

STOCKTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

BURGLARY ALARMS
SUBJECT

DATE: March 28, 2019

NO: N-2

FROM: CHIEF ERIC JONES

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

INDEX: Alarms
Burglary Alarms
Audible Alarms

I. POLICY

Most alarms will be responded to as a crime in progress. Crimes in progress require an organized, immediate, and efficient response to the area to increase the possibility of a criminal apprehension. However, the preservation of life and property and the prevention of injuries to officers and citizens are as important as the apprehension of criminal offenders.

The "Verified Alarm" requirement described in this policy does not apply to locations owned and operated by the City of Stockton. As representatives/employees of the City of Stockton, Officers will be dispatched to burglary alarms at city-owned locations and conduct alarm verification themselves.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Verified Alarm: On-site verification by a responder or alarm company central monitoring station to determine whether or not a police response to a burglary alarm is warranted. Verification of a crime or emergency may be accomplished through the use of an audio or video system monitored by the alarm system monitoring company. Witness reports (i.e. private security) of glass breakage, suspicious persons in the area of the alarm, or suspects observed entering the location, etc., should be considered verification of the alarm. There may also be any number of other events or circumstances that indicate the alarm may be valid which include, but are not limited to, recent criminal activity in the area, the absence of prior false alarms or multiple zones activated at the subject location. Examples include:

1. Audio feedback alarms where the monitoring company has heard evidence of possible criminal activity.
2. Video feedback alarms where the monitoring company can see evidence of possible criminal activity.
3. Verification of criminal activity by a guard service, private security, or other person that has responded to the location.
4. Multi-zone activation when there has been alarm activation in two or more separate monitoring zones.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Burglary Alarms

1. Telecommunications Personnel Responsibilities
 - a. Determine the business name, if commercial, and the address.

- b. Check to see if the business or residence is on the non-response list.
 - (1) If the location appears on the alarm non-response list, the Telecommunications Center will contact the alarm agency and advise them the Police Department will not respond to the alarm.
 - (2) If a representative of the business/residence or the alarm agency is on scene and verified that a crime or emergency exists, officers will meet them at the alarm location.
 - c. If a standard audible burglary alarm is being reported, unless there is additional information to indicate a crime has occurred or is occurring (i.e. glass breakage, subjects entering/exiting windows, alarm is reported continuously audible for over 20 minutes in violation of SMC, etc.), the Police Department will not respond.
 - d. Confirm whether “verified alarm” requirements have been met by the alarm monitoring company (see above Definition). If the alarm company or monitoring station have advised Telecommunications personnel that two or more responders were contacted (noted in SMC 8.44.190 as Enhanced Call Verification) and request police response, until there is actual verification of a crime or emergency (as noted in the above Definition), a unit will not be dispatched.
 - e. When the Telecommunications personnel determines the above “verified alarm” conditions have been satisfied and the location warrants a police response, necessary field units will be dispatched to cover the alarm location. “Verified alarms” will remain Priority 1 calls. The police response will be that necessary for the circumstances.
 - (1) Residential audible alarms that are panic alarms, robbery alarms, etc., will remain classified as Priority 1 calls. The police response will be that necessary for the circumstances.
 - (2) All dispatched alarms will be broadcast via radio, by Telecommunications personnel, noting the alarm type and location.
 - f. If the information received does not meet the verification criteria, the Telecommunications personnel will determine, if possible, whether or not a responsible is responding to the scene. The call will be entered as a “933-990 Possible Burglary-Be on the Lookout (B.O.L.)” with as much information on the responder as possible included in the call. This information will then be broadcast via radio and/or Mobile Digital Computer by Telecommunications personnel. The purpose of the B.O.L. of unverified alarms is to make officers aware of the activation of an alarm in their assigned area. Officers may, at their discretion, respond to the alarm if time permits.
 - g. In the case of a burglary series, a Division Commander has the discretion to authorize officers respond to non-verified alarms in specified areas and may upgrade the priority of burglary alarms for specified periods of time.
2. Responding Units Responsibility When Dispatched
- a. Units will respond immediately. The officers may respond Code 3 if there is a burglary in progress or the responding officer is a considerable distance away, and circumstances suggest there may be a burglary in progress.

- b. Officers will check the exterior of the alarm location thoroughly.
- c. After Telecommunications personnel have advised the alarm agency the building appears secure, if not already on scene, officers will wait for a maximum of 20 minutes for a responsible party to arrive and assist in a thorough search of the building. Lack of response by a representative will be cause for the officer to secure.

3. Units Responding to B.O.L. Broadcast

Officers should pay particular attention to unverified alarms where the B.O.L. indicates that a responder for the location will be responding. Further, officers should consider their knowledge of the history of false alarms at the location, the current patterns of burglaries in the area, and other information they are aware of when determining whether to respond.

B. Outside Audible Alarms

1. Telecommunications Personnel Duties

- a. Determine the address and business name, if applicable.
- b. Ascertain if the alarm is on the non-response list.
- c. If a standard audible burglary alarm is being reported, unless there is additional information to indicate a crime has occurred or is occurring (i.e. glass breakage, subjects entering/exiting windows, alarm is reported continuously audible for over 20 minutes in violation of SMC, etc.), the Police Department will not respond.
- d. Usually, on audible alarms, a citizen makes the call to the Telecommunications Center. If the citizen is not positive of the location, and it appears a crime has occurred or is occurring, Telecommunications personnel will dispatch a unit to the vicinity.

2. Responding Officers' Duties

- a. If dispatched, determine the exact location of the audible alarm, and notify Telecommunications personnel of the business name, if any, and the address.
- b. Officers will inspect the building in an attempt to determine the cause of the alarm, and advise Telecommunications personnel of the results.
- c. Officers will attempt to locate the name or number of a responsible party to contact regarding the alarm.
 - (1) If contact cannot be made, officers will leave a note requesting the business/residence owner contact the Stockton Police Department's Alarm Coordinator with response information by telephone or mail.

C. Burglary in Progress or Person Inside Building Alarm

1. Telecommunications Personnel Responsibilities

- a. Classify the call as a Priority 1 call and dispatch sufficient units to secure the building.

- b. Dispatch the units on all channels, advising any other responding units to utilize the assigned channel.
 - (1) Dispatch the primary information.
 - (2) Notify a supervisor.
- c. Plainclothes officers (who will display their badges on the outside of their clothing) will normally be used to secure the exterior of the building only. The Telecommunications personnel will advise when plainclothes officers are on scene.
- d. A signal 900 will only be initiated when requested by a unit on scene. Each unit will give their location to Telecommunications personnel upon their arrival.

2. Responding Units' Responsibilities

- a. Field units should advise Telecommunications personnel of their location if they are a long distance from the alarm. Field units close to the alarm, but not dispatched, should advise Telecommunications personnel of their location, if they are able to respond.
- b. The first unit to arrive should generally check the front first, followed by a check of the entire building to determine whether there is an obvious point of entry.
 - (1) Units will advise Telecommunication personnel of their location when taking a post.
 - (2) Units will secure the premises and wait for the supervisor to arrive. If a supervisor is not en route, the first officer on scene will generally be in charge of the building search.
 - (3) Plainclothes officers, if available, will generally cover the exterior exits of a building. If plainclothes officers are involved in a search, they will wear their badges, outwardly visible, either pinned to their front, upper body or on a chain around their neck in plain view.
 - (4) If canine units are to be used, officers should not enter the building until the canine handler and his/her animal arrive and determine how the search is to be conducted.
 - (5) If an alarm appears false, Telecommunications personnel should be advised immediately so they can clear the radio channel and advise units that may be patrolling the vicinity.
 - (6) If persons are apprehended, Telecommunications personnel should be advised immediately.

3. Clearing from Alarms

- a. The field units assigned to handle an alarm call will advise Telecommunications personnel of the alarm code and one of the following dispositions:
 - (1) A (Good Alarm - Arrest Made)
 - (2) G (Good Alarm - No Arrest)
 - (3) E (Equipment Failure)
 - (4) F (Employee Error)
 - (5) U (Unable to Determine Cause of Alarm)