

# FLORENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

<b>Subject:</b> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ALARMS</b></p>	<b>Procedure:</b> General Order 35.2.13 CALEA 81.2.13	<b>Total Pages:</b> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
<b>Authorizing Signature:</b>  Original with Authorizing Signature on File	<b>Effective:</b> 01/01/2011 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>New</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Amended</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rescinds</b>	

**I. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Florence Police Department to respond to activated alarms within our jurisdiction. Alarms are a means of notifying police that a serious crime may be in progress. Alarms can represent a threat to citizens and law enforcement, therefore an organized, cautious approach is required. The nature of the alarm will determine the type of response. However, many alarms are frequently false. Therefore, it is also the policy of this department to warn citizens and/or businesses, that after multiple false alarms, the Florence Police Department reserves the right to cease responding to alarm activations at these locations.

**II. PURPOSE**

This written order establishes guidelines for the safe and effective response to activated alarms.

**III. SCOPE**

This written order is applicable to all personnel.

**IV. RESPONSIBILITY**

All personnel are responsible for complying with this directive.

**V. DEFINITIONS**

A. **ALARMS:** A device or series of devices including, but not limited to, systems interconnected with radio frequency signals and which are designed to emit or transmit an audible, visual, or electronic signal upon activation. Dispatch learns of activated alarms through several means, including:

1. Direct transmission to dispatch by automatic dialing devices;
2. Alarm companies;
3. Citizens that observe or hear an alarm; or
4. Officers that discover and report alarms.

B. **FALSE ALARMS:**

1. Any alarm signal originating from an alarm device, to which the

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police department responds **and** which results from:

- a. An alarm triggered by negligence of the alarm subscriber or a subscriber's employee;
  - b. Alarm malfunction, including mechanical or electrical failure; or
  - c. False activation, including for example, an alarm activation reporting a robbery where no actual or attempted robbery has occurred, or reporting a burglar alarm where there is no evidence to substantiate an attempted or forced entry to the premises.
2. An alarm will not be considered a false alarm if it is determined that the alarm was caused by:
- a. Natural or man-made catastrophes, or an act of God;
  - b. Vandalism causing physical damage to the premise;
  - c. An attempted entry of a location that causes visible, physical or other evidence of damage to the location;
  - d. A test of a local alarm system by a licensed alarm business agent or employee who is present servicing, repairing, or installing the alarm, **when the police department has been notified of such testing in advance;**
  - e. Severe weather causing damage to the premise; or
  - f. Electrical service interruption or telephone line malfunction that is beyond the control of the alarm customer.
3. After the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) false alarm in a month, the Police Department may notify the offending alarm customer and inform them that if the problem is not fixed, the police department reserves the right to cease responding. If false alarms continue after this notification, the Chief of Police can send a directive to the police department and alarm customer stating that Florence Police will no longer respond to alarms at that location.

**VI. ALARM PROCEDURES**

**A. PATROL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. When an alarm is received, two units (when available) should be dispatched (one closest to the scene and a backup) to the alarm location.
2. No business or residence should be searched by a single officer.
3. K-9 units should be utilized when available.
4. Officers should attempt to determine if entry has been made and/or

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look for other evidences of a crime.

5. Officers should determine if a responsible party is responding or not. If an RP is en-route, an officer should wait a reasonable amount of time for their arrival, and verify with the RP that no crime has occurred. If it will take a considerable amount of time for a responsible party to arrive, a supervisor will determine whether the officer should remain on the scene or clear the scene for other calls.

B. DISPATCH REPOSIBILITIES:

1. In addition to standard duties, once an alarm has sounded, dispatch should ensure that a responsible party has been notified, and determine whether the RP will be responding to meet with the officer.
2. At the officer's request, Dispatch will send an email to the Community Policing Division, advising them of a nuisance false alarm, when applicable.

C. HOLD-UP ALARMS:

1. At least two units will be dispatched.
2. Units may respond code 3 to the location.
3. Units should approach the alarm location cautiously.
4. Back-up units should be on the scene prior to any officer making entry.
5. In the event the hold-up alarm occurs at a bank, the officer may choose to have dispatch contact the bank and have an employee exit the building to meet officers.
6. In the event the hold-up alarm is verified, patrol units should establish a perimeter and coordinate a tactical response depending upon the circumstances.
7. If it has been determined that a robbery has occurred, once the scene is clear, officers should establish a crime scene and proceed accordingly.

D. PANIC ALARMS:

1. At least two units will be dispatched.
2. Units may respond code 3 to the location.
3. Units should approach the alarm location cautiously.
4. Back-up units should be on the scene prior to any officer making entry.
5. Upon arrival, officers should develop a tactical plan of approach in

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order to determine the nature of the panic alarm, and then proceed accordingly.

E. GENERAL ALARMS:

1. At least two units will be dispatched.
2. Generally, the response will not be code 3.
3. Units should approach the alarm location cautiously.
4. Officers should check the perimeter of the location for evidence of entry or other crimes.
5. If there are indications that illegal entry has been made, officers should coordinate a tactical response for a thorough search of the premises.
6. If the alarm occurs at a residence, dispatch will contact a responsible party to respond and grant access to the residence.
7. If the alarm occurs at a business, dispatch will contact a responsible party to respond and grant access to the business.
8. K-9 units should be used whenever available.
9. If no RP is available, officers should search the premise to the extent they can and re-secure any open doors after completing other required duties.

F. CRIME SCENE DISCOVERED: In the event a crime scene has been discovered, officers should :

1. Secure the scene;
2. Take necessary photographs;
3. Gather physical evidence;
4. Provide any BOLO information to dispatch;
5. Attempt to establish contact with an RP and have them respond;
6. Take necessary steps to re-secure the location.
7. Complete required paperwork.