

ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance adding Sections 57.901.11 through 57.901.11.3 to Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to establish a False Fire Alarm Program; amending Sections 57.106.7.1.1 and 57.202 to add a fee provision and new definitions related to a False Fire Alarm Program; and amending Sections 57.901.8.3 through 57.901.8.4 to update provisions related to false fire alarms.

WHEREAS, of the approximately 32,000 fire alarm activations received by the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) each year, approximately 15,000 (or 47%) are "false fire alarms," i.e., fire alarm activations where there was no fire or other life safety emergency at the time of the activation;

WHEREAS, in addition to needlessly expending LAFD resources, these false fire alarms divert vital LAFD resources from actual emergencies;

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles Police Department has a false alarm fee and fine program that has been successful in reducing the number of false burglar alarms from a high of 145,000 activations in 2009 to 43,000 in 2021; and

WHEREAS, implementing a similar fee and fine program for false fire alarms may allow LAFD to recover revenue to offset the expense of deploying unnecessary resources to false fire alarms and may reduce the number of false fire alarms, thus freeing up limited LAFD resources.

NOW, THEREFORE,

**THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. A new Subsection 12 is added to Section 57.106.7.1.1 of Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

12. False Fire Alarm fees, Section 57.901.11.

Sec. 2. The following definitions are added in alphabetical order to Section 57.202 of Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

Fire Alarm System User. The owner of record of property or premises with a Fire Alarm System.

False Fire Alarm. An activation of a Fire Alarm System resulting in a response by the Fire Department where there is neither a fire nor other life safety emergency at the time of the alarm activation, or the Department determines that neither a fire nor other life safety emergency existed at the time of the alarm activation. A False Fire

Alarm does not include the activation of a Fire Alarm System due to violent, uncontrollable acts of nature, e.g., earthquakes, tornados, etc.

Sec. 3. Section 57.901.8.3 is amended in its entirety to read as follows:

SEC. 57.901.8.3. INTENTIONAL FALSE FIRE ALARM.

No person shall willfully and maliciously initiate or cause to initiate a False Fire Alarm.

Sec. 4. Section 57.901.8.4 is amended in its entirety to read as follows:

SEC. 57.901.8.4. PENALTIES AND MINIMUM FINES.

Violation of Section 57.901.8.3 shall be subject to penalties and minimum fines as prescribed in Section 57.110.4 and Table 57.110.4

Sec. 5. A new Section 57.901.11 is added to Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

SEC. 57.901.11. FALSE FIRE ALARM FEES.

Fire Alarm System Users shall pay a False Fire Alarm fee for each False Fire Alarm as defined in Section 57.202. The False Fire Alarm fee shall be in addition to any applicable penalties and fines under Sections 57.901.8.4 or 57.901.11.1.

Sec. 6. A new Section 57.901.11.1 is added to Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

SEC. 57.901.11.1. PENALTY ASSESSMENTS FOR MULTIPLE FALSE FIRE ALARMS.

In addition to the False Fire Alarm fee provided in Section 57.901.11 and any applicable penalties and/or fines under 57.901.8.4, the responsible Fire Alarm System User shall pay a penalty assessment for each additional False Fire Alarm occurring within 365 days of the "first" False Fire Alarm at the same property or premise. The penalty assessment for the first additional False Fire Alarm shall be \$50 and shall increase by \$50 for each additional False Fire Alarm occurring within 365 days of the "first" False Fire Alarm (e.g., \$50 for second *False* Fire Alarm, \$100 for third, \$150 for fourth, etc.).

Sec. 7. A new Section 57.901.11.2 is added to Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

SEC. 57.901.11.2. DETERMINATION AND COLLECTION OF FEES.

The Department shall collect the fees required by this section, established by the most current cost recovery schedule published, as provided by Section 57.106.8 and applicable thereto. Upon payment of said fees the Department shall cause them to be deposited with the City Treasurer.

Sec. 8. A new Section 57.901.11.3 is added to Article 7, Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

SEC. 57.901.11.3. PROCEDURE FOR DISPUTES.

Before the Department imposes any fees or penalty assessments for False Fire Alarms, the Board of Fire Commissioners ("Board") shall adopt rules allowing a Fire Alarm System User to dispute a fee and/or penalty assessment.

A Fire Alarm System User against whom a False Fire Alarm fee and/or a penalty assessment has been imposed may lodge a written dispute regarding such fee and/or assessment with the Board or its designee.


The Board or its designee shall determine whether to waive, rescind, or uphold the fees and/or the penalty assessment. This determination shall be:

1. based on evidence submitted by the Fire Alarm User;
2. made pursuant to the rules and procedures adopted by the Board; and
3. final.

Sec. 9. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and have it published in accordance with Council policy, either in a daily newspaper circulated in the City of Los Angeles or by posting for ten days in three public places in the City of Los Angeles: one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall; one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall East; and one copy on the bulletin board located at the Temple Street entrance to the Los Angeles County Hall of Records.

Approved as to Form and Legality

HYDEE FELDSTEIN SOTO, City Attorney

By 
LINDA N. NGUYEN
Deputy City Attorney

Date 6-20-23

File No. _____

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The Clerk of the City of Los Angeles hereby certifies that the foregoing ordinance was passed by the Council of the City of Los Angeles.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

Ordinance Passed _____

Approved _____