



Tacoma Municipal Code 6B.40 False Alarm Fees

Finance Department – Tax & License Division
Government Performance and Finance
Committee Meeting
October 15, 2024



1

OVERVIEW



- Increase False Alarm Fee
- Add option for No Response by police after five false alarms (excluding hold-up, robbery, panic)
- Enhance monitoring company requirements to verify need for police response

2

2

OVERVIEW



- Amendments intended to:
 - Decrease the number of false alarm calls
 - Focus on locations that generate a higher number of false alarms

3

3

BACKGROUND




2003 - Alarm License and False Alarm Fees established

- False alarm calls were close to 12,000
- False Alarm Fee set at \$60

2012 – False Alarm fee increased to \$100

4

4




ISSUE

- False Alarms have decreased by 88% since 2003
- Significant number of locations generating multiple false alarms
- Over 50% of false alarms triggered by 25% of locations

5

5



ISSUE

# of False Alarms in 2023	# of Addresses	Total False Alarms
1	681	681
2	115	230
3	34	102
4	26	104
5	14	70
6	7	42
7 or more	26	272
	903	1501

6

6

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- Increase False Alarm fee
- Create a tiered structure that increases for more than two false alarms in calendar year
- Add option to issue No Response

False Alarm Occurrence	Current	Proposed
1 or 2	\$100	\$115
3 or 4	\$100	\$215
5 or 6	\$100	\$265
More than 6	\$100	\$315

7

7

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- Alarm monitoring company requirements
 - Alarm Confirmation – requires companies to confirm the presence of human(s) and a high probability that a criminal offense is in progress
 - Enhanced Call Confirmation – requires a minimum of two calls to verify alarm is valid
 - Exemption added from the two-call requirement if the alarm is verified through Alarm Confirmation
- Process for monitoring companies to request cancellation of false alarm fee

8

8

ALTERNATIVES



- Adopting a different fee structure for false alarms
- Not increasing the false alarm fee

9

9

OUTREACH



- Tacoma Police Department
- South Sound 911 Dispatch
- Security Integration Life and Safety Association
- The National Monitoring Association
- All licensed Monitored Alarm Companies

10

10

RECOMMENDATIONS



Staff recommends the GPFC forward the amendments to City Council for consideration and approval.

11

11



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12