



BY-LAW NO. 488-2024

**A BY-LAW TO APPROVE THE NO FEE VERIFIED ALARM RESPONSE PROGRAM
FOR POLICE RESPONSE TO FALSE ALARMS**

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 WHEREAS subsection 37 (1) of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1, ("CSPA")* provides that a Board shall provide adequate and effective policing in the area for which it has policing responsibility as required by Section 10 of the CSPA;
- 1.2 AND WHEREAS subsection 38 (2) of the CSPA provides that a Police Service Board may establish policies respecting matters related to the Police Service or the provision of policing;
- 1.3 AND WHEREAS false alarms attract emergency response from the police service;
- 1.4 AND WHEREAS police response to false alarms at institutional, commercial and residential premises results in delay of police response at genuine emergencies and results in a serious loss of police resources;
- 1.5 AND WHEREAS the Board on the recommendation of the Chief of Police has approved the implementation of the Verified Alarm Response Program for Police Response to False Alarms in place of the prior Alarm Response Program providing the imposition of charges in the case of false alarms.

NOW THEREFORE THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA POLICE SERVICE BOARD ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 "*Act*" or "*CSPA*" means the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1*, and amendments thereto;
- 2.2 "*Alarm Company*" means the business, by an individual, partnership, corporation, or other entity of selling, leasing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving, installing or monitoring an alarm system at an alarm site, and includes a monitoring service retained by the Alarm Company for the purpose of monitoring alarms;
- 2.3 "*Alarm System*" means any device which is used for the detection of a criminal act or unauthorized entry into a building, structure or facility and which when activated emits a sound or transmits a signal or message to an alarm business and includes bank automated teller machines;

- 2.4 “Alarm System Owner” means the owner or lessee of a building, structure or facility that has an alarm system;
- 2.5 “Alarm System Registration Number” means the number assigned to an alarm system by the Niagara Regional Police Service;
- 2.6 “Board” means the Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Service Board;
- 2.7 “Chief” means the Chief of the Niagara Regional Police Service;
- 2.8 “Owner” means a person who has any proprietary interest in an alarm business, including but not limited to, partners in a partnership and shareholders in a corporation;
- 2.9 “Police Response” includes any means of answering a call for police service which involves the attendance of a police officer at the scene of an alarm;
- 2.10 “Service” means the Niagara Regional Police Service;
- 2.11 “Verified False Alarm Response Program (VARP)” means the program for police response to alarms described in Schedule A to this By-law.

3. REGISTRATION OF ALARM SYSTEMS

- 3.1 The Chief of Police shall determine the need for registration of Alarm Systems within the Region of Niagara, and upon determining such need for registration, shall implement a procedure which shall include the following requirements.
- 3.2 The Alarm Company, as determined by the Chief of Police, shall register every Alarm System it is responsible for installing and/or monitoring with the Board through the Communications Unit.
- 3.3 The Alarm System Owner is responsible for ensuring the Alarm Company, as determined by the Chief of Police, registers any installed and/or monitored Alarm System in which it has an interest with the Board through the Communications Unit.
- 3.4 The Alarm Company shall notify the Communications Unit, as determined by the Chief of Police, of any cancellations or changes of every Alarm System that it monitors.

4. VERIFIED FALSE ALARM RESPONSE PROGRAM

- 4.1 The Board hereby approves implementation of the VARP Program for police response to alarms as described in Schedule A to this By-law and authorizes the Chief to amend the specific procedures described in Schedule A as required, provided that the intent and effect of the Program remain intact.
- 4.2 The Chief of Police shall develop and implement procedures for the implementation of VARP, including circumstances when the Service will not respond to alarms, including instances of past failures by the alarm company to follow VARP and past false alarms relating to specific addresses.

5. PARTIAL INVALIDITY

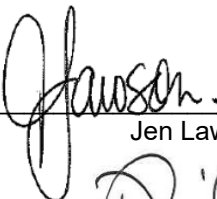
- 5.1 If any term of this By-law or the application thereof shall to any extent be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this By-law and or the application of such term to circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid or unenforceable, shall not be affected thereby and each term of this By-law shall be separately valid and enforceable to the fullest extent permitted by law.

6. IMPLEMENTATION


- 6.1 By-law Nos. 268-2004, 302-2010, 377-2018 and all other By-laws, sections of By-laws and procedural policies of the Board inconsistent with the provisions of this By-law are hereby repealed effective March 31, 2024.
- 6.2 This By-law shall come into force on April 1, 2024.
- 6.3 The short title of this By-law is the Police Response to False Alarms By-law.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 25th day of April, 2024.

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA POLICE SERVICE BOARD



Jen Lawson, Chair



Deb Reid, Executive Director

Attachment (1)

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW NO. 488-2024

**A BY-LAW TO APPROVE THE NO FEE VERIFIED ALARM RESPONSE PROGRAM
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The no fee Verified Alarm Response Program (VARP) provides that an Alarm Company or Monitoring Service must verify an intrusion alarm using at least one of the following criteria prior to requesting police emergency response:

- (a) Audio sensors that provide the Alarm Company or Monitoring Service with the ability to confirm criminal activity by the sounds detected within the premise;
- (b) A video system that provides the Alarm Company or Monitoring Service with the ability to confirm criminal activity through visual images;
- (c) Confirmation made by an Owner, a person to whom the Owner has provided a key, an alternate response agency, or a witness on scene who can confirm the existence of a suspected criminal act; or
- (d) Multiple activation points and the Alarm Company, Monitoring Service or monitoring system determines the manner or sequence of activation indicates that suspected criminal activity is, or has taken place.

The VARP also provides:

- (e) if the Alarm company is reporting a panic/duress or hold-up alarm that emergency response would be initiated without the need for verification, and
- (f) should a member of the public call in an audible alarm with no suspicious circumstances that the incident would be given a low priority and responded to as a noise complaint.