

City of Niles Police Department

General Order

Number: 18-1

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Effective:

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Subject: **FLOCK SYSTEM / LPR**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines on the proper use of license plate recognition (LPR) systems, also commonly known as license plate reader systems.

II. POLICY

The availability and use of LPR systems have provided many opportunities for the enhancement of productivity, effectiveness, and officer safety. It is the policy of this agency that all members abide by the guidelines set forth herein when using LPR systems.

III. DEFINITIONS

FOUO: For Official Use Only

LPR: License Plate Recognition/License Plate Reader

OCR: Optical Character Recognition

Read: Digital images of license plates and vehicles and associated metadata (e.g., date, time, and geographic coordinates associated with the vehicle image capture) that are captured by the LPR system.

Alert: A visual and/or auditory notice that is triggered when the LPR system receives a potential “hit” on a license plate.

Hit: A read matched to a plate that has previously been registered on an agency’s “hot list” of vehicle plates related to stolen vehicles, wanted vehicles, or other factors supporting investigation, or which has been manually registered by a user for further investigation.

Hot list: License plate numbers of stolen cars, vehicles owned by persons of interest, and vehicles associated with AMBER Alerts that are regularly added to “hot lists” circulated among law enforcement agencies. Hot list information can come from a variety of sources, including stolen vehicle information from the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), as well as national AMBER Alerts and Department of Homeland Security watch lists. Departments of motor vehicles can provide lists of expired registration tags, and law enforcement agencies can interface their own, locally compiled hot lists to the LPR system. These lists serve an officer safety function as well as an investigatory purpose. In addition to agency supported hot lists, users may also manually add license plate numbers to hot lists in order to be alerted if and when a vehicle license plate of interest is “read” by the LPR system.

Fixed LPR system: LPR cameras that are permanently affixed to a structure, such as a pole, a traffic barrier, or a bridge.

Mobile LPR system: LPR cameras that are affixed, either permanently (hardwired) or temporarily (e.g., magnet-mounted), to a law enforcement vehicle for mobile deployment.

Portable LPR system: LPR cameras that are transportable and can be moved and deployed in a variety of venues as needed, such as a traffic barrel or speed radar sign.²

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. The use of LPR systems is restricted to public safety–related missions of this agency.
2. LPR systems and associated equipment and databases are authorized for official public safety purposes. Misuse of this equipment and associated databases, or data, may be subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary actions.
3. LPR systems and LPR data and associated media are the property of this agency and intended for use in conducting official business.
4. You must not exhibit or divulge the content of any record to any except in the conduct of your work assignment.
5. You must not knowingly include or cause to be included in any record or report a false or inaccurate or misleading entry.
6. You must not remove or cause to be removed copies of any official record or report from any file from the office where it is kept except in the performance of your duty.

B. Administration

1. The agency shall designate an employee(s) with administrative oversight for LPR system deployment and operations who is (are) responsible for the following:
 - a. Establishing protocols for access, collection, storage, and retention of LPR data and associated media files
 - b. Establishing protocols to preserve and document LPR reads and “alerts” or “hits” that are acted on in the field or associated with investigations or prosecutions
 - c. Establishing protocols to establish and ensure the security and integrity of data captured, stored, and/or retained by the LPR system
 - d. Ensuring the proper selection of the personnel approved to operate the LPR system and maintaining an adequate number of trainees.
 - e. Maintaining records identifying approved LPR deployments and documenting their results, including appropriate documentation of significant incidents and arrests that are related to LPR usage
 - f. Authorizing any requests for LPR systems use or data access according to the policies and guidelines of this agency
2. LPR systems repairs, hardware, or software, shall be made by agency authorized sources.
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4. LPR Alerts/Hits: Prior to initiation of the stop:

- a. Visually verify that the vehicle plate number matches the plate number run by the LPR system, including both alphanumeric characters of the license plate and the state of issuance.
- b. Verify the status of the plate through dispatch or MDT query when circumstances allow.