

EXECUTIVE ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Subject	Handling False Alarms, Bomb Threats, and Swatting Incidents
Number	EO-24-001
Effective Date	March 14, 2024
Related to	GO-HSC-802.06 (Suspicious Activity Reporting Program) GO-HSC-805.04 (Bomb Threats and Explosive Devices) GO-HSC-805.05 (Barricaded Subjects/Hostage Situations and Other Unusual Incidents)

I. PURPOSE

The practice of "swatting" which involves the intentional reporting of a fabricated critical incident — such as a shooting, hostage situation, or bomb threat — to elicit a substantial emergency response from law enforcement, is a serious and dangerous offense established in [DC Official Code § 22–1319. False alarms and false reports](#). The purpose of this executive order is to outline the procedures when responding, investigating, and documenting emergency calls and potential critical incidents that are later identified as fictitious.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Initial Response

1. Members dispatched to the report of a bomb threat, active shooter, or similar critical incident shall immediately assess the threat level, the veracity of the call, and the potential need for immediate lifesaving action.
2. Once it is determined that there is no need for immediate lifesaving interventions, members shall gather pertinent information regarding the reported threat, including, but not limited to:

Relevant Initial Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Details of the threat (e.g., time, location, nature of the threat)○ Information provided by the 911 caller○ Details of the location and surrounding area○ Location of nearby CCTV○ Knowledge of prior calls to the location

3. A patrol official shall respond to all critical incidents and continue the assessment, ensuring that incident-specific steps are taken and notifications are made as outlined in the relevant incident general orders.
4. If it is determined that the call is fictitious, the on-scene official shall consider the gathered information, decide whether the incident violates DC

Code § 22–1319, and ensure that it is appropriately classified, documented, and reported.

DC Code § 22-1319	
Code	Elements of the Offense
§ 22–1319(a-1) Abuse of 911 by the false reporting of a critical incident (Misdemeanor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suspect willfully or knowingly used the 911 system to make a false or fictitious report or complaint which initiated a response by DC emergency personnel or officials and; • At the time of the call or transmission, the suspect knew the report or complaint was false.
§ 22–1319(b)(1) False Report of a Weapon of Mass Destruction (Misdemeanor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suspect willfully and knowingly made or caused to be made, a false report which initiates a response by DC emergency personnel or officials and; • The report alleges to involve, the delivery, presence, or use of a weapon of mass destruction.
§ 22–1319(b)(2) Give, Transport, Mail, or Send Hoax Weapon of Mass Destruction (Misdemeanor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suspect willfully and knowingly gave, transported, mailed, sent, or caused to be sent, any hoax weapon of mass destruction to another person or place
§ 22–1319(c)(1) False Report of a Weapon of Mass Destruction with Specific Intent (Felony)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suspect willfully and knowingly made or caused to be made, a false report which initiates a response by DC emergency personnel or officials and; • The report alleges to involve, the delivery, presence, or use of a weapon of mass destruction. • Suspects actions were done with the specific intent to intimidate, frighten, extort profit, cause economic damage, panic or civil unrest.
§ 22–1319(c)(2) Placing a Hoax Weapon of Mass Destruction with the Intent to Intimidate (Felony)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suspect willfully and knowingly gave, transported, mailed, sent, or caused to be sent, any hoax weapon of mass destruction to another person or place • Suspects actions were done with the specific intent to intimidate, frighten, extort profit, cause economic damage, panic or civil unrest.

B. Reporting and Documentation

1. Members shall complete an incident or offense report in addition to a Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) (<https://iwatchdc.org>) in response to all

bomb threats or “swatting” calls. in the IWatchDC system prior to the end of the reporting member’s shift.

2. District watch commanders shall note the incident or offense in their PD 150 (Supervisors Tour of Duty Report) and ensure that the Office of Intelligence is emailed the central complaint number (CCN), IWatchDC number, location, classification, and a brief description of the incident.

C. Investigation and Analysis

1. If it is determined that the call meets the elements of an offense, district detectives shall be notified and be responsible for continuing the initial investigation and documentation of investigative actions within RMS.
2. After the initial investigation and response, the Office of Intelligence shall assume responsibility for the investigation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pamela A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pamela A. Smith
Chief of Police