



**RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDER**



Subject: RESPONSE TO ALARMS		Chapter 9	Number 4	Pages 6
References: CALEA: <i>81.2.12</i> VA State Code: <i>§18.2-212, §18.2-461</i> City Code: <i>§10-53</i>	Related Orders: 07-15	Effective Date: 10/18/2023 Revised By: Review Prv. Rev. Date: 06/07/2019		
Chief of Police: <div style="text-align: center;"></div>				

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to outline a plan to be followed for responding to and handling security alarms.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGE

This policy is due for review. Section VI sub-paragraph F, located on the ■ drive, has been outdated since 2007 and is no longer used. City Code §34-68a is outdated and has been omitted from the policy. The addition of 3SI tracking has been added to the policy. The specific changes are noted in bold italicized text throughout the document.

III. POLICY

Officers shall proceed with extreme caution when answering any alarm call. Officers shall be aware that alarms can be activated in several ways, and the nature of the alarm may determine the type of response. Officers shall follow the procedures outlined in this policy to enhance arrest possibilities of suspects and observe proper precautions for the safety of officers, employees, and bystanders.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines outlined in this general order. Failure to comply will result in appropriate corrective action. Responsibility rests with the Division Commander to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and proper training, counseling, and/or disciplinary action is initiated.

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as creating a higher safety standard or case in an evidentiary sense concerning third-party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this Department and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

V. DEFINITIONS

- A. FALSE ALARM – any alarm signal communicated to the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC) which is not in response to an actual or threatened hazard.
 - 1. False alarms shall include negligently or accidentally activated signals; signals that are activated as the result of faulty, malfunctioning, or improperly installed or maintained equipment; and signals that are purposefully activated to summon police and/or fire personnel in non-emergency situations.
 - 2. False alarms shall not include signals that are activated by unusually severe weather conditions or other causes that are identified and determined, after evaluation by DEC, Chief of Fire, or the Chief of Police, as applicable, to be beyond the control of the owner or the user of an alarm system.
- B. DELIBERATE FALSE ALARMS – Any person who intentionally or deliberately and without cause activates an alarm system in a non-emergency situation and by such action causes an emergency response to be made by the Police Department, Fire, and Emergency Services Departments, either or both, shall be deemed guilty of a Class I Misdemeanor. (Virginia State Codes §18.2-212 and 18.2-461)
- C. FINANCIAL INSTITUTION – A business that provides financial services for its clients or members to accept and manage deposits and make loans. These businesses operate primarily, but not exclusively, as banks or credit unions. Check cashing establishments, insurance companies, mortgage loans, and investment fund businesses are not considered financial institutions.
- D. [REDACTED]

VI. PROCEDURE

- A. DEC Responsibilities for Alarms: [CALEA 81.2.12]
 - 1. Upon receiving an alarm by direct interface with the CAD system or the 911 phone system, DEC shall dispatch Police, Fire, or EMS officers to respond according to the priority appropriate to the circumstances and nature of the alarm. If the alarm company advises that they have confirmed that a crime has occurred, the Communications Officer shall treat the event as a robbery or burglary, assign a minimum of two patrol units and notify a field supervisor. [REDACTED]
 - 2. When a financial institution robbery alarm is received, DEC will simulcast the call on all police channels. All police units responding to the alarm will advise the communications officer of their response and the location they are responding from.
 - 3. If the robbery or burglary notification is received by telephone, DEC shall, if possible, obtain a complete description of the suspect(s) along with as much additional information as possible, including whether the suspect(s) is still at the

scene, their direction and mode of travel if they have left the location and a complete description of any vehicle(s) involved. In the case of a burglary, the responding officers shall instruct the radio operator to have [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NOTE: During “in-progress” incidents, DEC personnel shall remain on the line with the resident or business representative until verification of Richmond Police Officers on the scene is received.

4. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

5. If DEC is subsequently notified that the alarm is false, the Communications Officer will change it to a non-emergency (code 2) response, and the responding units will be advised that one unit is to respond for verification.

B. Initial Police Response to Alarms:

1. When an alarm signal is received, [REDACTED] shall be dispatched and shall respond immediately to the alarm location. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Any responding units shall be alerted for suspicious activity.

2. When using emergency equipment, officers shall follow all applicable Department procedures and respond sensibly and cautiously. Audible alarms, however, do not justify an emergency response. Officers shall respond to audible alarms using posted speed limits and traffic control devices.

3. The [REDACTED] police unit to arrive at the alarm scene shall approach the premises cautiously, observing for possible getaway cars, lookouts, or other suspicious signs. After this initial assessment, the [REDACTED] unit on the scene shall immediately advise other units. Before arrival, responding units [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

5. If a robbery has been committed, the officer shall identify witnesses, ensure that injured people receive medical attention, protect the crime scene, obtain necessary information for on-the-lookout broadcasts, and notify DEC as soon as possible.

6. If detectives or plainclothes officers respond to the alarm, they shall have a visible type of identification that signifies them as police officials and utilize universal Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) recognition as described in General Order 7-15, Recognition of Plainclothes Officers, whenever possible.

7. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

C. Procedures upon Determination that a Robbery or Burglary has Occurred:

1. Upon arrival, if the officers confirm that a robbery or burglary has occurred, they shall secure the scene, protect all evidence, treat injured individuals, and collect appropriate information for the Incident Based Report (IBR) with the proper incident classification.
2. Once it has been determined that a robbery or burglary has occurred, the [REDACTED] officer responding will obtain enough information for a preliminary all-unit broadcast to be sent out. This broadcast shall include a brief physical description of the suspect(s), direction of travel, and weapons used. After witnesses have been located and more thoroughly interviewed, a more detailed broadcast shall be given.
3. AFTER A ROBBERY OR BURGLARY HAS OCCURRED, THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR THAT WILL AFFECT THE APPREHENSION OF THE SUSPECT(S) IS THE SPEED IN THAT THE PRELIMINARY ALL-UNIT BROADCAST IS SENT OUT. AN OFFICER SHALL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO IMMEDIATELY HAVE THE ALL-UNIT BROADCAST SENT OUT AFTER ARRIVING AT THE SCENE.
4. In the case of a verified alarm, the on-duty supervisor shall direct other patrol units to monitor possible escape routes, assume a perimeter around the premises (if possible), or resume other duties.

D. Procedures in Cases of Alarms at Financial Institutions:

1. This procedure is intended to be a joint effort between the Richmond Police Department and Richmond area banks. The details of this procedure must be handled as confidential information and be released to no one except authorized law enforcement officials. The Department's primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of the officers responding to the alarm, employees, and other citizens. Through the proper use of this procedure, it is felt that the possibilities for apprehension will be significantly increased:

a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

b) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- 2.

[REDACTED]
- 3.

[REDACTED]
- 4.

[REDACTED]
- 5.

[REDACTED]
- 6.

[REDACTED]

 - a)

[REDACTED]
 - b)

[REDACTED]
 - c)

[REDACTED]
 - d)

[REDACTED]
 - e)

[REDACTED]
 - f)

[REDACTED]
 - g)

[REDACTED]

E. Police Response to Business and Residential Alarms:

1. Upon receipt of the alarm notification, if the location is secure or the business is closed, the Warrant and Information Services Unit personnel shall, at the request of the responding officer, immediately notify the alarm company.

NOTE:

[REDACTED]

2.

[REDACTED]

3.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] If appropriate, the officers shall summon the canine unit. In any event, the officers shall conduct a thorough search of the premises.

4. If the officer determines that the premise is secure and no break-in or attempt has occurred, they will complete an Alarm Notice (PD-158) and attach it to the entry doorknob or other conspicuous location on the premises.

5. For each false alarm, an Alarm Notice will be left at the premises. The Alarm Notice advises the owner and/or occupant that the alarm was activated and the premise was checked by police. In many cases, this will be the only way to advise the owner/occupant that the alarm was activated while they were away.

NOTE: Excessive false alarms at financial institutions, other businesses or residences shall be handled in accordance with Richmond City Code §10-53.

VII. FORMS

- A. PD-107, Request for Copy of Recorded Transmission from the Department of Emergency Communications
- B. PD-158, Alarm Notice
- C. IBR and supplemental forms, if applicable