



## Town of Islip Fire Marshal's Office

# Temporary Fire Watch Procedure

Chief Fire Marshal Robert Doucet  
24 Nassau Avenue, Islip NY 11751  
P: (631) 224-5477 F: (631) 224-5458

Last Updated: 2/12/25  
Form: FMO-TFWP  
E-Mail: [fireprevention@islipny.gov](mailto:fireprevention@islipny.gov)

### **PURPOSE:**

The continued use and occupancy of any structure with a required fire protection system is dependent on those systems being maintained in a fully operational mode at all times. Failure of any system to operate places the occupancy at risk. A Fire Watch is a temporary measure taken when any fire protection system is rendered inoperable for a period of 4 hours or more, or when deemed necessary by the Fire Department or Fire Marshal. The protection of persons and property against the hazards of fire is the building's owner/management responsibility. The requirements of this procedure are intended to aid the owner/management in the selection, requirements, duties and training of individuals when systems are down, and a Fire Watch is required.

**NOTE:** The fire watch's primary function is to detect fire, notify and evacuate the occupants of the building. Firefighting activities are **not** the purpose of the watch and should only be attempted by trained personnel **after** notifying the fire department and evacuating the building.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

If a fire protection system fails, is rendered out of service, or there is an excessive number of false activations, the building owner/management or occupant may be required to provide a fire watch until the system is repaired. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined by the owner/management. A professional security company is not required, but can be utilized. A fire watch is a 24-hour requirement, the same as the fire protection system provided for the structure. When ordered, fire watch personnel shall be provided with at least one means for notification of the Fire Department, and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises to keep watch for fire. The owner/management shall provide fire watch personnel with written instructions on rounds, and a complete contact list of supervisory personnel.

The owner/management shall establish training for the fire watch personnel to ensure that they are familiar with the property being protected. Personnel shall also be familiar with the facilities emergency action & evacuation plan, as well as the fixed and portable fire protection equipment. They should also know the location of all hazardous materials and dangerous processes within the structure and site, along with storage areas for products that add fuel to combustion.

### **FREQUENCY OF INSPECTIONS:**

Fire Watch personnel shall make rounds of the structure(s) and grounds at intervals determined by the Fire Marshal. Each site or building may require different timed rounds. The minimum requirement shall be hourly rounds. The Fire Marshal may require additional rounds for special conditions such as buildings containing sleeping areas, occupied assembly spaces, or areas containing hazardous material storage or use. A log of the rounds, times of the rounds, and conditions noted for attention shall be kept by all fire watch personnel. This log shall be maintained by the owner/management and made available to the Fire Marshal's office for review.

### **WARNING SIGNS:**

Fire Watch warning signs shall be provided by the Fire Marshal and be posted conspicuously in the building in the following areas:

- Main entrance to the building.
- All entrances to the affected area(s).
- Any other location deemed necessary by the Fire Marshal.

These signs warn all occupants that the building has a fire watch in place and to call 911 if they see smoke or fire. These signs shall remain in place until the fire watch has been cancelled by the Fire Marshal.

**Saving lives through Inspection, Education, and Enforcement**



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### **GENERAL:**

Fire watch personnel shall begin rounds as soon as possible and at the frequency determined by the Fire Marshal. During the rounds, the fire watch should make a thorough inspection of the building(s), or spaces assigned to keep watch for fire, and check the following at a minimum:

- All portable fire extinguishers are in place, unobstructed and in working order.
- All exits and corridors are free and clear of storage and all other obstructions.
- All exit doors are clear and fully operational.
- All exit signs are properly illuminated and visible.
- All fire doors, smoke barrier doors and hazardous area doors are in working order and kept closed
- Electrical hazards are promptly reported and remedied.
- Any and all flammable or combustible materials are properly stored.
- Trash and other unnecessary accumulations of combustible materials are promptly removed from the building.
- Any machines and motors not required to be running are shut down.

Fire watch personnel shall promptly report to the owner/management any conditions that require immediate attention, and owner/management shall immediately correct any reports of this nature.

### **CANCELLATION OF THE FIRE WATCH:**

When the fire protection system has been repaired and placed back in service, notification shall be made to the Fire Marshal's office to determine if the requirement to conduct the fire watch can be lifted. At the minimum, the Fire Marshal will require a copy of the fire watch log, as well as a copy of any service ticket showing that repairs to the fire protection equipment have been completed before lifting the fire watch.

**\*\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*\*:** If the system that is out of service still has power and will activate the audio/visual devices upon any device activation, additional steps need to be taken to notify the building occupants that the system is out of service. The system shall be silenced as soon as possible, and eventually reset as per the directions given by the Fire Marshal. Failure to complete these steps could result in the local FD being notified to respond unnecessarily and the buildings HVAC systems remaining off.