversees Fairbanks' emergency youth shelter, The Door. The FYA board recently discovered that an employee had misused organization funds. FYA is fully cooperating with the Fairbanks Police Department on an investigation. The FYA staff have been notified and the youth clients have been reassured that their well-being and safety will continue to be the number one priority. All services for youth will continue.

For more information visit the FYA website at www.fairbanksyouthadvocates.com.

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DRAFT Letter to Donors (immediately after or concurrent with the arrest)

Patrick will post this message to the appropriate Web and social media sites. Also modify this to fit on letterhead and send to donors via a postcard or mailing, emailing.

It is with deep frustration that the Board of Directors reports to the Fairbanks community that a former employee of The Door has been criminally charged with misuse of Fairbanks Youth Advocates financial resources. The Board discovered the alleged incident in April 2021 and reported their findings immediately to the Fairbanks Police Department. The FPD investigation recently concluded and resulted in the arrest and criminal indictment of the former employee. In response, the Board has designed and implemented updates to internal financial control procedures and is working to recover the funds. Although FYA suffered a substantial financial loss, grant revenues and donations continue to keep the cash-flow situation positive, ultimately keeping FYA operations running smoothly and staff getting paid. Despite the unfortunate incident, the Board is happy to report that the FYA staff continues to provide professional, high-quality and uninterrupted youth shelter services to our most vulnerable in Fairbanks. Despite the financial loss, the Board is greatly appreciative of the unwavering support and commitment of the Fairbanks community to the mission of The Door.

Communications Timing

Task	When/How
Communicate incident to internal staff – open Q&A	ASAP and frequently as new information surfaces. In person meetings.
Let granting agencies know about the incident, Q&A	Just prior to or after the arrest.
Press conference.	Just prior to the arrest. Tell our story first
Email & mail letters to donors	Just prior to or after the arrest.
Update social media and web pages	Just after the arrest
Q&A, town-hall ish meeting with donors & key stakeholders.	Zoom. Just after the arrest.

Information Points

Key Messages	Audience
The Door emergency youth shelter provides safe shelter, 24x7 for teens age 12-18.	Staff, External Agencies, Donors, VIPs, WEB
The Board discovered the alleged theft in April 2021	Staff, External Agencies, Donors, VIPs, WEB
The board was tipped off by irregularities discovered in a credit card statement.	Staff, External Agencies, Donors, VIPs, WEB
The alleged theft was confined to 1 staff member.	Staff, External Agencies, Donors, VIPs, WEB
The staff member is no longer employed by FYA	Staff, External Agencies, Donors, VIPs, WEB
The FYA board contacted the Fairbanks Police Department, reported the alleged theft, and is currently cooperating with FPD in the investigation.	Staff, External Agencies, Donors, VIPs, WEB
The Board has corrected internal controls procedures that enabled the alleged theft to occur.	External Agencies, Donors, VIPs
The Board of directors will attempt to recover the alleged stolen funds.	External Agencies, VIPs, Donors
Although an unfortunate financial loss, FYA cash flows are sufficient to keep services to homeless youth operating at high level of quality.	Staff, External Agencies, VIPs, WEB
The FYA Board appreciates the continued support of the community.	External Agencies, VIPs, Donors, WEB

Anticipated Questions and Answers

Question	Response
How much money was taken?	[pre-charge] We cannot disclose the amount due to the on-going investigation of FPD [post charge] Over \$90,000
When did the board discover the alleged theft?	In late April, 2021
When was the police contacted?	In early May, after the board was reasonably certain a theft occurred.
How did the alleged thefts occur?	[pre-charge] We cannot disclose the details at this time due to the ongoing FPD investigation [post-charge] Mostly through misuse of the company credit card and checks.
When or for how long had the alleged thefts been occurring?	[pre-charge] We cannot disclose the details at this time due to the ongoing FPD investigation [post-charge] As early as August 2020
What has FYA done to prevent this from happening again?	The board modified its internal control procedures and mail opening procedures to ensure broader segregation of duties. The board also hired a part-time accountant to duties related to increased internal controls.
How did this incident impact the finances of FYA?	Although an unfortunate loss, FYA cash flows are sufficient to keep operations at the door operating at a high level of quality. The staff are amazing and continue keep first things first: the care and well being of our youth clients staying in the shelter.
What is FYA's operating budget?	About \$690,000 per year.
How is FYA going to recover this money?	The Board has several strategies identified to recover the funds. At this time, we cannot disclose the specific strategies. The Board's intent is to recover the lost funds.
Why has the FYA Board waited this long to report the alleged fraud to the community?	The timing decision was tough. On one hand, we feel an obligation to the community to be up front and transparent. On the other hand, the Board decided that alleged criminal behavior of this magnitude could not be ignored and ultimately, there needed to be accountability – in order to preserve the integrity of the investigation, we had to wait.
What lessons has the FYA Board learned?	The FYA board takes full responsibility for fixing the internal controls procedures that were exploited. Its unfortunate that a former employee engaged in alleged criminal behavior that diverted resources away from an institution that provides vital services to extremely vulnerable youth clients.

Last update 7/14/2021

Monitoring for Feedback

Task	Assigned to:
Daily. Monitor media outlets in Fairbanks & Anchorage. Be on the lookout for changing media focus. Forward findings to Chief Spokesperson.	Public Information Officer
As needed. Modify messages based on changing media or public focus points.	Chief Spokesperson
Daily. Monitor Web feedback forms and social media comments. Forward findings to Chief Spokesperson.	IT Coordinator
Daily. Monitor staff comments and morale. Make adjustments to plan, as needed.	Agency Liaison(s)