

April 29, 2026

To: Council President Hardin and Members of Council
From: Kate Pishotti, Director, Department of Public Safety
CC: City Auditor's Office; City Attorney's Office
Subject: Write Off of Uncollectible Alarm Fee Accounts Receivable

As you are likely aware, the Department of Public Safety, Division of Support Services formerly charged alarm fees, such as fees for the registration of alarm systems and false alarm fees. The Division stopped billing for these fees effective January 27, 2023. Effective June 1, 2024, the City of Columbus no longer requires registration of alarm systems and has suspended all aspects of the False Alarm program. Alarm users in the City of Columbus no longer have any requirements to register their systems and will not be charged for false alarms.

While the alarm program was in effect, fees were tracked in the False Alarm Management System (FAMS). However, access to that system was discontinued in August 2024. Although we have a download of raw data from that system, there are data quality issues, such as duplication of invoices. Due to those issues and significant employee turnover in the Division of Support Services Fiscal Office in recent years, we are unable to accurately ascertain the full value of outstanding alarms accounts receivable. However, the last known amount of uncollectible debt for unpaid alarm fees as reported to the City Auditor's Office is \$968,533.00. Once the alarm program shut down, no further efforts were made to collect on this debt. No payments have been received since January 2024. Therefore, we are requesting approval to deem this amount uncollectible and to write it off.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or to our Fiscal Officer, Trisha Wentzel.

Thank you for your consideration,



Kate McSweeney-Pishotti
Director, Public Safety

KMP/tlw

