

Definitions

An alarm system is a device or series of devices that emits or relays:

- (i) An audible, visual, or electronic alarm signal that is electronically programmed to cause contact with or summon the police; or
- (ii) An audible or visual alarm signal that is intended to elicit a police response at the alarm system user's property when activated.

A contractor is any person engaged in the business of installing, maintaining, altering, inspecting, administering, selling, or servicing alarm systems.

A monitor is any person engaged in the business of monitoring alarm systems for the purpose of reporting an alarm system's activation to the Police Department.

A user is:

- (i) The owner or lessee of any alarm system;
- (ii) The owner or lessee of any dwelling unit, place of business, or other premises that has been equipped with an alarm system; or
- (iii) Any other person that uses an alarm system.

Neither owners of multi-tenant buildings where one tenant has an alarm system, nor governmental entities, are considered users.

Fees and Citations

- Contractors and monitors may be subject to the following fees and citations:
- \$50 annual registration fee
- \$500 citation for:
 - Monitoring an unregistered user
 - Failure to report an unregistered user
 - Failure to provide a customer list upon registration, monthly, or upon request
 - Failure to follow the two-call verification requirement
- Use of automatic dialers to 911
- Fines can double for repeat offenses within a 12 month period



For More Information

This brochure is meant as a general summary, not a comprehensive guide, to all codes, rules, and regulations related to false alarms.

For more information, please see Art. 19, 8-1 of the Baltimore City Code, or visit our website at <https://dhcd.baltimorecity.gov/>

False Alarm Reduction Program
417 E. Fayette Street, Room 100
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
410-396-3575

alarmregistration@baltimorecity.gov

City of Baltimore

Information for Alarm Contractors and Monitors



False Alarm Reduction Program



False Alarm Reduction Program

The False Alarm Reduction Program was created to administer Baltimore's false alarm reduction legislation. The program's main function is to reduce the number of false alarms that police respond to each year.

The False Alarm Reduction Program registers alarm companies and alarm users to prevent excessive false alarms in accordance with the legislation.

False Alarms

False alarms are costly and dangerous because they divert resources from true crime prevention and delay responses to real emergencies. **In 2013, the Baltimore Police and Fire Departments responded to more than 30,000 false alarms.**

To discourage repeated false alarms, Baltimore established a program to:

- Register all contractors, monitors, and users of burglar alarm systems in the City.
- Track the occurrence of alarms.
- Administer a tiered system of false alarm occurrence fines to be imposed on residents and businesses experiencing excessive false alarms.
- Administer fines for violations of registration, payment, and reporting requirements for alarm contractors and monitors.

What Contractors Need to Know

Under Baltimore City Code, contractors must:

- Register with the City, for a \$50 annual fee, before conducting any work related to alarm systems in Baltimore.
- Keep registration current, providing information about any system installed, maintained, altered, inspected, administered, sold, or serviced within 10 days of the undertaking.
- Provide information on the contractor's website and place of business notifying users of their obligation to register their alarm system with the City.
- Inform alarm user of the requirement to register the system with the City and provide them with a printed notice of how to register the alarm.



What Monitors Need to Know

Under Baltimore City Code, monitors must:

- Register with the City for a \$50 annual fee and keep all registration information updated.
- Provide a monthly report of all customers/users being monitored in Baltimore City via email to: alarmregistration@baltimorecity.gov.
- Baltimore City requires two-call verification to the alarm user prior to placing a call to the Police Department.
- Place calls to the police for alarm activation to the dedicated line, **410-396-2677**, NOT to 911. Automatic dialers are prohibited.
- Provide the customer's registration number at the time of the request for a police response. If not available, indicate.
- Notify the users you are monitoring of the requirement to register within 10 days of activation.
- If you become aware of an unregistered user, notify the Baltimore City False Alarm Reduction Program via email at alarmregistration@baltimorecity.gov.