

**ORDINANCE NO. 1290**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON, CREATING A NEW SECTION OF THE SNOQUALMIE MUNICIPAL CODE WITHIN TITLE 9, RELATING TO THE MISUSE OF THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Snoqualmie utilizes the Issaquah Police Communications 911 Center as its communication and dispatch center to provide emergency assistance to the residents of the City of Snoqualmie; and

**WHEREAS**, it is potentially a danger and misuse of public resources when individuals call the emergency communication system when no emergency exists, using time and resources of the communication center and Snoqualmie and Issaquah Police; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has determined it is in the best interest of the City to adopt a new section to its criminal code to prohibit misuse of the 911 emergency response system;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED** by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, as follows:

**Section 1.** A new section 9.88 of the Snoqualmie Municipal Code is hereby adopted to read as follows:

Chapter 9.88

Misuse of the 911 Emergency Response System

9.88.010 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is intended to reduce the number of false requests for emergency services or similar misuse of the 911 emergency response system, which occurs within the city and results in the waste of city resources, by providing a criminal penalty for violators, and imposing an administrative fee.

A. A person commits the crime of Misuse of the 911 Emergency Response System if the person knowingly:

1. Makes repeated non-emergency calls, irrespective of the duration of time between the calls, to the Issaquah Police Communications center or Snoqualmie Police non-emergency line for a purpose other than (a) to report a situation that the person reasonably believes requires prompt service in order to preserve human life or property or, (b) to report new information in an active investigation. Repeated calls include, but are not limited to, the repeated reporting of incidents, without providing new information, which have already been reported, repeated requests to speak to specific officers, or the harassment of specific officers using rude, lewd, or threatening language; or
2. Makes an emergency call or calls to the Issaquah Police Communications 911 Center for a purpose other than to report a situation that the person reasonably believes requires prompt service in order to preserve human life or property; or
3. Allows another person to use communications equipment owned, rented, or leased by or under the control of the person to make an emergency call or calls to the Issaquah Police Communications 911 Center for a purpose other than to report a situation that the other person reasonably believes requires prompt service in order to preserve human life or property.

9.88.020 Definition:

- A. "Misuse of the 911 system" is a request for emergency response services when no actual emergency exists, and when the caller does not have a good faith basis to request emergency assistance. This includes, but is not limited to, repeated calls, continuous

calls, and harassing calls to 911 when no emergency exists. This chapter shall not be applicable to mechanical actions of requests for assistance, nor shall it be interpreted to impose liability on any person who makes a good faith request for emergency assistance base on a reasonable, factual basis that an emergency situation exists.

- B. “Person” means and includes any natural person, partnership, joint stock company, or corporation of any character whatsoever.

#### 9.88.030 Penalties.

Unless otherwise provided in this chapter, any person violating any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, be sentenced to a fine not to exceed \$1,000 and/or 90 days in jail.

#### 9.88.040 Imposition of Fees.

In addition to any criminal penalty, the city may impose administrative sanctions up to five hundred dollars per incident at the request of the 911 emergency response agency upon any misuse of the 911 emergency response system.

**Section 2.** This ordinance shall be in full force and effect five days after its passage and publication, as provided by law.

**Section 3.** Severability. If any portion of this ordinance is found to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such finding shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other section of this ordinance.

**Section 4.** Corrections by the City Clerk or Code Reviser. Upon approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk and Code Reviser are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance, including the correction of clerical errors; references to other local, state or federal laws, codes, rules, or regulations, or ordinance numbering and section/subsection numbering.

**PASSED** by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington this \_\_\_\_ day of  
May 2024.

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Katherine Ross, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Deana Dean, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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David Linehan, Interim City Attorney