

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR)

343.1 POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Fairfield Township Police Department to properly and appropriately utilize the automated license plate reader ("ALPR") cameras and system in an effort to increase public safety and enhance the effectiveness of patrol operations, investigations, and officer safety.

343.2 PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to provide Fairfield Township Police Department personnel with guidelines for the use, collection, access, dissemination, and storage of ALPR data and to ensure that the information is used for legitimate law enforcement purposes only.

343.3 DEFINITIONS

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) - Any device that automatically scans the license plates of vehicles and using machine learning, interprets the alphanumeric values on the plate. ALPR systems may be installed on designated marked patrol vehicles or fixed objects.

Law Enforcement Purposes - The investigation and detection of a crime and/or violations of law. Examples include, but are not limited to, the searches for missing persons, vehicles involved in criminal activity, or hit and run accident investigations.

ALPR System Administrator - The Chief of Police will designate a sergeant who will act as the ALPR System Administrator.

343.4 PROCEDURES

The ALPR technology allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Fairfield Township Police Department to convert data and images associated with vehicle license plates for official law enforcement purposes, including identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates, and missing persons. It may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction, and stolen property recovery.

The procedures of the Fairfield Township Police Department will ensure the proper use of ALPR systems for the protection of the people and property while maintaining the highest respect for the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of those whose data is collected by the system.

- A. ALPR devices and information contained within ALPR databases will be utilized for law enforcement purposes only.
- B. Use of the ALPR system for traffic enforcement, fines, towing, or immigration enforcement is prohibited.
- C. ALPR installation locations will be determined by the department through an analysis of current and historical incidents, high-density crime areas and routes, and common entrance and egress locations for Fairfield Township. The Chief of Police will be responsible for the determination of the locations of the placement of the fixed ALPR

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system equipment. Existing ALPR installations may only be relocated after receiving approval by the Chief of Police or his designee after following a similar analysis.

- D. Officers will verify all ALPR activations prior to taking enforcement action. Upon receiving a notice, the officer should utilize whatever information is available to determine the accuracy of the "hit." The officer will visually verify the actual license plate number and the actual read on the ALPR screen are the same. Verification may also be assisted through use of a query on the vehicle registration via the Ohio Law Enforcement Data System (LEADS).
- E. Creation and use of internal police department "hotlist":
 - 1. Personnel will not enter any license plates into the hotlist unless the vehicle is currently wanted or suspected in criminal activity. All hotlist vehicles shall include a case number, reason for entry, and approving supervisor prior to being entered into the system.
 - 2. Entries into the department's hotlist must be of a complete license plate. Partial plate entries are prohibited.
 - 3. Sworn members creating an entry into the department's internal hotlist shall set the entry to expire no later than 30 days from the date of entry. Sworn members wishing to extend an entry past 30 days shall extend the entry for another 30 days upon approval by a sergeant.
 - 4. Once the entering member is aware that their ALPR alert is no longer valid, they shall immediately remove the vehicle from the department's internal hotlist or request the ALPR System Administrator remove it.

343.5 DATA SECURITY, ACCESS, AND PRIVACY

- A. The Fairfield Township Police Department will not utilize the ALPR system to seek data on any individual or organization based solely on their religious, political, social views, or activities; their participation in a particular non-criminal organization or lawful event; or their race, ethnicity, citizenship, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other classification protected by law.
- B. Employees shall not use the ALPR system to target any group or individual in a discriminatory manner or infringe on constitutionally protected activities.
- C. Access to the ALPR system, for the purpose of queries, will be granted to all Fairfield Township sworn police officers. Use of the ALPR system for queries must be related to an official investigation, personnel complaint, administrative investigation, or criminal investigation. All users that are granted access to ALPR system will be issued a unique username and password specific to everyone. The sharing or use of another employee's username/password is prohibited. Employees who are terminated from employment or no longer need access to the ALPR system shall promptly have access rights removed.
- D. When conducting investigative queries into an ALPR database, the requester is required to enter either a case number (when available), a CAD run number, or label the search "Investigation" (with additional specificity) when a case or run number have yet to be established. This entry will be associated with the search and be visible in

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the system audit logs. Queries regarding administrative or auditing purposes may be excluded from the requirement to provide a case number.

- E. ALPR data may be released to other authorized and verified law enforcement officials and agencies for legitimate law enforcement purposes. Employees are prohibited from releasing any specific information obtained by ALPR devices to non-law enforcement personnel unless required by law.
- F. Personnel accessing the ALPR data shall also follow other Fairfield Township Police Department and Fairfield Township policies which control the access, transmission, release, and security of protected information.

343.6 DATA STORAGE, RETENTION, AND SHARING

- A. The database retention period for data collected by FTPD ALPR is 30 days.
- B. Downloaded records are to be treated as evidence and stored according to departmental procedures and policy by the ALPR end user. Evidence created through use of ALPR query shall also be included in an officer's/analyst's investigative report.
- C. External law enforcement agencies may request a query of FTPD's ALPR system as part of an active criminal investigation by the external law enforcement agency. The department will only share FTPD ALPR data for official law enforcement purposes in accordance with departmental policies and local, state, and federal laws and regulations. If the external agency request produces investigative leads in other jurisdictions, FTPD will not provide records from those external agencies to the requesting agency. FTPD will then refer the requesting agency to the outside agency where the original records reside.
- D. When practical, and in absence of exigent circumstances, external law enforcement requests should be referred to the ALPR System Administrator for processing and record keeping.
- E. Electronic online sharing of FTPD historical ALPR data to external law enforcement agencies, who use a compatible ALPR system, is permissible and will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee.
- F. At no time is ALPR data allowed to be sold, monetized, shared, or otherwise used for any commercial or non-law enforcement purpose.

343.7 TRAINING

Only officers who have received ALPR system training from a trained officer within the Fairfield Township Police Department are authorized to query the system and may access the ALPR data for law enforcement purposes only.

343.8 ACCOUNTABILITY

The ALPR System Administrator will conduct and document an audit of at least ten (10) LPR queries each quarter of the year. Documentation of a random inquiry will include date, time, officer's name, and comment(s). During the review, the ALPR System Administrator should observe whether the video equipment is functioning properly and that personnel are following departmental policies.

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Any department member found to be in noncompliance with this policy in their use of the ALPR system will immediately have their access suspended to the ALPR system (if an authorized user) and be subject to the appropriate disciplinary or administrative actions.

Any non-departmental personnel found to have gained unauthorized access will be referred to the appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution, as necessary.