

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Tucson Museum Accountant Charged in \$973,000 Embezzlement**

(Phoenix, Ariz. – May 4, 2009) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced that Ruth Sons, 65, of Tucson, has been indicted on three counts of fraudulent schemes and artifices, three counts of theft and one count of illegally conducting an enterprise, all felonies.

Between 2003 and 2008, Sons allegedly embezzled \$973,010 from the Tucson Museum of Art, where she had been employed as a bookkeeper and accountant since 1990.

According to investigators, Sons' position as an accountant gave her access to the museum's payroll, museum shop deposits and petty cash accounts. Sons allegedly conducted the elaborate embezzlement scheme for more than five years that included:

- Forging the signature of the museum's CFO and Director.
- Stealing cash intended for deposit from sales at the museum shop.
- Manipulating the museum's general accounting ledger to conceal the embezzlement.

The defendant began her employment at TMA in 1990 as a bookkeeper. The alleged scheme was discovered during an internal audit conducted by the museum last year. The museum turned the case over to the Tucson Police Department for investigation.

Assistant Attorney General Michael Jette is prosecuting this case. A copy of the complaint is attached.

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