



## Appeal Guidelines

This document provides guidelines for false alarm appeals. The Gwinnett County Code of Ordinances defines a false alarm as, “an alarm dispatch request resulting in the responding officer finding no evidence of a criminal offense or attempted criminal offense after having completed a timely investigation of the alarm site.”

### Who

Appeals may be filed by the alarm user. An alarm user is any person who owns, leases, manages, or otherwise controls a premises (alarm site) directly or indirectly, regardless of whether shared with other persons. Alarm companies and other third parties may not file an appeal on behalf of the alarm user.

### What

An alarm user may appeal a fee or revocation of alarm registration to the alarm administrator.

### When

An appeal must be submitted to the alarm administrator within 15 days of the date on which notice of a fee or alarm revocation is first sent.

### Where and How

Appeals must be submitted in writing (through an Appeal Form) and may be emailed or sent by postal mail.

**Email to:** GwinnettCoGA@alarm-billing.com

**Mail to:** PO Box 745856, Atlanta, GA 30374-5856

Make check payable to “Gwinnett County False Alarm Reduction Program” and include it with your Appeal Form.

If you wish to pay the appeal fee online, please contact us at 833.281.8743 for the charge to be added to your account. Once the charge has been applied, you’ll be able to remit payment with a credit card online.

### Why

The purpose of the alarm ordinance is to encourage proper use and maintenance of alarm systems and to reduce or eliminate false alarms, which unduly divert law enforcement from responding to actual criminal activity.

### Appeal Fees

Number of Cases Being Appealed	Total Appeal Fee
0-4 .....	\$25
5 or more .....	\$50

Submissions that do not include the appeal fee are not considered valid appeals and will not receive a response. The appeal fee will be returned to the alarm user if the appeal is successful, less any convenience/managed service fees associated with online payment as those are non-refundable.

### **What Cannot Be Appealed Through This Process**

Citations, fines, or sentences imposed by the courts. Other requirements outlined in this ordinance.

### **While You Wait**

Your suspension or revocation status remain unchanged after filing an appeal, until the alarm administrator provides a final decision on the appeal. The final determination letter will let you know whether the appeal is upheld (and everything remains unchanged) or if the previous decision is being overturned. You will receive further instructions at that time. The appeal process or final ruling does not excuse you from any court summons.

### **Appeal Determination**

After review by the alarm administrator, the appellant will be notified of the final decision in writing. The decision of the alarm administrator is final.

### **Other Information**

Appeals are not generally granted as a result of the following:

1. Faulty, defective or malfunctioning equipment supplied by an alarm business.
2. Improper installation or maintenance by an alarm business.
3. Improper monitoring by an alarm business.
4. Alarm activations that occur while alarm technicians are repairing or servicing the alarm system.
5. An occurrence where no evidence of criminal activity is present.
6. Mistakes made by private contractors, cleaning crews, visitors, etc.
7. Item(s) within the home or business that move causing motion detectors to activate (e.g., curtains, signs, balloons, etc.).
8. Doors and/or windows that become loose and cause a break in the contacts that activate the alarm system.
9. Caretakers who watch homes or businesses when owners are away and who activate the alarm in error or are not familiar with required codes or passwords.
10. Pets, rodents or wildlife movement in or near the home or business.
11. Alarms caused by apartment management employees.

In the case of items 1 and 2 above, if you suspect the false alarm was due to faulty equipment or improper installation contact your alarm company. In such cases, the system should be inspected and repaired where necessary.

This list is only intended as a guide to assist you in deciding whether to appeal a false alarm or contact your alarm company for discussion. This list is not intended to cover every situation where an appeal may be denied.