

# ASHEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY MANUAL

**Chapter:** 8 - Patrol Operations

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## ASSOCIATED DIRECTIVES

[Policy 701 - Emergency Response](#)

[Policy 901 - Crime Scenes and Evidence](#)

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the proper and efficient handling of residential and business alarms and to minimize the number of false alarms.

## POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Asheville Police Department (APD) to ensure an organized, well-considered response to activated alarms while offering the greatest measure of safety for the responding officer and the employees or residents of a protected location.

## DEFINITIONS

**Alarm:** any electronic or mechanical device which emits any signal (electronic, visible, audible, silent, recorded, or otherwise) which is designed, intended, or used to detect unauthorized entry into a building, structure, or premise, to signal an attempted robbery or holdup, or the commission of an unlawful act in or around a building, structure, or premises that is intended to elicit a response by the police (Ch. 13, Art II, § 13-31).

Alarm Administrator: the designated person or system designated by the Chief of Police to administer the provisions of the City of Asheville alarm ordinance.

Alarm Systems Coordinator: an employee appointed by the Chief of Police to administer rules and regulations for police alarms and serves as the primary liaison with the Alarm Administrator, as necessary.

False Alarm: activation of an alarm by any means that elicits a response by police when no situation requiring such as response, in fact, exists. This includes accidental, avoidable, and unnecessary alarm activation due to user error, equipment malfunction, improper or unsuited equipment but does not include alarm activation caused by violent conditions of nature or other extraordinary circumstances not reasonably subject to control by the alarm user or alarm business (Ch. 13, Art II, § 13-31).

Registered Alarm: an alarm that has been listed with the Asheville Police Department in accordance with the application and permitting requirement as set out in the Asheville City Code of Ordinances.

## **RULES AND PROCEDURES**

### **802.1 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. It is the responsibility of all alarm users to register with the APD, [through established procedures](#), the pertinent information to identify the alarm, location, and appropriate contact person(s).
- B. The Communications Center will process and immediately dispatch all alarm calls received, [see 802.2](#).
- C. Patrol officers will handle alarm calls, determine the cause of the alarm, and supply the necessary information to the Communications Center to process false alarms.
- D. The Records Unit is responsible for managing false alarm data, billing lists, and producing statistical reports.
- E. The [Chief of Police, Alarm System Coordinator, and/or](#) Alarm Administrator will ignore all calls that are canceled by the alarm monitoring company [prior to officers arriving at the scene](#).

### **802.2 COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Communications Center personnel will process and immediately dispatch all alarm calls received. All alarm calls will be aired [on the radio](#).

- B. Communications Center personnel are responsible for obtaining sufficient information on reported alarm activations to ensure the proper classification of the event. The Communications Center will request from the alarm monitoring company the following information, including, but not limited to:
  1. Information on the exact location of the alarm.
  2. The call-back number for the alarm company.
  3. If the call has been enhanced or verified. If the alarm company confirms the call has been through enhanced verification procedures, Communications Center personnel will gather information from the alarm company on who has been contacted. Information on all keyholder contact attempts, whether the keyholder was contacted or not, will be recorded in the CAD notes.
  4. If the keyholder is en route, the keyholder's name, contact number, type of vehicle, and estimated time of arrival will be recorded in the CAD notes.
- C. Should the alarm company advise they have confirmed with the protected premises that an actual criminal activation has taken place, Communications Center personnel will enter an event that describes the situation being reported rather than as an alarm activation (for example, an intruder verified by video should be classified as breaking and entering in progress).
- D. Upon receipt of a bank hold-up alarm, Communications Center personnel will enter the event, including all available information. Communications Center personnel will immediately attempt to make telephone contact with the protected location to determine the actual situation. **At least two (2) units will be dispatched on silent alarm and robbery calls.**
- E. If the alarm monitoring company calls back to cancel the alarm call, Communications Center personnel will enter this information into the call. Only the alarm monitoring company or APD's Alarm Administrator may cancel an alarm call.
- F. Communications Center personnel will ensure the proper clearance code is entered into the CAD system. False alarm codes should be entered to reflect any special circumstances, as appropriate (e.g., weather-related).
- G. When clearing alarm calls, dispatchers are responsible for ensuring the exact location and names of businesses are correctly entered into the Computer-Aided Dispatch System (CAD).

- H. If a keyholder arrives and the officer has already left the scene, the keyholder may call Communications and request an officer return to meet with them. Communications Center personnel will dispatch an officer back to the scene.

### **802.3 RESIDENTIAL/BUSINESS ALARM RESPONSE**

- A. Officers dispatched to alarm calls will respond in the most expedient manner consistent with department policy. [The utilization of emergency equipment during response will comply with Policy 701 - Emergency Response.](#)
- B. Officers arriving at the scene must indicate their arrival by radio or via the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. The officers will determine the validity of the alarm.
- C. If a valid police issue has been detected, the appropriate department procedure will be followed.
- D. If a keyholder is en route, the officer will be required to stand by for twenty (20) minutes unless required to respond to another urgent or emergency call for service. The officer may be required to return to the scene at the request of the keyholder who has arrived and made such a request to the Communications Center.

### **802.4 HOLD-UP AND BANK ALARMS**

- A. [Officers responding to a bank or panic/robbery alarm will proceed as quickly and safely as possible to the bank's vicinity. If lights and sirens are approved for use, officers should remain aware that the lights and sirens may alert suspects who may still be in the area. Officers will use their discretion to turn off lights and sirens or continue their use when approaching the bank's vicinity. Any use of lights and sirens must comply with Policy 701 - Emergency Response.](#)
- B. At least two (2) units will be dispatched on silent alarm and robbery calls.
- C. If the suspect has left the scene, the initial arriving unit will secure the scene following [Policy 901 - Crime Scenes and Evidence](#). Other responding units should cover the general area and possible escape routes.
- D. [Communications Center](#) personnel will be responsible for notification to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of any bank robbery.

### **802.5 DISPOSITION OF ALARM CALLS**

- A. [When clearing alarm calls where no cause can be found, officers will initiate a disposition of false alarm.](#)

1. When clearing alarm calls in which a reasonable explanation for the alarm is found or the alarm is canceled before the first officer arrives on the scene, officers will use the appropriate dispositions and make an appropriate entry in the CAD notes field when clearing the call.
  2. Notes should clearly indicate any reasonable explanation for the activation of the false alarm, as defined by this policy so that the department's Alarm Administrator can make appropriate determinations.
- B. Alarm calls that are not false alarms will be cleared with the appropriate disposition per departmental directives.

#### **802.6 DOCUMENTATION AND REVIEW OF ALARMS**

- A. The Alarm Systems Coordinator will serve as the department coordinator, in conjunction with the Alarm Administrator, for compliance with the City of Asheville's alarm ordinance. This includes the alarm monitoring software established to administer the alarm ordinance.
- B. Once the user registers a Security Alarm Permit application, the owner will receive notice that they are registered and given their permit number.
- C. The Alarm Administrator and/or Alarm Systems Coordinator will regularly process false alarm data and send out any documentation to alarm holders regarding activations, fines that are owed, and alarm permit updates as needed.
- D. The Alarm Administrator will investigate all appeals requested by alarm holders in compliance with the City of Asheville Ordinance.

BY ORDER OF:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David J. Zack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Zack  
Chief of Police