



5.42 License Plate Reader

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper use, operation, and management of License Plate Reader (LPR), i.e. Flock Safety Solution System (Flock) or any other LPR system utilized by the Youngstown Police Department. License Plate Reader (LPR) technology enhances law enforcement capabilities by providing a tool for identifying stolen vehicles, locating vehicles of interest, and supporting investigations while ensuring the responsible and lawful use of collected data.

This policy seeks to balance the operational benefits of the LPR system with the department's commitment to transparency, accountability, and the protection of individual privacy rights. It is designed to ensure that the LPR system is used solely for legitimate law enforcement purposes, in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

II. POLICY

The Youngstown Police Department recognizes the value of License Plate Recognition (LPR) systems as a tool to enhance public safety, support investigations, and improve officer efficiency. It is the policy of this department to ensure that all members use LPR systems in a manner that complies with legal requirements, protects the privacy of individuals, and maintains the integrity of law enforcement operations.

All officers operating LPR systems must receive proper training and adhere to the guidelines established in this policy. The Flock administrator and/or Internal Affairs shall monitor the use of LPR systems to ensure compliance with this policy and applicable laws, including routine audits and reviews of data access logs.

The department is committed to safeguarding collected data, maintaining accountability, and promoting transparency in its use of LPR technology to serve and protect the community.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General Usage

1. LPR systems shall be used solely for legitimate law enforcement purposes, including but not limited to:
 - Locating stolen vehicles.
 - Identifying vehicles associated with wanted persons or missing individuals.
 - Supporting ongoing investigations and criminal intelligence.
2. Unauthorized use of LPR systems or data for personal, administrative, or non-law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited.
3. All users of the LPR system must complete department-approved training before operating the equipment or accessing collected data.

B. Operation of LPR Systems

1. Officer shall log into Flock and/or any other available LPR software at the start of their shift.
2. Before taking enforcement action based on an LPR alert, officers must:
 - Visually confirm that the license plate matches the LPR system alert, including the plate number, state of issuance, and any unique identifying features.
 - Verify the alert's status through dispatch or other official systems when circumstances allow.



3. Officers shall report any issues or errors they encounter to the Flock/LPR administrator.

C. Data Retention and Security

1. LPR data will be retained for a maximum of 30 days, unless it is associated with an active investigation or legal hold.
2. All LPR data shall be classified as "For Official Use Only" and stored securely in compliance with department and state data security standards.
3. Access to LPR data is restricted to authorized personnel and shall be logged for auditing purposes.

D. Data Sharing and Dissemination

1. LPR data may be shared with other law enforcement agencies for legitimate law enforcement purposes, subject to interagency agreements and applicable laws.
2. Requests for LPR data from external entities or the public must be reviewed and approved by the Chief of Police or designee to ensure compliance with public records laws and privacy considerations.

E. Auditing and Oversight

1. The Flock/LPR administrator shall conduct routine audits of LPR system usage and data access to ensure compliance with this policy.
2. Any suspected misuse of the LPR system or data must be reported immediately to Internal Affairs for investigation.
3. LPR systems shall be used exclusively for legitimate law enforcement purposes, such as identifying stolen vehicles, locating wanted individuals, and supporting investigations. Unauthorized access, misuse, or sharing of LPR data is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution. **The same standard for use and dissemination of the Law Enforcement Database System (LEADS) shall apply to the use of any LPR system.**

F. Maintenance and Updates

1. LPR systems shall be maintained and updated regularly to ensure functionality and accuracy.
2. Officers shall promptly report any equipment malfunctions or system errors to the department's designated Flock administrator.