



**CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD
FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023**

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BEING A BY-LAW of the Cornwall Police Services Board establishing a policy for alarm response and reduction of false alarms.

WHEREAS the Cornwall Police Services Board is responsible for the provision of police services in the City of Cornwall;

AND WHEREAS The Police Services Board may, by By-Law, make rules for the effective management of the police force, pursuant to section 31 (6) of The Police Services Act;

AND WHEREAS The Police Services Board may pass By-Laws imposing fees or charges for services or activities provided by or on behalf of it, pursuant to the Municipal Act, 2001.

AND WHEREAS the number of false alarms in Cornwall has been identified as consuming a significant quantity of police resources which could be better directed to enhancing the police presence in the community;

AND WHEREAS the Verified Alarm Program has been identified as an integral part of the strategy to reduce the number of false alarms in the City of Cornwall.

AND WHEREAS the Cornwall Police Services Board has deemed it desirable to set out its fees and charges for services in this by-law and repeal Cornwall Police Services By-Law No 1, 2000.

NOW THEREFORE The Cornwall Police Services Board enacts as follows:



CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023

DEFINITIONS

1. In this by-law:
 - a) **“Board”** means The Cornwall Police Services Board;
 - b) **“Alarm Administrator”** means the person appointed by the Chief of Police pursuant to Section 6 of this By-Law;
 - c) **“Chief of Police”** means the Chief of Police of the Cornwall Police Service, or his or her designate;
 - d) **“Police Service”** means the Cornwall Police Service;
 - e) **“Alarm System”** means any mechanical or electrical device which is designed to be activated manually or automatically upon the detection of an unauthorized entry, intrusion, or other emergency in or on any building, structure, facility or premises through the emission of a sound or transmission of a signal or message, but does not include a device that is installed in a “motor vehicle” or “motor home,” as those terms are defined in the Highway Traffic Act, or a financial institution during regular business hours.
 - f) **“Automatic Dialing Service”** means an alarm system which automatically dials a specific telephone number and transmits an emergency message by a recording over regular telephone lines when activated.
 - g) **“Verified Alarm Response Program (VARP)”** means the police response model aimed at reducing the number of false alarm calls attended by the CPS. The initiative is intended to eliminate property related false alarms and outline the process under which the VARP may be employed. Members shall recognize that panic alarms related to the safety of a person are excluded from the VARP.
 - h) **“Alarm User”** means a person who uses an alarm system to protect any building, structure, facility or premises;
 - i) **“Alarm Agency”** means a person or company who, for hire or other reward
 - a) sells or supplies or installs or offers to install alarm systems;
 - b) monitors alarms systems by means of a monitoring device; having an office or service representative in the Cornwall area;
 - c) repairs or maintains alarm systems that are installed on the property of another;
 - j) **“Panic Alarm”** means an alarm (hold-up alarm or a duress alarm) is an electronic device or button which, when manually engaged, transmits an alert of an emergency situation in which a threat to a person exists.



CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023

- k) **“Valid Alarm”** means an alarm signal activated when someone who is not authorized to enter a premise has breached any barriers in place that are intended to prohibit entry.
- l) **“False Alarm”** means an alarm that prompts a police response to a premise where an emergency or criminal offence does not exist.
- m) **“Verified Alarm”** means confirmation that an apparent criminal offence has been or is taking place, as determined by a key holder, witness, security guard, alarm agency employee, or real time monitor.
- n) **“Verified Burglar Alarm”** means confirmation that an unlawful entry has taken, or is taking place, as determined by a key holder, witness, security guard, alarm agency employee or real time video monitoring.
- o) **“Multiple Activations Points”** means when more than one point of the alarm system are activated simultaneously or in a logical sequence.
- p) **“Panic Alarm Response”** means that the CPS shall provide immediate response to panic/hold-up/duress alarms when there is reason to believe that a crime is in progress or an emergency exists. Verification of a panic alarm is not required as the safety of the community is paramount. It is the responsibility of the alarm agency or monitoring service to notify the Communications Center that a panic alarm has been engaged.

ADMINISTRATION

- 2. The Chief of Police shall be responsible for the administration and enforcement of this by-law.
- 3. The Chief of Police may from time to time prescribe the form and content of any approval, certificate, form, policy, procedure or other document in relation to the administration of this by-law and may amend or revise the form and content as required.
- 4. The Chief of Police may issue any approval or certificate under this by-law as well as any amendments thereto or cancellations, suspensions or terminations thereof, on behalf of the Police Service.
- 5. The Chief of Police may assign duties or delegate tasks under this by-law as necessary.

PROHIBITIONS

- 6. No person shall use, maintain or install, or permit the use, maintenance or installation of any alarm system utilizing an automatic dialing device which dials any telephone number assigned to the Cornwall Police Service.
- 7. No alarm user or alarm agency shall own, install, sell, operate or maintain an alarm system that issues an outside audible alarm for more than five (5) minutes.



CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023

8. No outside audible alarms can be operational for structures over 2,000 square feet.

ALARM AGENCY REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

9. Every alarm agency that may request that Police respond to an alarm incident in the City of Cornwall shall register that alarm agency with the Police Service.

Every application for registration shall contain, at minimum, the following;

- (a) The name, address and phone number of the alarm agency responsible for monitoring the alarm system;
 - (b) The name, phone number, and email address of a contact person at the alarm agency responsible for monitoring the alarm system;
 - (c) Payment of the applicable registration fee outlined in Schedule "A".
10. Every alarm agency that obtains a registration shall ensure that the information provided to CPS is accurate and shall notify the Alarm Administrator forthwith, in writing, of any changes in the information.
 11. The fee to register an alarm agency as provided in Schedule "A" of this by-law is due upon receipt of the registration and annually thereafter on anniversary dates.
 12. Upon receipt of the registration and payment of the registration fee, the Alarm Administrator shall cause the alarm agency to be entered on CPS' alarm database.
 13. A registration shall be issued in the name of the alarm agency. A registration shall not be assigned or transferred without the written consent of the Alarm Administrator.

ALARM AGENCY PROCEDURE

14. Every alarm agency that request that Police respond to an alarm incident in the City of Cornwall are required to adhere to the terms and conditions of this bylaw. Alarm agencies will provide at minimum, the following;
 - (a) The correct business or residential address for the requested call for service
 - (b) The correct business or residence owner contact information.
 - (c) Up to date key holder information
 - (d) Alarm agency customer number or account number
 - (e) The name, address and phone number of the alarm agency responsible for monitoring the alarm system;
 - (f) The name, phone number, and email address of a contact person at the alarm agency responsible for monitoring the alarm system;
15. Every alarm agency shall ensure that the information provided to the Cornwall Police Service is accurate and shall notify the Alarm Administrator forthwith, in writing, of any changes in the information.
16. The fee for false alarm(s) as provided in Schedule "A" of this by-law are due upon receipt of invoice from Cornwall Police Service.



CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023

17. Any false statement of a material fact made by a representative of an alarm agency for the purpose of police response shall be sufficient cause for refusal, cancellation or suspension of service.

DUTIES OF ALARM AGENCIES

18. The alarm agency shall provide instructions to each of its alarm users in the proper use and operation of their alarm systems. Such instructions will specifically include all instructions necessary to turn the alarm system on and off and to avoid false alarms.
19. At the time of the installation of an alarm system, the responsible alarm agency shall review with the alarm user the current best practice that is recommended by the Alarm Industry business community.
20. An alarm agency that purchases alarm system accounts from another person or alarm agency shall notify the Alarm Administrator and/or Cornwall Police Service of such purchase and provide details as may be reasonably requested by the Alarm Administrator.
21. An alarm agency shall:
 - (a) Perform verification of every alarm signal, except a duress, panic, holdup, before initiating an alarm incident;
 - (b) Communicate alarm incidents to the CPS in a manner and form determined by the Communications Center and/or Alarm Administrator;
 - (c) Communicate cancellations to the CPS in a manner and form determined by the Communications Center and/or Alarm Administrator;
 - (d) Ensure alarm users of alarm systems equipped with a duress, holdup or panic alarms are given adequate training as to the proper use of the duress, holdup or panic alarms;
 - (e) Communicate available information about the location of all alarm signals related to the alarm incident;
 - (f) Communicate nature of the alarm signal to the CPS including whether it is a bona fide emergency, panic, duress, silent, audible, interior or perimeter alarm.

VERIFIED ALARM RESPONSE PROGRAM

22. **The Verified Alarm Response Program is designed to reduce the number of false alarm calls attended by the CPS. Members will only be dispatched when alarms meet one or more of the verification criteria.**

A. Verification of Alarms

It is the responsibility of the alarm or monitoring agency to verify the legitimacy of an alarm. Verification of alarms must occur prior to notifying the CPS. In situations where the alarm agency or monitoring agency cannot verify the legitimacy of an alarm, the CPS shall not respond.



CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023

1) Prior to contacting the CPS, the alarm agency or monitoring service must verify the alarm using at least one of the following criteria:

- (a) Audio sensors that provide the alarm agency or monitoring service with the ability to confirm criminal activity by the sounds detected within the premise;
- (b) A video system that provides the alarm agency or monitoring service with the ability to confirm criminal activity through visual images;
- (c) Confirmation made by an owner, key holder, an alternate response agency, or a witness on scene who can confirm the existence of a suspected criminal act; or
- (d) Multiple activation points and the alarm agency or monitoring system determines the manner or sequence of activation indicates that suspected criminal activity is, or has taken place

2) The CPS shall provide immediate response to panic/hold-up/duress alarms when there is reason to believe that a crime is in progress or an emergency exists. Verification of a panic alarm is not required as the safety of the community is paramount. It is the responsibility of the alarm agency or monitoring service to notify the Communications Center that a panic alarm has been engaged.

3) The CPS may accept a call for service when the information provided is sufficient evidence that a criminal activity is occurring/has taken place or there is imminent threat to personal safety.

PENALTY AND ENFORCEMENT

23. Any alarm agency or alarm user who contravenes Sections 6, 7 or 8 (Prohibitions Section) of this By- Law, is guilty of an offence and is liable, upon conviction, to a fine not exceeding two thousand (\$2,000.00) dollars, exclusive of costs, for each offence, recoverable under the Provincial Offences Act.

FALSE ALARM REDUCTION

24. Where the Cornwall Police Service is required to attend at a building, structure or premises as a result of an Alarm Incident that is a false alarm, the following shall apply:

- False Alarm Dispatch- \$150.00 (per occurrence)

25. The false alarm fee outlined in paragraph 24 will be invoiced to the registered Monitoring and/or Alarm Agency.

- a) All appeals must be made within 30 days from response to the alarm agency in question. Appeals must be made to the office of the Inspector of Field Operations.
- b) Where any fee pursuant to paragraph 24 remains unpaid for sixty (60) days or more, the Chief of Police shall forthwith, by forwarding a registered letter, revoke service to the



**CORNWALL POLICE SERVICES BOARD
FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023**

monitoring or alarm agency.

- c) This By-Law is not to be construed at any time in such a fashion as to hold the Cornwall Police Service or its officers liable for failing to ensure that persons comply with the provisions of this By-Law.

26. The Cornwall Police Services Board By-Law 001, 2000 is hereby repealed.

27. This By-Law shall come into force and take effect on May 1, 2023.

DATED AT CORNWALL, this 6th day of April, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michel Payette".

Signed Michel Payette
CHAIR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diahe Brown".

Signed Diahe Brown
SECRETARY



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FALSE ALARM REDUCTION BY-LAW NO. 1, 2023**

SCHEDULE "A" FEE SCHEDULE

ALARM AGENCY REGISTRATION FEE

Yearly Fee: \$100.00

FALSE ALARM

Police attendance to false alarm \$150.00

Police dispatched (cancelled prior to arrival) \$150.00