



ST. JOHNS COUNTY *SHERIFF'S OFFICE*

ROBERT A. HARDWICK, SHERIFF

LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION (LPR) TECHNOLOGY

This brief provides an overview of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office (SJSO) use of License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology, recent policy updates, and the safeguards in place to ensure transparency, privacy protection, and legal compliance. Our goal is to equip our citizens with accurate information to support informed decision making.



1. OVERVIEW: WHAT LPR TECHNOLOGY IS — AND IS NOT

- LPRs are investigative tools used to identify vehicles connected to criminal activity, missing or endangered persons, and other legitimate public safety concerns.
- LPR alerts are only investigative leads and must be reviewed, validated, and confirmed by a trained deputy before any enforcement action occurs.
- All data systems have the potential for errors. A human decision maker must verify every alert; LPRs do not replace professional judgment.
- LPRs do not identify a vehicle's owner or driver. Any such identification requires a separate, limited access law enforcement database query with its own restrictions and oversight.



2. KEY UPDATES TO LPR POLICY & PROCEDURES

- SJSO has modernized its LPR policies to enhance privacy, transparency, and compliance with best practices. Updates include:
- Shortened data retention periods to ensure information unrelated to criminal investigations is not stored unnecessarily.
- No data sharing unless:
 - Another agency directly contacts SJSO,
 - The request is tied to an active criminal case or missing person investigation,
 - A verifiable case number is provided, and
 - The agency follows policies consistent with our standards.
- Strict prohibition on broad, speculative, or unconstitutional surveillance.
- Required supervisory review, auditing, and documentation for all investigative queries.



3. TRANSPARENCY & PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

SJSO launched a public LPR Transparency Portal, accessible via our website, offering clear information on:

- LPR camera locations
- What data is collected — and what is not
- Data retention timelines
- How LPRs support public safety

This initiative reinforces our commitment to openness and community trust.



4. RECENT CASE LAW (U.S. V. KYLE)

- SJSO remains fully informed on federal cases involving LPR usage.
- U.S. v. Kyle is fact specific and does not currently apply to St. Johns County or Florida.
- Even so, we have proactively implemented safeguards addressing concerns raised in that case.
- SJSO has a long, consistent history of immediate compliance with any ruling from a court that has jurisdiction over our county or state.
- Suggestions that SJSO would disregard constitutional standards are inconsistent with our proven record and our core obligations as a law enforcement agency.



5. COMMUNITY CONCERNS & MISINFORMATION

- We respect concerns from community groups, including "Deflock." Sheriff Hardwick has met with them multiple times, listened, and made policy adjustments where concerns were valid.
- Much of the information circulating publicly is misinformed, incomplete, or based on misunderstandings of how LPRs function.
- SJSO believes public safety and personal privacy can coexist, and our updated policies reflect that balance.
- We welcome questions and dialogue, but decisions must be based on accurate facts.



6. WHY LPRS ARE VALUABLE PUBLIC SAFETY TOOLS

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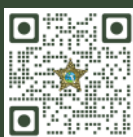


CLOSING MESSAGE

SJSO remains committed to:

- Protecting constitutional rights
- Ensuring transparency and public trust
- Using technology responsibly and legally
- Updating policies in response to law, oversight, and best practices

We encourage our citizens to base their decisions on verified information, established safeguards, and our agency's consistent record of legal compliance. We stand ready to provide further explanation, documentation, or demonstrations at any time.



Click or Scan to visit the ALPR Transparency Portal at:
<https://transparency.flocksafety.com/st-johns-county-fl-so>
for more information!



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