



# TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

|  |  |                                       |   |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <br>Proudly Policing Since 1841 | <b>SUBJECT</b><br><br>Alarm Response                   |                                       | <br>Nationally Accredited 1986 |
|  | <b>CHIEF OF POLICE</b><br><br><i>Signature on file</i> |                                       |   |
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## AUTHORITY/RELATED REFERENCES

FS 162.21, Enforcement of municipal codes and ordinances  
 City of Tallahassee Ordinance 8-38, False Alarms  
 General Order 12, Radio Communications  
 General Order 18, Criminal Investigations  
 General Order 22, Emergency Response Driving  
 General Order 26, High Risk Incidents

## ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

CALEA Chapter                      81

## KEY WORD INDEX

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| <b>Burglary Alarms</b>                      | Procedure III |
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## POLICY

The Department shall establish dispatching, response, and administrative protocols for private security alarm activations. Members are responsible for adhering to the established protocols in the course of their assigned duties.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Alarm Activation:** The triggering of any assembly of equipment, mechanical or electrical, arranged to signal the occurrence of an illegal entry or other activity needing urgent attention, and to which a law enforcement response is reasonably expected. Specifically excluded are triggering of alarms installed in conveyances or single station smoke detectors in a residential dwelling.

**Alarm Source Location:** The premises where the alarm is activated.

**Alarm User:** Any person or entity in control of any building, structure, or facility, or any room or office therein, where an alarm system is installed, operated and maintained.

**CDA:** Consolidated Dispatch Agency, the Tallahassee-Leon County joint call-taking and dispatch entity. As used in this policy, the CDA also refers to Public Safety Communications Operators employed by the CDA.

**False Alarm Activation:** With specific exceptions as outlined in section VI A below, an alarm activation resulting in at least one member responding to the alarm source location when a situation requiring such a response does not exist.

**Key Holder:** Authorized representative of the alarm source location.

**Primary Member:** The member assigned the primary responsibility to investigate and document a call for service, and provide the CDA with the appropriate disposition code in order to close the call in the Computer Aided Dispatch system.

## PROCEDURES

### I. GENERAL PROTOCOLS

- A. Department members respond to alarm activations indicating the crimes of robbery or burglary, and alarm activations indicating panic or duress.
- B. Department members do not typically respond to other types of alarm activations, but nothing in this written directive shall prevent such action if deemed reasonably necessary by a member or the CDA.
- C. Members shall receive, respond to, and investigate each alarm activation as if it is a true emergency until information indicates otherwise.
- D. The CDA's use of an alert tone in the dispatching of an alarm activation call for service is solely designed to direct attention to the call, and does

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not automatically require members to engage in emergency response driving.

E. The Department does not monitor private security alarms.

**II. RESPONDING MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. When acknowledging the call from the CDA members shall determine if emergency response driving is appropriate, and advise the CDA when they are responding in an emergency mode.

B. Members utilizing emergency response driving to an alarm activation shall adhere to the guidelines in General Order 22 (Emergency Response Driving).

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

E. If warranted, members shall ensure appropriate inner and outer perimeters are established to contain the scene.

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- F. In situations where members are responding to an alarm activation call for service and they receive information it may be a false alarm activation, the responding members shall continue to the scene until cancelled by an on-scene member, a district supervisor, or the CDA.
- G. Members on scene of alarm activations that are crime scenes shall adhere to the applicable mandates of General Order 18 (Criminal Investigations) and:
  - 1. The appropriate member is responsible for establishing incident command when necessary and notifying the CDA of the alarm status (e.g., crime in progress, crime occurred/suspects left the scene).
  - 2. The primary member shall advise the CDA of the change in alarm status so the CAD dispatch signal can be properly changed.

**III. BURGLARY ALARM PROTOCOLS**

- A. In response to a burglary alarm activation, members shall attempt to confirm if a burglary is in progress by assessment and utilization of:
  - 1. Information from witnesses, victims, and alarm companies, and
  - 2. Observations on scene, including searching for a point of entry/exit.
- B. Members on the scene of a burglary alarm activation should consider all relevant factors in determining if the alarm activation is indicative of a burglary and, based upon those factors, decide on a reasonable course of action, to include, but not limited to:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**IV. ROBBERY AND PANIC/DURESS ALARM PROTOCOLS**

A. In response to a robbery or panic/duress alarm activation, members shall attempt to confirm if a robbery or other life-threatening crime is in progress by assessment and utilization of:

1. Information from witnesses, victims, and alarm companies
2. Observations on scene

B. Members on the scene of a robbery or panic/duress alarm activation should consider all relevant factors in determining if the alarm activation is indicative of a robbery or other life-threatening crime/event, and based upon those factors, decide on a reasonable course of action, to include, but not limited to:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**V. DISTRICT SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

In response to alarm activation calls for service, district supervisors shall:

- A. Monitor the radio talk group (channel) and ensure an appropriate police response occurs,
- B. Upgrade/downgrade vehicle responses, and as needed, assign additional members, and
- C. If the situation warrants, respond to the alarm source location to supervise the on-scene activities and take appropriate actions to contain and de-escalate the situation.

**VI. FALSE ALARM ACTIVATIONS**

- A. An alarm activation is not considered a false alarm activation when any one of the following conditions or events activated – or likely activated – the alarm:
  - 1. Violent weather conditions,
  - 2. Power failures,
  - 3. Other extraordinary circumstances not reasonably subject to control by the alarm user, or
  - 4. Intentional activation by the alarm user who observed or heard suspicious circumstances which would cause a careful and prudent person to believe a fire, forced entry, robbery, or other crime was in progress at the premises protected by the alarm system.
  
- B. In response to a false alarm activation, the primary member is responsible for:
  - 1. Completing a written warning for the violation utilizing the residence/business check (PD 164),
  - 2. Providing the appropriate portion of the PD 164 to the key holder, or when no key holder is available, leaving the PD 164 at the alarm location, and
  - 3. Submitting the appropriate portion of the PD 164 to their immediate supervisor, unless otherwise directed.

**VII. CAD DISPOSITIONS FOR ALARM ACTIVATIONS**

- A. The initial dispatch code for an alarm shall not be changed except to reflect the occurrence of a crime.
  
- B. Members shall utilize the following disposition and signal found codes appropriate to the false alarm activation:
  - 1. W209N Written warning issued
  
  - 2. B209N Alarm was not in violation of false alarm ordinance

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- C. When the disposition/signal found code B209N is used, the primary member shall ensure CAD notes reflect the reason(s) for no written warning.

History: issued 08/01/1985, revised 01/01/1991, 11/15/2001, 05/15/2003, 03/09/2009, 02/22/2013, and 05/15/2014.