
Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

429.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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 plate reader (ALPR) technology.

429.2 POLICY

The policy of the Vernon Hills Police Department is to utilize ALPR technology to capture and store digital license plate data and images while recognizing the established privacy rights of the public.

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 review.

429.3 ADMINISTRATION

The ALPR technology, also known as license plate recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Vernon Hills 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 to aid in criminal investigations, including identifying suspect and vehicle information, and stolen property recovery.

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access shall be managed by a Deputy Chief. The Deputy Chief will assign personnel under their command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

429.4 OPERATIONS

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

- (a) An ALPR shall only be used for official law enforcement business.
- (b) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any legitimate Department interest. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not required before using an ALPR.
- (c) While an ALPR may be used to canvass license plates around any crime scene, particular consideration should be given to using ALPR in response to homicides, shootings, and other major incidents. Partial license plates reported during major crimes should be entered into the ALPR system in an attempt to identify suspect vehicles.
- (d) No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing department-approved training.
- (e) No ALPR operator may access confidential department, state, or federal data unless authorized to do so.

Vernon Hills Police Department

Policy Manual

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

- (f) If practicable, the officer should verify an ALPR response through the appropriate law enforcement database before taking enforcement action that is based solely upon an ALPR alert.

For procedures related to monitoring hotlist hits, see the [Vernon Hills Police Department Procedures Manual: 306.1 Mandatory Reporting of Certain ALPR Hits](#).

429.5 DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

All data and images gathered by an ALPR are for the official use of the Vernon Hills Police Department and because such data may contain confidential LEADS information, it is not open to public review. ALPR information gathered and retained by this department may be used and shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law. ALPR data is generally maintained for a period of thirty (30) days, and does not become a department record.

The Deputy Chief of Support Services is responsible for ensuring systems and processes are in place for the proper collection and retention of ALPR data.

All stored ALPR data should be retained in accordance with the established records retention schedule. Thereafter, ALPR data should 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 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.

429.6 ACCOUNTABILITY

All data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Vernon Hills 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 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, such as when the data relate to a specific criminal investigation or department-related civil or administrative action.
- (c) ALPR system audits should be conducted on a regular basis.

429.7 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.

Vernon Hills Police Department

Policy Manual

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

2. The name of the person requesting.
 3. The intended purpose of obtaining the information.
- (b) The request is reviewed by the Deputy Chief of Support Services or the authorized designee and approved before the request is fulfilled.
- (c) The approved request is retained on file.

Before sharing ALPR information with an out-of-state law enforcement agency, the Deputy Chief of Support Services or the authorized designee shall also ensure that the Vernon Hills Police Department has received the executed written declaration of affirmation from the out-of-state agency as required by 625 ILCS 5/2-130. The declaration of affirmation should be retained on file.

Requests for ALPR data by non-law enforcement or non-prosecutorial agencies will be processed as provided in the Records Maintenance and Release Policy.