

# **City of Houston Convenience Store Ordinance Guidebook**

This packet is being created to provide a basic guideline to staying in compliance with the City of Houston convenience store ordinance.

**Disclaimer:**

This packet covers general documents that are required to be filled out and kept on site as well as documents required to be filled out and filed with City of Houston. Please check the Houston Police Departments website for full understanding of convenience store ordinance as well as updates and changes made to the ordinance.

Last update: 3/25/2014

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# **1. Convenience Store Ordinance Key Points**

## Key components of the Convenience Store Ordinance

The Municipal Ordinance includes, but is not limited to:

**1.) (sec. 28-402) Registration of Convenience Store**

All convenience stores located in the City of Houston are required by ordinance to register with the Houston police Department.

**2.) (sec. 28-403) Employee, Manager, and Supervisor training**

All employees, managers, and supervisors are required to view the Training Video provided by the Police Department. The packet that all stores will receive once they register, contains the internet link to the video.

**3.) (sec. 28-404) Trespass Affidavit**

All Convenience Stores must have a Trespass Affidavit on file with the Houston Police Department. You can submit the original Notarized Trespass Affidavit form and Complainant Data Sheet to your nearest storefront or substation for filing. A copy of the affidavit only must be posted at the Convenience Store in a place always accessible to public view. You may call the Convenience Store Registration Unit if you have any questions concerning Trespass Affidavit.

**4.) (sec. 28-405) Security Signs and Height Strip**

All Convenience Stores must have "No Loitering" and "No Trespassing" signs in at least two inch lettering or larger, in English and Spanish, posted on the front, sides, and rear of the store. Convenience Stores must also have height strips posted at all public exits.

**5.) (sec. 28-406) Unobstructed Visibility**

All Convenience Stores shall maintain an unobstructed line of sight allowing a clear view of and from the cash register and sales area. Windows and doors must be clear of all items that would obstruct a clear view from three feet above the ground to at least six feet above the ground.

**6.) (sec. 28-407) Alarm System**

All Convenience Stores must have a Silent Panic or Hold-up Alarm System with a valid alarm permit. The Alarm must have at least one panic button hidden from the view of the customers, but within reach of the cash register. All Convenience Stores must have signs or decals posted at entrances and exits indication that such a system is in use.

**7.) (sec. 28-408) Drop Safe**

All Convenience Stores shall have a drop safe on the premises bolted to the floor. A convenience store shall have a cash accountability policy and shall have signs posted stating that employees cannot open the safe and that the employees have minimum cash on hand.

**8.) (sec. 28-409) Surveillance Camera System**

A convenience store shall have a minimum of two surveillance cameras which are color, digital, and high-resolution. One camera viewing the counter/register area and the other camera viewing the main entrance/exit area with date and time the recording. The entrance/exit area camera shall be placed to provide a clear and identifiable full frame of an individual's face. The cameras shall be operated at all times. A library shall be kept of the recordings for not less than 30 days. Signs must be posted at all public doorways indicating that surveillance cameras are in use.

**Reference:** [http://www.houstontx.gov/police/convenience\\_store/](http://www.houstontx.gov/police/convenience_store/)

Published By: City of Houston, convenience store task force

## **2. Registration requirements and convenience store safety video**

All convenience stores in City of Houston are required to register their stores with Houston Police Department, convenience task force.

First time registration can be done through Houston Police Department website. (link below)

[http://www.houstontx.gov/police/convenience\\_store/registration\\_form2012a.htm](http://www.houstontx.gov/police/convenience_store/registration_form2012a.htm)

Any ownership changes or information update must also be updated on Houston Police Department website. (link below)

[http://www.houstontx.gov/police/convenience\\_store/registration\\_form2012b.htm](http://www.houstontx.gov/police/convenience_store/registration_form2012b.htm)

All stores and their staff must view the convenience store safety video, which is available in multiple languages. (link below)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6330D7669B17715C>

There requirements must be completed to meet Houston Police Department, convenience store task force requirements.

**TRESPASS AFFIDAVIT**  
**(BUSINESS OR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY)**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, I am the \_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name) (Owner/ Agent of the Owner)

of the property located at \_\_\_\_\_, Houston, Texas \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address) (Zip Code)

I hereby request and authorize the HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT to enter the premises at said location and, in my absence, to enforce all applicable trespass laws on my behalf in regard to the above referenced property. I further request that on my behalf, the HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT request all persons who are not patrons in the normal course of business to immediately leave the property or be arrested pursuant to Section 30.05 of the Texas Penal Code. "NO TRESPASSING" signs have been posted throughout the property.

In addition, I, or my designee, will cooperate fully in the prosecution of anyone who is arrested for a violation of any local or state law.

My business address is \_\_\_\_\_ My business phone number  
is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Subscribed and sworn to before me on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ to  
certify which witness my hand and seal of office

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC IN AND FOR  
THE STATE OF TEXAS

# Houston Police Department

## Complainant Data Sheet

(For use in filing charges on suspects arrested for criminal trespass)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Race: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's ID/TDL: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's 24 hour Phone Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

The complainant will be the person subpoenaed for court in the case of a trial.

Complainants may use a business address and phone number to satisfy the District Attorney's Office requirement for this information.

Attach this form to the signed and notarized copy of the trespass affidavit.

This form is confidential and will not be released to anyone except the District Attorney's Office. This form will be kept on file with the affidavit at the division responsible for that location.

# Convenience Store Training Log

Convenience Store Name:

Convenience Store Address:

	Employee Name	Date of Training	Time	Employee Signature
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## Cash Accountability Policy

Store Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1. The store will maintain in the "Cash Accountability Policy" during hours of operation between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  
2. The store will maintain immediate cash, to support check cashing and other money service business, NOT to exceed \_\_\_\_\_ dollars. This amount includes all cash tills, but NOT the safe.
  
3. The store will make cash drops in situations where total dollar amount immediately available exceeds the limits above.
  
4. The store will do its best to maintain a low cash count in drawers for immediate customer check out, but not such that it would be detrimental to the business of check cashing or other money service business.
  
5. The store will deposit into the safe all of the days deposits, cash and other monetary values at the time of closing. Such safe is locked and only opened through key, safe combination or a secured method.
  
6. This policy may be reviewed and altered from time to time to best accommodate store safety and best business practices.

Implemented on \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Year

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_.





## FEE SCHEDULE

### IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL ALARM SITES

As per City Ordinance, If your alarm system has been configured to send a Hold-Up/Panic alarm notification, you are required to have this type of permit. Please be aware and ensure, the proper permit is obtained to avoid this violation and any penalties that may be associated with it.

#### RESIDENTIAL ALARM PERMIT

Combination burglar and hold-up/panic: \$50.00 (Annual renewal required, fee \$50.00)  
Burglar: \$37.47 each. (Annual renewal required, fee \$37.47)

#### NON-RESIDENTIAL/BUSINESS ALARM PERMIT (IMPORTANT: Administrative fee applies – see below for detail)

Combination burglar and hold-up/panic: \$214.10 (Annual renewal required, fee \$240.85) \* **Administrative fee applies**  
Burglar: \$107.05 each. (Annual renewal required, fee \$133.80) \* **Administrative fee applies**  
Hold-up/panic: \$107.05. (Annual renewal required, fee \$133.80) \* **Administrative fee applies**

**GOVERNMENT OFFICES:** Alarm system is on premises occupied by the United States Government, the State of Texas, the County of Harris, or the City of Houston situated within the corporate limits of the City, a permit is mandatory, but no fee is required.

**ALARM RESPONSE RESIDENTIAL:** Three (3) false burglar alarm calls are allowed without a charge with a burglar alarm permit per year. The 4th and 5th false alarm call is chargeable at \$50.00 each and the 6th and 7th call is chargeable at \$75.00 each. Thereafter each false alarm call is chargeable at \$100.00 each. Permits are subject to revocation after the 7th false call and no response. ***Burglar alarm systems without a permit are chargeable at \$107.05 per response and/or no response.***

Hold-up/panic alarm systems are allowed one (1) false call without charge with a hold-up/panic permit. Thereafter the 2nd call is chargeable at \$128.45, the 3rd false call at \$256.92 and the 4th false call is chargeable at \$385.37. Thereafter the 5th false alarm and above are chargeable at \$513.84 (each). ***Panic alarm systems without a permit are chargeable at \$282.61 per response and/or no response.***

**ALARM RESPONSE NON-RESIDENTIAL / BUSINESS:** Three (3) false alarm calls are allowed without a charge with a burglar alarm permit per year. The 4th and 5th false alarm call is chargeable at \$50.00 each and the 6th and 7th false call is chargeable at \$75.00 each. Thereafter each false call is chargeable at \$100.00 each. Permits are subject to revocation after the 7th false call and no response. ***Non-residential burglar alarm systems without a permit are chargeable at \$214.10 per response and /or no response.***  
Hold-up/panic alarm systems are allowed one (1) false call without charge with a hold-up/panic permit. Thereafter the 2nd false alarm call is chargeable at \$256.92 and the 3rd false call at \$513.84 The 4th false alarm and above are chargeable at \$642.30 each. ***Non-residential panic alarm systems without a permit are chargeable at \$449.61 per response and /or no response.***

**ADMINISTRATIVE FEE:** An administrative fee of \$ 26.75 shall be collected at time of application for any license, permit or service for which the fee is greater than \$ 50.00. The administrative fee shall be in addition to the fee for the permit, license or other service. In the case of renewal for which no application is filed, the administrative fee shall still be collected.

For information regarding False Alarm Prevention please visit our website: [www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org](http://www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org)

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#### PAYMENT INFORMATION:

**\*We DO NOT accept credit card payments via mail or fax\***

You may choose one of the following payment methods:

1. You may pay online at [www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org](http://www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org) with a credit card: Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.  
or
2. Mail page 1 of the application and include a check/money order payable to:  
**City of Houston - ARA Alarm Administration**  
**PO Box 203887**  
**Houston, Tx. 77216-3887**

Permits will be sent by request only. You may obtain a copy of your permit online at: [www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org](http://www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org). Click on NEED LOGIN AND PASSWORD to have your login information emailed to you. This may also be used to update your contact information as needed and view alarm incident detail. We may also fax a copy of your permit. If you do not have access to the internet or fax, please contact our office and request a copy of your permit to be mailed. If you need to cancel your permit, we must have formal notice. You can cancel your permit online, as well as, by mail or fax. If you have any questions please call 713-581-7410. Our hours of operation are: Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm.

**\*Please keep this sheet for your reference**