

	Houston Independent School District Police Department Directives	DIRECTIVE: 450-002
		EFFECTIVE DATE: July 16, 2013
	SUBJECT: Response to Burglar and Fire Alarms	REVISED DATE: February 24, 2022

PURPOSE

The purpose of this departmental directive is to describe the Houston Independent School District Police Department procedures for responding to burglar alarms and fire alarms. This departmental directive applies to all Houston Independent School District Police Personnel.

BURGLAR ALARM RESPONSE

The primary officer responding to a burglar alarm will respond to the activation unless exigent circumstances exist that would preclude the patrol officer from responding. A minimum of two patrol units are recommended to be dispatched to an alarm activation location if resources permit.

If no entry or unauthorized entry is found to the alarm area, the primary unit and or officers will then advise the communications center of "no sign exterior" and proceed to the key safe location and enter the building. The primary officer will then advise dispatch that they will enter the building for an interior search.

The primary officer will assume all responsibilities when deploying units on location unless otherwise directed by the shift supervisor.

BURGLARY ALARM RESPONSE CODES

HISD Police Patrol Division personnel will comply with HISD Police Directive 460-006 (Response Management Priorities) when responding to burglar alarms.

PRIORITY ONE RESPONSES

Requires an immediate emergency police response. If all district units are busy, the need for units to clear for emergency calls will be broadcast. If no units clear, the nearest unit from another district (or another agency) will be dispatched.

PRIORITY TWO RESPONSES

Requires an immediate police response. If all district units are busy, they need to clear a Priority 2 call broadcast. If no units are immediately clear, the call will be broadcast. If the call involves violence and indicates an imminent threat of injury to a person or damage to property and no units clear after the second broadcast, the nearest unit from another district will be dispatched.

FIRE ALARM GUIDELINES

When responding to fire alarms, the patrol officer's primary responsibility is to check the fire alarm activation physically. If a fire is observed to and or on HISD property,

the patrol officer shall notify the HISD Police Communications Unit of the location and size of the fire. The officer on the scene shall take great care not to enter a location ablaze with fire or smoke damage unless they believe or hear human cries for help coming from the fire location. Officers shall follow the below-listed guidelines regarding fire alarms.

Once a fire is registered by police dispatch or called in by a local fire system detection service, patrol officers responding to the fire alarm shall respond safely. Patrol officers shall comply with the HISD Police Department Vehicular Response Directive when responding to all alarm activations.

Upon arriving at the fire alarm location, the patrol officer shall visually check the location's exterior for any signs of fire, smoke, electrical power lines, loss of pressurized steam from boiler rooms, or anything abnormal before entering the location. If the patrol officer finds any significant or abnormal event at the location, they shall use extreme caution and advise their shift supervisor on the situation.

If a fire or fire damage is observed, the patrol officer on the scene shall immediately inform dispatch and the shift supervisor. The dispatch on duty shall advise the local fire department that shares jurisdiction with the active fire alarm and dispatch additional patrol units for support. The shift supervisor shall make the scene of any fire on HISD property.

Once the local fire department puts out the fire, the primary officer shall secure the fire-damaged area for arson investigators. The shift supervisor shall notify the public utilities, HISD Maintenance-Emergency Call-Out, HISD ALCOM, HISD Police Department Command Staff, and HISD Risk Management.

The primary patrol officer shall stand by arson investigators and generate an HISD report for Investigation-Arson.

FIRE ALARMS-PASSIVE

Passive fire alarms are without any active fire or blaze at a location. Once the patrol officer physically checks a location on a fire alarm and determines no fire has occurred. The responding officer shall;

- a) Determine if any major system malfunction exists at the location. Officers shall visually check and inspect the fire alarm panel(s) at a location and report any system problem.
- b) If a local fire department is still on location, the responding officer shall assist in determining the cause of the alarm.
- c) If the local fire department or the responding officer finds no cause for the fire alarm, the alarm panel should reset itself. If the fire panel does not reset itself, the dispatcher on duty shall notify HISD ALCOM.

- d) Under no circumstances shall the patrol officer disable or turn off a fire alarm panel. Only fire alarm technicians from HISD ALCOM and local fire marshals are authorized to turn off alarms.

FIRE ALARM RESPONSE CODES

HISD Police Patrol Division personnel shall comply with HISD Police Directive "Vehicular Response" when responding to fire alarms.

Code One-High priority

Code One calls are emergency in-progress situations involving a potential threat to life or serious bodily injury.

A Code One response will not be made for a property crime.

The officer responding will use emergency lights and siren unless it is determined that the distraction to other drivers and pedestrians may create additional hazards or that a perpetrator of a crime will be alerted of the officer's approach (s) and flee the scene.

Officers may exceed the speed limit with caution if weather, road, and traffic conditions permit.

Officers will yield at intersections before proceeding through safely.

Officers shall exercise a particularly high caution when responding through residential neighborhoods.

In a Code One response, the safety of both the officer and the public shall be of paramount importance.

Code Two-Medium Priority

Code Two calls are emergencies that do not involve a potential in-progress threat to life or serious bodily injury.

The responding officer will normally respond in silent mode; however, emergency lights and sirens may be used if deemed necessary. The use of lights and sirens will be discontinued if it is determined that the distraction to others and pedestrians may create additional hazards or that a perpetrator of a crime will be alerted of the officer's approach (s) and flee the scene.

All speed limits will be observed through residential neighborhoods.

Officers will yield at all intersections but may proceed through safely, using lights and sirens.

Code Three-Low Priority

Code Three calls do not require the use of emergency equipment.

Officers shall proceed safely and obey all traffic laws.

Approved By 
Pedro Lopez Jr., Chief of Police