

# UW Whitewater Police



## Alarm Response

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Special Instructions:			
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### I. Purpose

The purpose of this General Order is to establish a response procedure for Fire, Burglar and Hold Up Alarms.

### II. Definitions

None.

### III. Policy

It is the policy of the UW-Whitewater Police Department (UWWPD) that Officers will respond to all activated fire/burglar/hold-up/panic alarms on campus, or in university owned/controlled buildings. Officers will evaluate the circumstances of the alarm and respond appropriately, resetting the alarm panel at the end of the event if necessary.

### IV. Procedure

#### A. Fire Alarms

1. Officers shall respond to all activated fire alarms on campus, or in university owned/controlled buildings.
2. Officer(s), upon arrival, shall check the fire alarm panel for the building to determine the fire alarm activated and its location. They shall also ensure that occupants of the building are evacuating the building.
3. In the absence of visible flames, or the building being filled with smoke, the officer(s) shall the location of the activated fire alarm.
4. If the officer(s) locates no visible flame, or smoke, in the area of the fire alarm, or is able to determine the source of the fire alarm activation and it no longer presents a hazard, the officer(s) may reset the fire alarm panel, prior to the arrival of the fire department, and allow persons to reenter the building.
5. If the officer(s) reset the fire alarm panel prior to the fire department arriving, the officer(s) will remain at the fire alarm panel to provide the fire department with the nature of the fire alarm, the alarm head number, and its location.
6. If, upon arrival of the officer(s), there are visible flames and/or the building is filled with smoke, the officer shall:

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- a. Ensure evacuation of the building is taking place.
  - b. Determine if those evacuated need to be directed to a place of shelter.
  - c. Attempt to ascertain all person have evacuated the building, or if there are persons trapped at a certain location within the building.
  - d. Try to ascertain how and where the fire originated
  - e. Call the on-call supervisor, as time allows, if a supervisor is not present.
  - f. Assist the fire department as needed, under the direction of the fire chief and his/her designee.
- B. Burglar Alarms/ Hold-Up Alarms/ Panic Alarms
1. Upon receipt of a report of a burglar/hold-up/panic alarm, a minimum of two officers will respond to the scene when available. Mutual Aid from another agency should be requested if a single officer is working. It will be the individual officer's discretion if waiting for the mutual aid officer is the best course of action or immediacy of response is best. The mutual aid officer can always be called off if circumstances change on arrival to the scene.
  2. Financial institutions and other offices who handle money, that have hold up alarms, present the potential for officers to arrive on scene with suspects and citizens in the building/office. To prevent a potential hostage situation, officers should respond to the immediate area without use of emergency lights or siren and covertly take up positions where they can observe the exits from the building/office without being seen.
  3. Officers responding to alarms shall use radio communications to coordinate their arrival and positioning when responding to an alarm.
  4. The first officer arriving on scene of an alarm shall be in charge until a supervisor arrives. The officer in charge of the scene shall notify dispatch when all assigned officers are in position.
  5. When the assigned officers are in position and it has been observed that it appears normal business is occurring, a tactical entry should be made.
    - a. If a financial institution is involved, a dispatcher shall telephone the business and advise that the department has received an alarm.
    - b. If the employee contacted indicates the alarm is false, the dispatcher will gain the name and description of one employee and they shall be directed to meet a responding officer outside the business, at a specific location, and approach officers using the prearranged signal.
    - c. Officers shall accompany the employee into the building/office in order to verify the situation and shall notify Dispatch once the verification is complete.
  6. Available officers not assigned to the alarm response should position themselves along possible escape routes and shall maintain radio silence unless an emergency exists.
  7. If suspects have fled the scene prior to the arrival of officers, officers shall secure the building/office, obtain descriptions of suspects and vehicles, direction of escape,

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and transmit this information to officers in the field. The officer in charge of the scene shall also notify a supervisor and request appropriate personal to respond to the scene for assistance.

8. If suspects become trapped in the building, whether or not hostages have been taken, officers should not attempt to enter the building and apprehend the suspects or free the hostages. If the suspects fail to voluntarily leave the building, or if potential or actual hostages are involved, the officer in charge shall make a request for mutual aid to surrounding jurisdictions and will develop a coordinated response to the incident.
9. If suspects are aware of the officers' presence outside, and telephone communications can be established, officers may attempt to talk the suspects into voluntarily exiting the building and surrendering themselves, or giving up their hostages, while awaiting the arrival of the requested mutual aid units.
10. If the alarm is received after business hours and/or the building is believed to not be occupied, responding officers shall assume positions where they can see into the building or office without being seen. Officers will conduct an inspection of the building/office for signs of forced entry. If signs of forced entry exist, officers shall follow procedure for conducting a building search. If the building/office is secure, Dispatch shall be notified and entry will be made to reset the alarm.