

NEWS RELEASE



Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office
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TOMS RIVER WOMAN INDICTED FOR THEFT FROM HOWELL TOWNSHIP LAW FIRM

On February 8, 2010, a Monmouth County Grand Jury returned an indictment charging Kimberly Dehl, 33, of Toms River, N.J., with one count of second degree Theft and one count of second degree Misapplication of Entrusted Property. The charges relate to Dehl's former role as the office manager of a Howell Township, N.J., law firm.

The indictment follows an investigation which was conducted by the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office. Dehl worked for the law firm of Bongiovanni & Pavliv from 1998 until she resigned in November 2007. The investigation revealed that from January 2002 through November 2007, Dehl misappropriated more than \$274,000 in funds which were in the law firm's trust account. Dehl accessed the funds by writing checks from the firm's trust account which she then issued in order to make her mortgage payments and to pay her personal credit card bills. Dehl also issued checks to herself which she then deposited into her own personal bank accounts. The theft was not discovered until after Dehl's resignation from the law firm.

The law firm of Bongiovanni & Pavliv dissolved in December 2007. The funds which were stolen from the law firm's trust account were reimbursed by the law firm and the law firm's insurance carrier.

Dehl was arrested on August 12, 2008. Dehl was released from custody on August 13, 2008, after she posted bail in the amount of \$150,000 which was set by Monmouth County Superior Court Judge Bette E. Uhrmacher.

If convicted of second degree Theft or second degree Misapplication of Entrusted Property, Dehl faces a maximum potential custodial sentence of up to a ten year State Prison term on each charge.

Despite these charges, every defendant is presumed innocent, unless and until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, following a trial at which the defendant has all of the trial rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and State law.

The case is assigned to Assistant Monmouth County Prosecutor Michael J. Costanzo. Dehl is represented by Steven E. Nelson, Esquire, of Neptune, N.J.

Released: February 8, 2010