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# CHAMPAIGN POLICE DEPARTMENT

## POLICY and PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 41.18

SUBJECT: AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READERS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/01/22

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use and operation of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs).

DEFINITIONS:

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

**Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR):** Equipment consisting of cameras, computers, and computer software used to automatically recognize and interpret the characters on motor vehicle license plates. Digital images captured by the cameras are converted into data which is processed through the ALPR system (also known as Automated License Plate Recognition).

**Fixed ALPR System:** ALPR cameras permanently fixed to a structure, such as a pole, traffic barrier, bridge, etc.

**Hit:** A read matched to a license plate that has either been previously registered on the Department's hot list of vehicle plates or is on the local hot list on the ALPR computer that a user has added.

**Hot List:** The license plate numbers of, or associated with, stolen vehicles, wanted subjects, missing persons, AMBER Alerts, or other criteria as determined by a Deputy Chief of Police. Hot List information can come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS), and the Illinois Secretary of State. Officers may also manually add license plates to the hot list based on information relayed to or learned by them in the course of their official duties.

**Mobile ALPR System:** Location-flexible ALPR cameras for temporary coverage that can be quickly placed by Police Department staff in any location to maintain public safety, address emerging criminal activity, and monitor hotspots and public events. This includes any mobile camera that can be integrated with ALPR technology, such as in-car cameras or those mounted to a surveillance camera trailer.

**Read:** The capture of a digital image, license plate, or vehicle with associated metadata (date, time, and GPS coordinates with vehicle image capture).

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Champaign Police Department to use law enforcement data systems to provide information and investigative resources to employees. The use and access of such systems and information shall be for law enforcement purposes only and in compliance with all applicable training, policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and laws.

### 41.18.1 AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READER

- A. Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology, also known as License Plate Recognition, provides automatic detection of license plates. The Champaign Police Department uses ALPRs to convert data associated with motor vehicle license plates and use it for official law enforcement purposes, including identifying the license plate numbers of or associated with stolen vehicles, wanted subjects, missing persons, AMBER Alerts, or other criteria as determined by a Deputy Chief of Police. ALPRs may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction, stolen property recovery, or other legitimate law enforcement purposes. ALPR devices shall not be used to enforce registration violations or City ordinance violations.

### 41.18.2 ALPR CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Use of the ALPR system, software, associated databases, and data is restricted exclusively to the Department's law enforcement and public safety-related functions. Information obtained from the ALPR, software, associated databases, and data shall not be used for personal reasons or for reasons inconsistent with the Department's law enforcement or public safety-related functions under any circumstances.
- B. Misuse or abuse of the ALPR system, software, associated databases, or data may be subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary action.
- C. The ALPR system, software, associated databases, and data are solely the property of the Department and intended for use in the law enforcement and public safety-related functions of the Department.
- D. Information obtained from the ALPR system, software, associated databases, and data may not be disseminated to the public except as authorized or required by law.

E. Information obtained from the ALPR system, software, associated databases, and data may be disseminated to other law enforcement agencies or officers when it is to be used for law enforcement or public safety-related function, provided each of the following criteria are met:

1. The law enforcement agency makes an official request for the ALPR data; and
2. The agency's identity, the person requesting the data, and the intended purpose must be documented in such a manner as to demonstrate compliance with this policy and retained on file. All such documentation shall be forwarded to the ALPR System Administrator; and
3. A supervisor must approve the request.
4. Requests from other law enforcement agencies pertaining to immigration enforcement activities prohibited under the Illinois TRUST Act (5 ILCS 805) shall be denied. Department personnel shall not honor, participate in, or provide support for any immigration enforcement request that would be unlawful for Illinois law enforcement agencies to fulfill under the provisions of the Act.
5. Requests from other law enforcement agencies pertaining to the investigation or enforcement of laws related to abortion or other reproductive health care services that are not prohibited under Illinois law shall be denied. Department personnel shall not honor, participate in, or provide support for any request that would aid the enforcement of out-of-state laws that criminalize reproductive health care services legal in Illinois, in accordance with state protections under Public Act 102-1117 and other applicable law.

F. Each ALPR user must have successfully completed approved Less Than Full Access Law Enforcement Agency Data Systems (LEADS) training/certification prior to operating ALPR equipment or accessing ALPR data.

#### **41.18.3 ALPR ADMINISTRATION**

A. The Police Chief shall designate a Department employee as the ALPR System Administrator, who shall have administrative oversight of ALPR system deployment and operations and shall be responsible for the following:

1. Establishing protocols for the access, collection, secure storage, and retention of ALPR data and associated media files.
2. Establishing protocols to preserve documented ALPR reads and alerts or hits that are acted upon in the field or associated with arrests, investigations, and/or prosecutions.
3. Maintaining records identifying approved ALPR deployments and documenting their results, including documentation of significant incidents and arrests related to the use of the ALPR system.

4. Ensuring that each employee who uses or has access to the ALPR system has completed Department-approved training and is certified to have access to the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS).

5. Conducting regular ALPR system checks to ensure proper alignment and functionality.

6. Ensuring ALPR system audits are conducted to ensure officer use is compliant with policy and statute.

7. The ALPR System Administrator will provide an information-only bi-annual report to the City's Citizen Review Subcommittee that provides information on ALPR technology and its use.

8. ALPR system maintenance and repairs (hardware or software) shall be made by appropriate sources as approved by the ALPR System Administrator.

#### **41.18.4 ALPR LIMITATIONS OF USE**

A. Use of the ALPR system, active ALPR data, historical ALPR data, and hot list information for any of the following reasons is strictly prohibited:

1. To harass or intimidate any person or group.
2. To deny or interfere with a person's right to choose or obtain reproductive health care services or any lawful health care services as defined by the Lawful Health Care Activity Act.
3. To permit the detention or investigation of a person based on the person's immigration status.
4. To engage in or assist with any activities or investigations related to immigration enforcement prohibited by the Illinois TRUST Act.
5. To investigate or enforce out-of-state laws that criminalize reproductive health care services that are lawful in Illinois.
6. For personal reasons.

#### **41.18.5 ALPR USE**

A. ALPR hits alone do not constitute reasonable suspicion or probable cause for a stop. Prior to taking enforcement action or initiating a traffic stop on an ALPR Hit/Alert, in all circumstances, an officer shall:

1. Visually verify that a motor vehicle's license plate number matches the plate number recognized by the ALPR system, including both the alphanumeric characters of the license plate as well as the state of issuance; and
2. Verify the status of the license plate through a query when circumstances allow.

B. In each case in which a(n) Hit/Alert is triggered, the officer following up on the hit shall either accept or

reject the Hit/Alert and document it via the ALPR system software.

- C. Enforcement action taken in response to a Hit/Alert shall be documented on a Field Interview Card, Written Warning, Citation, and/or police report.
- D. Hot lists may be updated manually if the officer enters a specific license plate into the ALPR system and wants to be alerted when it is located. Officers shall document the reason for the manual entry in the notes field provided in the ALPR software whenever a plate is manually entered into the system.
- E. Partial license plates reported during major crimes or significant incidents can and should be entered into the ALPR system in an effort to identify suspect vehicles.
- F. Any user of the ALPR system is expected to report any known issues to the ALPR System Administrator in a timely fashion.

#### **41.18.6 DATA STORAGE AND RETENTION**

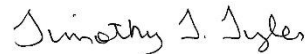
- A. Collection and retention of ALPR data is subject to the following guidelines:
  - 1. All ALPR data (meaning both "reads" and "hits/alerts") downloaded to the Department's server and ultimately stored on the vendor's server shall be stored for a period of 30 days. After 30 days, the data shall be 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 lawful action or order to produce records. In such circumstances, the applicable data shall be transferred to the appropriate evidence server in accordance with current file storage procedures.
- B. All saved data shall be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Department will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data:
  - 1. All requests for access to historical ALPR data shall be logged, and the reason for the access must also be recorded.
  - 2. All ALPR data shall only be accessible through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting who accesses the information by name, date, and time.
- C. Persons approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data when there is an articulable suspicion that the data relates to an investigation in a specific criminal or Department related civil or administrative action.

#### **41.18.7 ALPR SYSTEM EVALUATION**

- A. The ALPR System Administrator shall evaluate the ALPR system annually. That evaluation will be documented in writing, forwarded to the Police Chief, and shall include the following:

- 1. An evaluation of the efficacy of the ALPR program.
  - 2. An evaluation of the current locations of ALPR devices in consultation with recent crime trends and associated crime mapping information.
- B. Police administration is encouraged to share the results of each evaluation with neighborhood groups, business owners, and interested community members as part of the community engagement process.
  - C. Based upon the results of the evaluation, the ALPR System Administrator or his designee may, with the consent of the Police Chief, relocate individual ALPR devices to improve the efficacy of the system.

#### **ISSUING AUTHORITY**



Timothy T. Tyler  
Police Chief  
Champaign Police Department