

Automated License Plate Readers

466.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology, also known as License Plate Recognition, provides automated detection of license plates. ALPR is used by the Kelso Police Department to convert data associated with vehicle license plates for official law enforcement purposes.

466.2 ADMINISTRATION OF ALPR DATA

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Patrol Commander, or designee. The Patrol Commander will assign personnel under his/her command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

466.3 ALPR OPERATION

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes specified below. Department personnel 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 and legitimate law enforcement business, specifically:
 - 1. **Identifying vehicles related to or involved in a felony or gross misdemeanor crime;**
 - 2. **Identifying vehicles registered to a person for whom there is an outstanding felony or gross misdemeanor warrant of arrest;**
 - 3. **Identifying stolen vehicles through the WACIC database or internal ALPR hot list; or**
 - 4. **Identifying vehicles associated with missing, exploited and/or endangered persons or children.**
- (b) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any patrol operation or official department investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not required before using an ALPR.
- (c) No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment, or access ALPR data, without first completing department-approved training.
- (d) Officers shall verify that an ALPR alert through the Central Computerized Enforcement Service System (ACCESS) matches the image captured through the ALPR system before taking enforcement action unless other factors exist that would independently support enforcement action.
- (e) No ALPR operator may retrieve ACCESS data unless otherwise authorized to do so.

466.3.1 PROHIBITED USE OF THE ALPR SYSTEM

Members shall not use or allow others to use the ALPR equipment or data for any unauthorized purpose, including (Chapter 239, § 3, 2026 Laws):

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- (a) Investigating or enforcing federal immigration matters.
- (b) Assisting with out-of-state investigations regarding protected health care services under chapter 7.115 RCW (e.g., abortion services).
- (c) Tracking or otherwise monitoring activity protected by the state and federal constitutions (e.g., free speech, assembly, protest).
- (d) Collecting ALPR data from facilities that provide health care or conduct immigration matters as defined by RCW 19.154.020, elementary and secondary schools, places of worship, courts, or food banks.

The Kelso Police Department shall not sell, lease, rent, or purchase ALPR data or audit trail data (Chapter 239, § 5, 2026 Laws).

466.4 ALPR DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

All data and images gathered by an ALPR are for the official use of the Kelso Police Department, and because such data may contain confidential ACCESS 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.

All ALPR data downloaded to the server shall be stored for a period not to exceed 21 days unless it has been manually retained and kept pursuant to an investigation and prosecution for a felony or gross misdemeanor crime.

466.5 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

All saved data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Kelso 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 server shall be accessible only through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time.
- (b) Persons 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) Such ALPR data may be released to other authorized and verified law enforcement officials and agencies at any time for legitimate law enforcement purposes while in accordance with Policy 428 - Immigration Violations.
- (d) Any ALPR data obtained in violation of the law is inadmissible in any court proceeding. Willfully and intentionally accessing, using, searching or sharing ALPR data in violation of the law is a gross misdemeanor.
- (e) ALPR system audits should be conducted on an annual basis.