



## Legislation Details (With Text)

**File #:** 21-0050      **Version:** 0      **Name:** Burglar Alarms Registration and Regulation - False Alarms  
**Type:** Ordinance      **Status:** Enacted  
**File created:** 3/22/2021      **In control:** Baltimore City Council  
**On agenda:**      **Final action:** 8/12/2022  
**Enactment date:**      **Enactment #:** 22-161

**Title:** Burglar Alarms Registration and Regulation - False Alarms  
 For the purpose of revising the fees assessed to alarm system users for repeated false alarms; altering the number of false alarms within year that will result in the placement of the premises into a no-response status; requiring that alarm system monitors make certain additional attempts to verify the need for a police response; making certain stylistic changes; and providing for a special effective date.

**Sponsors:** City Council President (Administration), John Bullock, Sharon Green Middleton

**Indexes:** Alarms, Burglar, False Alarms

**Code sections:**

**Attachments:** 1. 21-0050~1st Reader, 2. Fire 21-0050, 3. DHCD 21-0050, 4. Law 21-0050, 5. BPD 21-0050, 6. Finance 21-0050, 7. Hearing Minutes - 21-0050, 8. PSGO - Hearing Notes - 21-0050, 9. Hearing Agenda 21-0050 (2), 10. Hearing Minutes - 21-0050 (2), 11. PSGO - Hearing Notes - 21-0050 (2), 12. Meeting Agenda - 21-0050 (3), 13. Meeting Minutes - 21-0050 (2), 14. PSGO - Hearing Notes - 21-0050 (3), 15. 21-0050~3rd Reader, 16. 21-0050 Signed, 17. Completed Ordinance 21-0050

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
8/15/2022	0	Mayor	Signed by Mayor	
6/27/2022	0	Baltimore City Council	Approved and Sent to the Mayor	
6/21/2022	0	Baltimore City Council	3rd Reader, for final passage	
6/21/2022	0	Public Safety and Government Operations	Recommended Favorably	
6/15/2022	0	Public Safety and Government Operations	Recommended Favorably	Pass
6/13/2022	0	Public Safety and Government Operations	Worksession	
5/4/2021	0	Public Safety and Government Operations	Worksession	
4/5/2021	0	Public Safety and Government Operations	Scheduled for a Public Hearing	
3/25/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Refer to Dept. of Housing and Community Development	
3/25/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Refer to Fire Department	
3/25/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Refer to Office of the Mayor	
3/25/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Refer to Dept. of Finance	
3/25/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Refer to City Solicitor	
3/25/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Refer to Police Department	
3/22/2021	0	Baltimore City Council	Assigned	

3/22/2021

0

Baltimore City Council

Introduced

**Explanation:** Capitals indicate matter added to existing law.  
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

\* **Warning:** This is an unofficial, introductory copy of the bill.  
The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

## **Introductory\***

### **City of Baltimore Council Bill**

Introduced by: The Council President

At the request of: The Administration (Executive Office of the Mayor)

A Bill Entitled

An Ordinance concerning

#### **Burglar Alarms Registration and Regulation - False Alarms**

For the purpose of revising the fees assessed to alarm system users for repeated false alarms; altering the number of false alarms within year that will result in the placement of the premises into a no-response status; requiring that alarm system monitors make certain additional attempts to verify the need for a police response; making certain stylistic changes; and providing for a special effective date.

By repealing and re-ordaining, with amendments,

Article 19 - Police Ordinances

Sections 8-8, 8-9, 8-11

Baltimore City Code

(Edition 2000)

**Section 1. Be it ordained by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore,** That the Laws of Baltimore City read as follows:

#### **Baltimore City Code**

#### **Article 19. Police Ordinances**

#### **Subtitle 8. Burglar Alarms - Registration and Regulation**

#### **§ 8-8. False alarm fees.**

(a) *User responsible.*

- (1) The user of an alarm system is responsible for payment to the City of the false alarm fees imposed under this section. Failure to pay a false alarm fee or any attendant late fee within 60 days of imposition is a violation of this subtitle.
- (2) For purposes of this section, 2 or more false alarms that occur within the same calendar day as a result of a single event are considered a single false alarm.

(b) *Residential user fee [Fee] schedule.*

After 1 false alarm in any 12-month period, a false alarm fee is imposed on any residential user for each false alarm, based on the following schedule:

**False alarms within  
12-month period**

**Fee**

2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup>	[\$ 50]	\$75	
4 <sup>th</sup>	[ 100]	\$150	
5 <sup>th</sup>	[ 150]	\$250	
6 <sup>th</sup>		200	
7 <sup>th</sup>		250	
8 <sup>th</sup>		300	
9 <sup>th</sup>		350	
10 <sup>th</sup>		400	
11 <sup>th</sup>		450	
12 <sup>th</sup> and above, for residential users			500
12 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> , or 14 <sup>th</sup> , for non-residential users			1,000
15 <sup>th</sup> and above, for non-residential users			2,000]

(c) *Non-Residential user fee schedule.*

After 1 false alarm in any 12-month period, a false alarm fee is imposed on any non-residential user for each false alarm, based on the following schedule:

**False alarms within  
12-month period Fee**

2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$150
4 <sup>th</sup>	\$300
5 <sup>th</sup>	\$500

(d) [(c)] *Waiver.*

(1) The Commissioner must waive 1 false alarm fee if the alarm system user:

- (i) has the alarm system inspected by a registered contractor or monitor; and
- (ii) obtains from the contractor or monitor a certification that the alarm system has been inspected and is functioning properly.

(2) If a false alarm fee is waived under this subsection and the user is subject to a subsequent false alarm fee, that subsequent fee will be assessed as if the previous fee had not been waived.

(e) [(d)] *Late fee.*

(1) The Commissioner may assess a late fee of \$25 for any false alarm fee that is not paid:

- (i) within 30 days of the Commissioner’s notice that the false alarm fee has been imposed; or
- (ii) if a timely appeal has been made, within 30 days of the final decision in that appeal.

(2) If the false alarm or late fee is not paid within 10 business days of the Commissioner’s notice that the late fee has been imposed, the Commissioner may place the user’s alarm system on no-response status, as provided in § 8-9 {“No-response status”} of this subtitle.

(f) [(e)] *Warning of no-response status.*

(1) After a [10<sup>th</sup>] second false alarm within any 12-month period, the Commissioner must send a warning notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the user, with a copy by regular mail to the monitor.

(2) The notice must state that:

(i) a [10<sup>th</sup>] second false alarm has occurred;

(ii) if a total of 5 [more] false alarms occur within the same 12-month period, the user's alarm system will be placed on no-response status, as provided in § 8-9 {"No-response status"} of this subtitle; and

(iii) reinstatement may only be obtained on written application to the Commissioner.

**§ 8-9. No-response status.**

(a) *"No-response status" defined.*

In this section, "no-response status" means that, except for a hold-up alarm or a panic alarm, police will not be dispatched to investigate an alarm signal

(b) *When required.*

(1) An alarm system will be placed on no-response status if, after a warning notice has been sent [in accord with § 8-8(e)] pursuant to § 8-8(f) of this subtitle, the alarm system has had [15] 5 or more false alarms in any 12-month period.

(2) The Commissioner may reinstate the alarm system only if:

(i) the user applies in writing for reinstatement; and

(ii) the Commissioner finds that the alarm system has been repaired, upgraded, or replaced and the cause of the false alarms corrected.

(c) *When authorized.*

The Commissioner may place an alarm system on no-response status if:

(1) the alarm system user has made any false statement of material fact in the user's registration application;

(2) the user's registration is revoked; or

(3) the user fails to pay timely any fee imposed under § 8-8 {"False alarm fees"} of this subtitle.

**§ 8-11. Verification of alarm signal.**

(a) *Scope.*

This section does not apply to a hold-up alarm or panic alarm.

(b) *Monitor to attempt to verify.*

(1) *In general.*

Before requesting a police response to an alarm signal, a monitor must attempt to contact the alarm system site or user, by telephone, electronically, or visually, to verify the need for a police response.

(2) *Second attempt required.*

For the purpose of this section, verification shall require, at a minimum, that a second attempt be made to a different number if the first attempt fails to reach an alarm user or an individual at the alarm system site who can properly identify themselves to determine whether an alarm signal is valid before requesting a police response.

**Section 2. And be it further ordained,** That the catchlines contained in this Ordinance are not law and may not be considered to have been enacted as a part of this or any prior Ordinance.

**Section 3. And be it further ordained,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the 120<sup>th</sup> day after the date it is enacted.