Billerica Police Department	POLICY NUMBER INV-22	PAGES 6	EFFECTIVE 10/5/2026
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Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs): FLOCK

I. General Considerations and Guidelines

A. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the capture, storage, and use of digital data obtained through the use of Automated License Pate Reader (ALPR) technology. At this time the Billerica Police Utilizes stationary Flock Safety license plate reader cameras.

II. Policy

A. The availability and use of (ALPR) systems have provided many opportunities for the enhancement of productivity and effectiveness, as well as increased safety to the public and law enforcement. It is the policy of the Billerica Police Department to only utilize this technology to capture and store digital license plate data in the furtherance of official and legitimate law enforcement operations and public safety, while recognizing the privacy rights of the public.

B. All data and images gathered by the ALPR are for the official use of this department. Because such data may contain confidential information, it is not open to public view. All trained members are expected to abide by the guidelines set forth herein when using an (ALPR) system.

III. Definitions

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) – Equipment that combines high-speed cameras with image-processing technology to identify vehicles by their license plate. Through fixed cameras mounted on places like streetlights, utility poles, highway overpasses, or mobile cameras secured to vehicles. ALPRs can capture thousands of images per hour, which can then be stored in a database. Once the license plate is converted to machine readable text that is coupled with information of the time, date, and GPS location of the vehicle.

Hit - Alert from the ALPR system that a scanned license plate number may be in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) or other law enforcement database for a specific reason including, but not limited to, being related to a stolen vehicle, wanted person, missing person, domestic violation protection order, or terrorist related activity.

Hot List – A list of plates associated with criminal activity, public safety concern, or investigative interest pertaining to a pending criminal investigation, or any information that is entered manually by an approved operator.

(ALPR) Operator: Trained Billerica Police Department personnel authorized to utilize (ALPR) systems and equipment.

(ALPR) Program Manager: The Detective Lieutenant serves as the ALPR administrator for the department.

IV. Administration and Technical Support

A. The ALPR technology, also known as License Plate recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Billerica Police Department to convert data 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.

B. **Administrative Support:** All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Program Manager.

Assigned duties shall include:

- Establishing protocols for data entries, access, collection, storage & security, and retention of ALPR data and associated media files; 41.3.9 (d), (e), (f), (g)
- Establishing protocols to preserve and document ALPR reads and “alerts” or “hits” that are acted on in the field or associated with investigations or prosecutions;
- Establishing protocols to establish and ensure the security and integrity of data captured, stored, and/or retained by the ALPR system;
- Ensuring that the (ALPR) system is used only for appropriate Department business and in accordance with this policy;
- Monitoring the use of the (ALPR) and schedule periodic audits;
- Recommending updates to the (ALPR) policy;
- Keeping informed of legal decisions, trends, and case law concerning (ALPRs);

- Coordinating with other Department personnel regarding the maintenance and retention of data;
- Maintaining records identifying approved (ALPR) deployments and documenting their results, including appropriate documentation of significant incidents and arrests that are related to (ALPR) usage;
- Authorizing any requests for (ALPR) systems use or data access according to the policies and guidelines of this agency

V. Maintenance and Retention of Data

A. The Record Department OIC shall be responsible for the maintenance and retention of data stored by Billerica Police Department (ALPR) systems in accordance with MA Public Records Laws.

VI. ALPR Operations

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department members shall not use, or allow other to use, the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose.

A. An ALPR shall only be used for law enforcement business.

B. Reasonable suspicion or Probable Cause is not required before using an ALPR.

C. An ALPR may only be used in conjunction with the following eleven (11) authorized purposes:

1. Investigation of a criminal offense when there is reasonable suspicion that a criminal offense was committed.
2. As part of an active investigation related to a missing, exploited, or endangered person or a person associated with human trafficking.
3. To locate a person with an outstanding warrant, a suspect in a crime, a stolen vehicle, or a stolen license plate.
4. Any case involving allegations of flight or evasion from law enforcement
5. Efforts to locate a fugitive from justice
6. Cases where physical surveillance of a target of a criminal investigation has been determined to be dangerous or compromised.
7. Emergencies involving wrong-way drivers, operators who appear intoxicated, or persons experiencing a medical emergency
8. Motor vehicle accidents resulting tin fatalities or serious injuries
9. Motor vehicle crashes related to evading responsibility

10. Situations that would meet the exigent circumstances exceptions to the Fourth Amendment requirement.
11. Identifying vehicles associated with individuals on federal or state Terrorist Watch Lists when conducted as part of a legitimate law enforcement or national security investigation.

D. No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing department approved training and becoming an approved ALPR operator.

E. No ALPR operator may access confidential department, commonwealth, or federal data unless authorized to do so.

F. Manual additions can be added to the Hot List by department approved ALPR operators. All manual entries remain active on the ALPR system for a maximum period of seven (7) days, after which it must be removed or re-issued based on a new assessment.

G. Once a Custom Hit List "hit" has been received and acted upon, the entry should be removed, or information updated immediately by the ALPR operator to avoid repeated unnecessary stops and/or interactions.

H. The Program Manager will conduct weekly audits of Searches and Hot Lists created by officers and purge or update lists as necessary.

VII. Authorized Users

A. Access to the ALPR system and associated database(s) will be granted by the Program Manager. Access is limited to supervisors and detectives of the Billerica Police Department. Access may also be granted to any vendors who provide maintenance and service for the ALPR at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

B. To ensure proper operation and facilitate oversight of the ALPR system, all users will be required to have individual credentials for access and use of the systems and/or data, which has the ability to be fully audited. Passwords shall be protected, maintained and accessed only by that assigned user and sharing of passwords is strictly prohibited.

VIII. Field Operations

A. During field operations, ALPR "hits" are indicated by a visual and/or audible alarm. An ALPR "hit" shall not be used as a reason to make contact until all provisions contained in this section have been met. Contact with the vehicle and its occupants shall only be made after the "hit" is confirmed.

The Following steps are mandatory:

1. The Officer receiving the notification will first visually verify the Hot List entry matches the digital image displayed by the ALPR. If for any reason they do not match. The “hit” will be rejected. If they do match, the “hit” will be accepted and the Officer will verify the “hit” through an appropriate law enforcement database.

2. Prior to taking any law enforcement action, the Officer must receive confirmation from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Mobile Data Terminal (MDT), or Central Dispatch, verifying the license plate is still stolen, wanted, and/or of interest before proceeding with any actions. A visual audible alarm (“hit”), shall not be a basis for any law enforcement action.

3. Once verification has been satisfied, the Officer will then attempt to make contact with the vehicle and its occupants. These contacts are to be treated as an unknown to high risk contact, depending on the circumstances, and appropriate backup shall be utilized when deemed necessary.

IX. Data Collection and Retention

A. All data is stored and encrypted by Flock Safety for seven (7) days. Thereafter, ALPR data is purged unless it has become, or it is reasonable to believe it will become, evidence in a criminal or civil action or is subject to a discovery request or other lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances, the applicable data should be downloaded onto portable media and booked into evidence by the ALPR operator.

B. As a customer and Law Enforcement Agency partner with Flock Safety, members of the Billerica Police Department have complete access to the data and are the gatekeepers for who views it. Flock does not use the data gathered by the Billerica Police Department license plate readers for any purpose.

C. Data entries are logged in an event log and an outcomes log with the insights portal on the navigation bar. The Program Manager can access a report of all inputs into the system by Billerica Police Department users (custom hotlist entries, BOLO’s, etc.) as well as access a search audit log.

X. Accountability

All data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Billerica Police Department will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data:

A. All ALPR data downloaded to the mobile workstation and in storage shall be accessible only through a login/password protected system that uses Dual Factor Authentication (DFA) capable of documenting all access of information by name, date, and time.

B. Members approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only.

XI. Releasing ALPR Data

The ALPR data may be shared only with other law enforcement or prosecutorial agencies for official law enforcement purposes or as otherwise permitted by law, using the following procedures:

A. The agency makes a written request for the ALPR data that includes:

    1. The Name of the agency.
    2. The name of the person requesting.
    3. The intended purpose of obtaining the information.

B. The request is reviewed by the Program Manager or the authorized designee and approved before the request is fulfilled.

C. The approved request is kept on file.

Requests for ALPR data by non-law enforcement or non-prosecutorial agencies will be processed in accordance with a Public Records Request as outlined in ADM-24 Records Request.

XII. Training

A. Prior to accessing any portion of the ALPR system all employees authorized to access the ALPR system and database(s) shall receive training and instructions on proper use of the database and authorized use of the system, along with a copy of this policy.