

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-333

**AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING CHAPTER 11, ARTICLE I OF THE
MADISON CITY CODE**

WHEREAS upon the recommendation of the Police Chief, Johnny Gandy, the City Council seeks to **REPEAL** and **REPLACE** provisions of the City Code regarding Security Alarm Systems;

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Madison, Alabama, that the Madison City Code is hereby amended to **REPEAL**, in its entirety, City Code Chapter 11, Article 1, Section 11-1 through Section 11-9.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Madison, Alabama, that the Madison City Code is hereby amended to **REPLACE** and insert the following for City Code Chapter 11, Article 1, Section 11-1 through Section 11-11:

Section 1.

“Sec. 11-1. – Definitions

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Alarm business means the business, by an individual, partnership, corporation, company or other entity licensed by the city, of installing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving, or monitoring an alarm system at an alarm site. This does not include individuals performing work without compensation.

Alarm notification or dispatch request means a notification intended to summon the police either manually or automatically to a particular alarm site. At the discretion of the Systems Security Coordinator (SSC), multiple false alarm notifications in a 24-hour period of time may be counted as one false alarm.

Alarm site means a single fixed premises or location served by an alarm system. Multi-unit buildings or complexes with multiple physical addresses, are considered separate alarm sites, even if served by only one alarm system:

- (1) *Small commercial* includes a non-residential business with the largest building being less than 10,000 square feet.

- (2) *Large commercial* includes a non-residential business with the largest building being 10,000 square feet or more.
- (3) *Residential site* means any single-family premises having a separate street address.

Alarm system means a device or series of devices, including, but not limited to, hard-wired and wireless systems, and systems interconnected with cellular or private radio signals, that emit, transmit or relay a local audible, visual or electronic signal intended to indicate an alarm condition and summon a police emergency response, or that would reasonably be expected to summon police services, including but not limited to self-monitoring alarms. Alarm system does not include:

- (1) An alarm installed on a vehicle or boat unless the vehicle is permanently located at an alarm site;
- (2) An environmental alarm designed to alert only the inhabitants of a location that does not have an external local alarm or contact the owner or service personnel of a location;
- (3) A personal medical alert device unless it communicates directly through an alarm system;
- (4) An alarm that is portable or a temporary self-contained unit, is not permanently affixed or electrically connected to the property, does not have a sound or sight signal that can be heard or seen from the exterior, and is designed only to alert the inhabitants within; or
- (5) An alarm designed and classified as a department of defense system, provided each system has been excluded, in writing, by the SSC.

Alarm user means any person who uses an alarm system to protect his premises or has responsibility for the primary control of an alarm site.

ANSI/SIA Control Panel Standard CP-01 means the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) approved Security Industry Association — SIA CP-01 Control Panel Standard, as may be updated from time to time, that details recommended design features for alarm system control panels and their associated arming and disarming devices to reduce the incidence of false alarms. Control panels built and tested to this standard by Underwriters Laboratories (UL), or other nationally recognized testing organizations, shall be marked to state: "Design evaluated in accordance with SIA CP-01 Control Panel Standard Features for False Alarm Reduction".

Automatic voice dialer means any electrical, electronic, mechanical, or other device capable of being programmed to send a prerecorded voice message, when activated, over a

telephone line, radio or other communication system, to a public safety or emergency services agency requesting dispatch.

Cancellation means the process where an alarm dispatch request is terminated by the monitoring company for an alarm site prior to police arrival at the alarm site.

False alarm means an alarm notification or dispatch request summoning the police department to the location of the alarm activation where the responding officer finds no evidence of any criminal offense, or attempted criminal offense, after having completed an inspection of the interior or exterior of the alarm site. False alarm specifically excludes the following:

- (1) Alarm activation signal caused by extreme weather conditions which cause damage to the premises or alarm system. Such damage must be clearly established and must be verified by the SSC;
- (2) Cancellation of an alarm dispatch request by an alarm business performing the monitoring service prior to the dispatch of police;
- (3) Alarms caused by failure of the alarm equipment, provided that written proof of repair of the alarm equipment is provided to the SSC; or
- (4) Other reasonable, extenuating circumstances as determined by the SSC.

Holdup alarm means an alarm signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a crime in progress.

Inactive status means a permit has been placed in an inactive status after the alarm site exceeded six false alarms within a 12-month period. Alarm permits designated inactive are subject to increased administrative fees, fines and other penalties.

Keypad means a device that allows control of an alarm system by the manual manipulation of pushbuttons, locks, knobs, etc. A keypad may also be designated as an arming station or a command station.

Keyholder means an individual capable of reaching and accessing the alarm site, possessing the code to the alarm system, and/or the authority to approve repairs to the alarm system.

Monitoring means the process by which an alarm business receives signals from alarm systems and relays alarm notification to a public safety dispatcher for the purpose of summoning police response to the alarm site.

One plus duress alarm means a manual activation of a silent alarm signal by entering a code at an arming station that adds one to the last digit of the normal arm/disarm code (e.g. normal code = 1234, one plus duress code 1235).

Panic alarm means an audible and/or visible alarm system signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a life threatening or emergency situation requiring emergency response.

Security Systems Coordinator (SSC) means a person or persons designated by the chief of police to issue alarm permits, review false alarm notifications, assist with registration of security cameras, and/or otherwise administer this ordinance.

Public safety dispatcher means police department dispatcher.

Unregistered alarm site means a site that has not complied with registration requirements set forth in this article.

Verify means an attempt by the alarm business or its representative to determine the validity of an alarm signal by contacting the alarm site or alarm user by at least two different designated telephone numbers or other electronic means before requesting a police dispatch, whether or not actual contact with a person is made, in an attempt to avoid an unnecessary alarm dispatch.

Zones means the capability of an alarm system to separate and report incidents or alarms by area at the alarm site (Example: Zone 1—Front Door Contact; Zone 2—Front Entry Motion Detector).

Sec. 11-2. – Fines and Penalties

(a) An alarm user shall be subject to warnings, fines, and other penalties depending on the number of false alarm notifications (FAN) emitted from an alarm system within a 12-month period based upon the following schedule:

- (1) First and second FAN for registered active sites, no fine, warning only.
- (2) Third and fourth FAN, \$50.00 fine.
- (3) Fifth FAN, \$75.00 fine.
- (4) Sixth or more FAN, \$100.00 fine per occurrence, and the alarm permit shall be placed in inactive status.

- (b) Any alarm user or person operating a nonpermitted or unregistered alarm system shall be subject to a citation and assessment of a \$100.00 fine, in addition to the penalty for the designated FAN occurrence as set forth in subsection (a) of this section.
- (c) Any alarm user of a registered site placed in inactive status shall be subject to penalties as set forth in subsection (a) of this section, plus an additional penalty of \$50.00 for each FAN occurrence.
- (d) A false alarm awareness class may be offered by the SSC. Upon successful completion of the class, an alarm user's first fine may be waived.
- (e) After four unexcused FANS, as evidenced by written or electronic notification from the SSC, an alarm user, apartment owner or property manager (or his representative) must respond to any subsequent alarm notification and make contact with the responding police officer at the alarm site. Failure to comply with the provisions of this subsection shall constitute a violation of this article.
- (f) An alarm business, or any person performing services on behalf of an alarm business, may be subject to a fine of \$50.00 for any FAN caused by such alarm business or person performing services on behalf of the alarm business.
- (g) Failure to renew the alarm permit within 30 days of the anniversary date of the initial registration shall subject the alarm user to a fine, in addition to any administrative fee, in an amount equivalent to the initial registration fee.
- (h) Commercial alarm users and alarm businesses with unpaid fines and penalties are subject to being reported to the City Clerk-Treasurer's office for business license suspension.

Section 11-3 - Violations

- (a) An alarm user, owner of an alarm business, and/or person commits an offense if he/she violates by commission or omission any provision of this article that imposes upon him/her a duty or responsibility, and is subject to the general penalty provisions of Section 1-9 of this Code. Unless otherwise provided, the minimum fine for any violation of this article shall be \$50.00.
- (b) In addition to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, a person commits an offense if he/she operates an alarm business within the corporate limits of the city without having first obtained required city and state licenses.

- (c) In addition to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, a person commits an offense if he/she fails to pay any fines or other penalties assessed by the SSC within 30 days of written or electronic notification.

Section 11-4- Purpose

- (a) The purpose of this article is to encourage security camera system users, security alarm users and alarm businesses to register alarm systems and security camera systems with the city, maintain operational reliability of alarms and security cameras, and limit unnecessary police emergency responses to false alarms.
- (b) This article governs burglary, robbery, panic and holdup alarm systems, and security camera systems; requires permits; establishes fees; provides for penalties and violations; establishes a system of administration; and encourages their proper use.
- (c) Alarm and/or security camera registration is not intended to, nor shall it, create a contract, duty or obligation, either expressed or implied, of response. Any liability and consequential damage resulting from the failure to respond to a notification is hereby disclaimed and governmental immunity as provided by law is retained. By applying for an alarm registration and/or security camera registration, the alarm user acknowledges that public safety response may be limited by uncontrollable factors including, but not limited to, the availability of police, priority of calls, weather, traffic, or other emergency conditions.

Section 11-5- Appeals

- (a) If the SSC assesses a fine or denies the issuance, renewal, or reinstatement of an alarm permit, the SSC shall send written notice of the action and a statement of the right to appeal to the affected party.
- (b) The user, keyholder, or installation, servicing, and/or alarm business may appeal an assessment of a fine or the activation to inactive status of an alarm registration to the SSC by submitting, in writing, the reasons for the appeal within five business days of the date of the notice.

Section 11-6 – Alarm Business

- (a) An alarm business shall maintain all licenses as required by city, state and federal law.
- (b) An alarm business shall not install, service or monitor automatic voice dialers; program alarm systems to send one plus duress alarm; or install a device to activate a holdup or panic alarm with a single action, non-recessed button.

- (c) Upon request, an alarm business shall provide the SSC with a customer list in a format acceptable to the SSC.
- (d) An alarm business shall notify the SSC prior to any routinely scheduled maintenance or testing of an alarm system. The SSC should be notified of any urgent situations resulting in maintenance or testing as soon as possible.
- (e) Alarm installation or servicing companies shall also:
 - (1) Install alarm system detectors to report detailed zone and detector information to the monitoring company and prevent the occurrence of false alarms;
 - (2) Provide written and oral instructions to alarm user on proper use and operation of alarm system;
 - (3) Provide a summary of this ordinance to alarm user if completing initial registration for alarm user;
 - (4) Provide SSC a completed alarm registration for each new installation site if completing initial registration for alarm user; and
 - (5) Use only ANSI/SIA CP-01 listed alarm control panels on all new installations and panel replacements or upgrades.
- (f) Monitoring companies shall also:
 - (1) Communicate dispatch requests to the public safety dispatcher. Said dispatch request shall include alarm site address and permit number; nature of alarm (i.e. burglary, robbery, holdup, panic, audible, silent etc.); specific location of alarm at alarm site (i.e. interior or perimeter, north, south, front, back, etc.); name and estimated time of arrival of alarm user or keyholder; monitoring company operator name, I.D. number, and call-back phone number;
 - (2) Verify alarm activation before requesting police response, except a panic or holdup alarm activation, or where a crime-in progress has been verified by real-time audio/video surveillance of an alarm site by the monitoring company;
 - (3) Communicate cancellations to the public safety dispatcher; and
 - (4) Maintain, and make available to SSC upon request, for a period of at least 24 months following a request for police dispatch to an alarm site, records relating to the dispatch. Records must include the name, address and phone number of the alarm user, the activated alarm system zones or locations, and the time of

the request for police dispatch. Failure to provide requested records within 30 days shall be deemed a violation of this article.

Section 11-7 – Alarm permit required; application; fee; transferability; false statements

- (a) A person commits a violation of this article if he operates or causes to be operated an alarm system without a valid alarm registration and permit issued by the city for each alarm site. The permit required by this article is in addition to any permit which may be required by city for the installation of an alarm system.
- (b) The non-refundable, non-transferable registration or renewal fee for a permit is \$25.00 a year for a residential alarm site; \$35.00 a year for a small commercial alarm site; and \$50.00 a year for a large commercial alarm site. The permit fee shall be submitted to the SSC by the alarm user or the alarm company within 30 days of the alarm installation, activation, possession or anniversary date for annual renewal.
- (c) Each permit application must include the following information:
 - (1) The name of the person who will be the permit holder and be responsible for the proper maintenance and operation of the alarm system and payment of fees assessed under this article;
 - (2) The classification of the alarm site as residential, small commercial or large commercial; and
 - (3) All other information required by the SSC.
- (d) Any false statement of a material matter made by an applicant or alarm business for the purpose of obtaining an alarm permit shall be sufficient cause for refusal to issue a permit and shall constitute a violation of this article.
- (e) An alarm permit shall not be transferred to another person or location.
- (f) An alarm user shall inform the SSC of any change that alters any information listed on the permit application.
- (g) All fees owed by an applicant must be paid before a permit may be issued.

Section 11-8 – Multi-unit Alarm Systems

- (a) If an alarm system is the responsibility of the individual tenant in a multi-unit complex, the tenant is the alarm user and shall be responsible for permit

registration and renewal, and the payment of any fines, fees and other penalties associated therewith.

- (b) If the alarm system in a unit is provided by the multi-unit complex (i.e. an amenity), the complex owner or property manager is the alarm user and shall be responsible for permit registration and renewal, and the payment of any fines, fees and other penalties associated therewith, regardless as to whether the unit is occupied or not.
- (c) The name of the multi-unit complex, building number, and unit number must be provided to register, renew and/or modify the status of alarm permits.
- (d) The owner or property manager of a multi-unit complex shall obtain a separate commercial alarm permit for any alarm system operated in a non-residential area of the multi-unit complex, including but not limited to common tenant buildings and areas, offices, and storage and equipment areas and buildings.
- (e) At the discretion of the SSC, a single alarm registration and permit may be allowed for a commercial non-residential multi-unit building or complex if all units or buildings are served by one alarm system and located at the same physical address.
- (f) If commercial multi-unit buildings or complexes have separate physical addresses or are served by separate alarm systems, a permit shall be required for each alarm site.

Section 11-9 – Proper alarm system operation and maintenance

- (a) An alarm user shall:
 - (1) Maintain the premises and the alarm system in good working order and in a manner that will minimize or eliminate false alarm notifications;
 - (2) Pay all administrative fees and penalties associated with the operation and maintenance of the alarm system;
 - (3) Respond or cause the keyholder to appear at the system's location within one hour, when notified by the city, to deactivate a malfunctioning alarm system, to provide access to the premises, and/or to provide alternative security for the premises;

- (4) Not activate an alarm for any reason other than an occurrence of an event that the alarm system was intended to report;
 - (5) Provide the alarm installation and/or monitoring company with the alarm system permit number; and
 - (6) Notify the SSC within 30 days if the alarm system is disconnected or terminated; the permitted alarm user or business moves; or the alarm site is sold.
- (b) An alarm user shall adjust the mechanism or cause the mechanism to be adjusted so that an alarm audible or visible on the exterior of an alarm site will be actuated for no longer than ten minutes after being activated.
 - (c) An alarm user shall not contract to retain an alarm business that does not comply with the requirements of this article or is not licensed by the city or state.
 - (d) This section applies to all alarm sites, including alarm systems that are self-installed, self-monitored or proprietary.

Section 11-10 – Records

In the interest of public safety, all information submitted through the alarm registration process, records relating to alarm dispatch requests, applications for appeals, and all security camera video recordings and photographs shall be designated confidential, proprietary and safety sensitive and shall be maintained by the police department and not disseminated unless otherwise required by state or federal law.

Section 11-11 – Public Safety Office

- (a) If there is a reason to believe that an alarm system is not being used or maintained in a manner that ensures proper operation and suppresses false alarms, the SSC may require a conference with an alarm user, keyholder and/or the alarm business responsible for maintenance, repair or monitoring of the alarm system to review the circumstances of each false alarm. Failure to attend the required conference shall constitute a violation of this article.
- (b) Upon receipt of registration form and applicable registration fee, the SSC shall register the applicant unless assessed fines or administrative fees have not been paid; or an alarm site permit has been marked inactive and the violation causing such has not been corrected.

- (c) The SSC shall notify the alarm user electronically or in writing of the date and time of the false alarm; the amount of the assessed fine; and the number of false alarms at the site to date.
- (d) The SSC may require an alarm user to modify his alarm system or change how dispatches are requested to conform with this ordinance. Failure to make required modifications shall constitute a violation of this article.

Section 2. All remaining sections of Chapter 11, Article I shall be renumbered as needed to accommodate the repeal and replacement provided by this Ordinance.

Section 3. If any provision of this ordinance, or the application thereof to any person, thing or circumstances, is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect the provisions or application of this Ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and to this end, the provisions of this code and such amendments and statutes are declared to be severable.

Section 4. No other provisions of the City Code are amended by this Ordinance, unless specifically stated and referenced herein.

Section 5. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption and proper publication as required by law.

READ, PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____day of September 2026.

***Maura Wroblewski, Council President
City of Madison, Alabama***

ATTEST:

***Lisa D. Thomas, City Clerk-Treasurer
City of Madison, Alabama***

APPROVED this ____ day of September 2026.

Ranae Bartlett, Mayor
City of Madison, Alabama