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|  | <b>GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>   |                             |  |
|   | <b>Response to Alarms</b>               |                             |   |
|   | <b>GENERAL ORDER</b>                    | <b>603.8</b>                |   |
| <b>Effective Date</b>   | <b>06/23/2016</b>                       | <b>81.2.5, 81.2.13</b>      |   |
| <b>Authorized by:</b>   | <b>Mark P. Sroka</b><br>CHIEF OF POLICE | SIGNATURE <i>Mark Sroka</i> | DATE<br><b>06/23/2016</b>   |

**I. DEPARTMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the Department, for officer safety, that at least two officers should respond to adequately cover the scene of all alarm calls for service.

**II. RESPONSE TO ALARMS**

**A. Routine**

1. The response code for alarms is non-emergency, unless specific, credible evidence or information exists that would justify a Priority response (i.e., a 10-Signal alarm).

**B. Bank Alarms**

1. In the event the alarm is a bank alarm, the call taker will call the appropriate district station and advise station personnel of the alarm and its location, and forward the alarm to the dispatcher. Station personnel will call the bank to determine the welfare of the bank's employees, and will request a representative to meet responding officers in front of the building.
2. In the event an alarm company wants to cancel police response to an alarm, the call-taker will ask the alarm company for the ID number of the original call-taker, and if the alarm company can provide it, the call-taker will advise the dispatcher of the cancellation.
  - a. Officers advised to cancel their response to the alarm will terminate their response, unless they are near the scene and wish to proceed in to check the situation.
3. If an officer discovers an open door or other suspicious situation for which the officer feels that canine would be appropriate to assist with checking the building, the officer should request additional officers for the purpose of surrounding the building, and canine (see [General Order 609.1 - Use of Canine](#)).
4. If a representative for the building can respond in a timely fashion,

officers should consider waiting for the representative to respond so that keys can be provided to facilitate entry and to discuss the building's interior layout.

5. If canine is unavailable, or it would be impractical to wait for canine, at least two officers will systematically check the building, and while doing so, they will carry at least their portable radios and flashlights. Prior to entering the building or property, officers will request a restricted air from PSCC
6. After police operations have been concluded, if a building/property representative is not present, officers should attempt to secure the building/property appropriately.
  - a. Officers should consider leaving one of their business cards in a conspicuous location inside the building so that persons affiliated with the building know who they can call if there are any questions.
7. Officers will not call off a responding back-up unit when one is available.

### **III. RESPONSE TO "TEN-SIGNALS"**

#### **A. Priority**

1. A *Ten-Signal* alarm works on the same principle as a bugging device, and is established in a building or other structure, usually because of numerous prior break-ins. The intent of the Signal is to monitor the building or structure after normal business hours to listen for a suspect's entry. The building or structure that is bugged is monitored by station desk clerks. Schools are monitored by Board of Education Security.
2. Officers responding to this type of alarm will respond in accordance with the response code assigned by PSCC or patrol supervisor (see [General Order 603.1 - Response to Calls](#)).
3. Because these types of alarms are generally more accurate, more than two officers will respond, if available, to establish a perimeter while the keys to the facility are brought to the scene.

### **IV. CLEARING ALARMS**

#### **A. By the Dispatcher**

1. Whenever the dispatcher has indicated to responding officers that

they can cancel their response, the dispatcher will enter the appropriate clearance into C.A.D.

**B. By Responding Officers**

1. Using the MCP clearance card, officers will provide appropriate clearances for alarms when police operations at the scene have concluded.

**C. During Severe Weather**

1. Supervisors have the discretion to advise PSCC to clear a certain alarm(s) if the supervisor is reasonably certain that the alarm is directly related to severe weather conditions.

**D. Duplicate Calls**

1. If an officer is assigned an alarm to which police were previously dispatched and cleared during the officer's tour of duty, the officer will advise the patrol supervisor of the alarm and about how many previous times the alarm has been dispatched so that the supervisor can make a decision about continued response.
2. If the supervisor is unavailable, the officer should respond to the alarm, unless s(he) is certain that the alarm's activation is a malfunction, weather-related, or does not require police response.
3. Officers are not authorized to disable, turn off, or otherwise tamper with an alarm that has activated, even if it is disturbing the neighborhood. *In this instance, officers should attempt to contact the alarm company themselves to request alarm company intervention.*