

License Plate Reader (LPR) Program: Data Fact Sheet

A joint publication of the law enforcement agencies of Putnam County • Alert data: January 1 through August 11, 2026 • Prepared August 2026

The Program at a Glance

Fixed LPR sites	23 sites countywide (21 active, 2 pending installation)
Cameras	48 cameras across the active sites, each covering a single direction of travel on key corridors and county line crossings
Operating agencies	4 local agencies: Putnam County Sheriff's Office, Carmel PD, Kent PD, Cold Spring PD
Years in operation	More than 5 years. The year-to-date figures below reflect roughly seven months of a program with over five years of cumulative results.
Data retention	Approximately 2 years, after which records permanently age out of the system

2026 Year-to-Date Alert Activity

From January 1 through August 11, 2026, the county's fixed LPR network generated 808 investigative alerts on 250 distinct vehicles of investigative interest, an average of roughly 25 alerts per week. Every one of these alerts represents a stolen vehicle, a known offender, or a person in crisis physically present on Putnam County roads.

Alert Category	Alerts	Distinct Vehicles	What It Represents
Stolen vehicles	546	184	Confirmed stolen vehicles detected on county roads in real time
Known burglary crews	100	27	Known burglary crew vehicles, tied to residential burglaries across the region, many connected to NYC-based crews
Organized retail theft	141	22	Vehicles associated with organized theft groups, typically from out of state, targeting county retailers
Real Time Crime Center special alerts	21	17	Case-specific alerts: violent wanted suspects, missing or suicidal persons, domestic violence suspects
TOTAL	808	250	~25 alerts per week, year to date

These figures are year to date only. With the system in operation for more than five years, cumulative alert and case totals are several times larger.

Proactive Crime Prevention: Why the Alerts Matter

The value of these alerts is not simply in reacting to crime. It is in preventing it. Each alert category identifies offenders at the moment they enter the county, before a new crime is committed.

Stolen vehicles: 546 alerts on 184 vehicles

In the experience of Putnam County investigators, stolen vehicles are rarely used for simple transportation. They are routinely used by offenders traveling into Putnam to steal additional vehicles, commit larcenies from cars, and carry out other crimes while concealing their identity. A real-time alert allows officers to locate and intercept these vehicles before the next crime occurs, not after a resident becomes a victim.

Known burglary crews: 100 alerts on 27 vehicles

These alerts involve known burglary crew vehicles, tied to residential burglaries across the region, many connected to New York City based crews. When one of these vehicles appears in Putnam County, it is a strong indicator that a crew is canvassing neighborhoods for target homes. Notably, 46% of these alerts fired at county line cameras, meaning these vehicles were identified at the moment they entered the county, giving law enforcement the opportunity to deter or interdict before a home was broken into.

Organized retail theft: 141 alerts on 22 vehicles

These are criminal organizations, usually based out of state, that travel to Putnam County specifically to commit larcenies in local stores. LPR alerts allow patrol units and investigators to be positioned before the theft occurs and to connect local incidents to broader multi-jurisdiction patterns.

Real Time Crime Center special alerts: 21 alerts on 17 vehicles

Beyond property crime, LPR alerts have flagged violent wanted suspects entering the county, located suicidal and missing persons, and supported domestic violence cases. These are situations where minutes matter and a single camera activation can mean a life saved.

Everyday Investigative Use: The Carmel PD Example

Alert lists capture only part of the system's value. LPR data is also a routine investigative tool for cases that begin with nothing more than a vehicle description. The Town of Carmel Police Department alone documented 42 incidents from January 1 through August 11, 2026 in which LPR was used or referenced in the case, including hit-and-run crashes, stolen vehicles, larcenies, be-on-the-lookout alerts, a missing person, fraud, erratic drivers, a sex offense investigation, criminal mischief, and DWI. That is one department, in one town, averaging more than one LPR-assisted case per week.

How Putnam County's System Differs from Commercial LPR Networks

The agencies of Putnam County deliberately built this LPR program on a locally controlled, law enforcement governed model. This stands in sharp contrast to commercially networked LPR platforms (such as Flock-type systems) marketed to municipalities and homeowner associations nationwide.

	Putnam County's System	Typical Commercial LPR Network
Data storage	Stored on a government-owned server operated by law enforcement through the regional Real Time Crime Center	Stored in the vendor's commercial cloud, under the vendor's control

	partnership, never on a private vendor's commercial cloud	
Who has access	Local law enforcement officers only	Frequently shared across a nationwide network of subscribing agencies and private customers
Third-party integration	None. No integration with any third-party company or data broker.	Vendor-managed integrations and analytics products
National data sharing	Not shared on any national network	Often searchable by thousands of agencies nationwide by default
Search standard	An active criminal investigation is required to request any search of historical data	Varies by vendor and subscriber policy
Retention	~2 years, then records permanently age out	Varies by contract

The technology reads license plates only. It does not use facial recognition, does not identify drivers or passengers, and does not track the movements of ordinary residents. It compares plates against law enforcement alert lists of stolen vehicles, wanted persons, and active investigations.

Selected Case Results

All examples below are drawn from actual Putnam County cases. Identifying details have been removed.

- **Homicide (Town of Southeast).** LPR data, combined with video surveillance and forensic evidence, developed the critical leads that identified the suspect, who was arrested and confessed to Murder in the Second Degree and Robbery in the First Degree.
- **Homicide conviction (2022 case).** LPR reads corroborated cell-site records tracing the suspect's movements from Putnam through Connecticut to North Carolina and back, assisting in a murder conviction.
- **Violent arson/assault suspect intercepted.** A suspect wanted in Connecticut for arson and a knife assault was believed to be traveling to Putnam County to harm a family member. The Real Time Crime Center used an LPR alert to identify the vehicle as it entered the county, and officers apprehended the suspect before he could reach his intended victim.
- **Sexual assault of a minor.** LPR records independently corroborated the victim's account, placed the suspect vehicle at the relevant time and place, supported search warrants, and produced crucial corroborating evidence.
- **Armed robbery solved with no witnesses and no video.** A gas station clerk in Garrison was held up at gunpoint and zip-tied during a snowstorm, with no witnesses and no usable video. Investigators developed a vehicle of interest solely from LPR hits coming and going from the area, tracked it across the river, and identified the suspect. The case led to search warrants, his arrest, and federal prosecution. Without LPR, the case likely would never have been solved.

- **Sexual abuse of a 14-year-old victim.** In a second child sex crime case, LPR data confirmed the suspect's vehicle was near the crime locations on the dates in question, supporting the search warrants for phone and cell-site records that placed him at the scene. The subject was arrested and charged.
- **Commercial burglary and larceny patterns.** Numerous commercial burglaries and retail larcenies, including a multi-arrest string of gas station burglaries, were solved by cross-referencing brief vehicle descriptions against LPR data to develop plates and suspects. Nearly all of these offenders were unknown locally, coming from New York City or Connecticut. Without LPR these cases would have been extremely difficult to solve.
- **Sabotage of the County 911 Center.** After the 911 center's internet line was cut, taking emergency systems down for hours, video showed the suspect vehicle but not its plate. LPR data matched the vehicle to a registration, identifying the offender and leading to an arrest.
- **Multi-state identity-theft ring ("Felony Lane Gang").** LPR pattern analysis identified every vehicle used by a fraud crew operating across multiple counties, supporting search warrants and a federal investigation.
- **Identity-theft ring stopped in the act.** An LPR alert on a vehicle tied to an out-of-state fraud case allowed deputies to interrupt a larceny in progress. More than 40 counterfeit licenses and stolen property were recovered, and victims were notified.
- **Bank fraud ring.** An identity-theft crew out of NYC was withdrawing money from victims' accounts with fake IDs. LPR data located the vehicle, four subjects were arrested, and the ring is now under federal investigation.
- **Multi-state commercial burglary series.** A burglar hitting cell phone stores across six states used stolen plates and constantly changed vehicles. Analysis of LPR data reduced thousands of reads to a single suspect vehicle, leading to a federal case and arrest.
- **Stolen vehicle apprehensions.** Multiple occupants of a stolen vehicle were apprehended following an LPR hit on Danbury Road. In another case, an LPR read showed a stolen vehicle on a flatbed, allowing its recovery the same day.
- **Person in crisis located.** When NYPD reported a suicidal man believed to be driving to Putnam, an LPR hit narrowed the search area and helped locate him.
- **Results from day one (Kent).** Within the first three days of installing its first fixed reader on Route 311, Kent PD had a daytime residential burglary. The vehicle and suspect were identified only hours after the burglary took place.
- **NYC shooting suspect captured (Kent).** A Kent reader alerted over several days on a vehicle wanted in connection with a shooting in New York City. The subject was taken into custody and turned over to NYPD.
- **Six-county burglary series (Kent).** Kent readers led to the identification, investigation, and arrest of a subject involved in a string of commercial burglaries spanning six counties.
- **Rental vehicles and telematics (Kent).** LPR data developed suspect vehicles in a jewelry store burglary that identified both suspects, and in a residential burglary where the suspect used a rental car. A search warrant for the rental's telematics linked it to at least two additional burglaries in other jurisdictions as part of a larger multistate investigation.
- **Everyday interdiction (Kent).** A routine LPR alert on a suspended registration led to the arrest of a suspect with nine active warrants. Kent readers also developed the suspect vehicle in a vehicle title fraud case referred to DMV investigators, and have located missing and suicidal persons several times.

- **Regional case closures.** Putnam LPR bulletins and data have repeatedly enabled partner agencies in Connecticut and Dutchess County to identify suspects and close burglary and larceny cases, and their systems have done the same for Putnam investigations.

Jointly issued by:

Chief Anthony Hoffmann, Carmel Police Department

Chief Kevin Owens, Kent Police Department

Sheriff Brian Hess, Putnam County Sheriff's Office

With our partners in Brewster, Cold Spring, and the New York State Police

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

426.1 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.

426.2 POLICY

The policy of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office 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 office. Because such data may contain confidential information, it is not open to public review.

426.3 ADMINISTRATION

The ALPR technology, also known as License Plate Recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Putnam County Sheriff's Office 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.

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

426.4 OPERATIONS

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Office members shall not use, or allow others to use, the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose. Any violation of these outlined uses of ALPR data may result in disciplinary action by the Sheriff.

- (a) An ALPR shall only be used for official law enforcement business.
- (b) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation. 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-equipped vehicles to canvass areas around 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 office shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing office-approved training.
- (e) No ALPR operator may access confidential office, state or federal data unless authorized to do so.

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- (f) Prior to a tour of duty, members using an ALPR shall ensure that an upload of hot list data from the eJusticeNY Integrated Justice Portal has been performed for that day.
- (g) If practicable, the deputy should verify an ALPR response through the eJusticeNY Integrated Justice Portal before taking enforcement action that is based solely on an ALPR alert.

426.5 DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

The Operations Captain is responsible for ensuring systems and processes are in place for the proper collection and retention of ALPR data. Data will be transferred from vehicles to the designated storage in accordance with office procedures. All ALPR data should be transferred and purged from mobile workstations within 3 days.

All stored ALPR data should be retained in accordance with the established records retention schedule prepared and issued by the State Archives, State Education Department, pursuant to Section 57.25 of the Arts and Culture Affairs Law, and Part 185, Title 8 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York.. 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, or printed and added to the case file.

426.6 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

All data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Putnam County Sheriff's Office 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 office-related civil or administrative action.
- (c) ALPR system audits will be conducted monthly or when directed by the Sheriff.

426.7 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 required 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.

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- (b) The request is reviewed by the Operations Captain or the authorized designee and approved before the request is fulfilled.
- (c) The approved request is retained on file.
- (d) The sharing of ALPR data is subject to the terms of any existing sharing agreement between the Putnam County Sheriff's Office and any other law enforcement agency.

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

426.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy governs the capture, storage, query, retention, release and audit of digital license plate data obtained through Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology by the Putnam County Sheriff's Office (PCSO).

This policy applies to every ALPR resource PCSO uses, including vehicle-mounted readers, fixed and pole-mounted readers operated by PCSO, and PCSO member access to regional or vendor-hosted plate read pools reached through the MERLIN platform. It applies to all PCSO members who operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data.

This policy implements the Putnam County Policy for the Use of Automated License Plate Readers adopted by Putnam County Legislature Resolution #289 of December 19, 2023. Where the County policy sets a minimum requirement, this policy meets or exceeds it. This policy supplements, and does not replace, PCSO policies on Body-Worn Cameras, Mobile Video Recorders, Information Technology Use, Protected Information, Records Maintenance and Release, and the MERLIN Platform.

426.2 POLICY

It is the policy of PCSO to use ALPR technology to support public safety and criminal investigation while protecting the privacy rights of the public and the civil rights and civil liberties guaranteed by the First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

ALPR technology shall be used only to read license plates of vehicles exposed to public view, and only for the official law enforcement purposes authorized by this policy. All ALPR data is for official use only.

An ALPR read or alert is investigative lead information. It does not by itself establish reasonable suspicion, probable cause, or a confirmed wanted or stolen status, and it is not a lawful basis for a vehicle stop standing alone. Members shall confirm the underlying status through the eJusticeNY Integrated Justice Portal or dispatch before taking enforcement action.

Requests for ALPR data from persons or entities that are not law enforcement or prosecutorial agencies shall be processed under the Records Maintenance and Release Policy and applicable law, including the Freedom of Information Law, and should be reviewed by the County Attorney or the Office's legal advisor before response.

426.3 DEFINITIONS

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR): Technology, also known as License Plate Recognition (LPR), that uses optical character recognition to automatically read and record license plate characters, and compares those reads against hot list data.

Plate Read: A single automated capture of a license plate by an ALPR, including the associated image, date, time and location of capture.

Hot List: Data identifying license plates of stolen vehicles, stolen plates, plates associated with wanted persons, suspended or revoked registrations, AMBER Alerts, Missing Person or Vulnerable Adult Alerts, national data including NCIC records for similar categories, and manually entered plates associated with a specific criminal investigation.

Hit: An ALPR indication that a captured plate matches a hot list entry.

Query: Any search of stored ALPR data, including a plate search, a partial plate search, and a search of historical reads by date, time or location.

Query Log: The system record of an inquiry into ALPR data identifying the user, the date and time of the inquiry, and the plate or criteria queried.

Agency LPR Administrator: The PCSO member designated with administrative oversight of ALPR system deployment, operations, maintenance, user access, data retention and audit. The CSI Captain serves as the Agency LPR Administrator.

Preservation Request: A written demand, litigation hold, or notice received by PCSO directing that identified ALPR data be preserved pending legal action.

Disclosure Order: A subpoena, court order, judicial warrant, or other lawful process compelling PCSO to produce identified ALPR data.

426.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities below assign standing role ownership. The operational sequence for ALPR use is described in Section 426.5.

426.4.1 Dispatch Center

- a. Confirm wanted, stolen, registration and alert status through the appropriate law enforcement data system when a member reports an ALPR hit, and advise the requesting unit of the confirmed result.
- b. Relay hot list alert information to field units and supervisors.
- c. Document ALPR-related confirmations and dispositions in CAD.

426.4.2 Deputies

- a. Operate ALPR equipment and access ALPR data only after completing Office-approved training and only for the purposes authorized by this policy.
- b. Ensure every use has a legitimate law enforcement purpose, and independently verify a hit before taking enforcement action.
- c. Document ALPR involvement in the associated incident, arrest or case report.

426.4.3 Investigators

- a. Query stored ALPR data in furtherance of an active criminal investigation or another purpose authorized by this policy.
- b. Preserve ALPR data that is or may become evidence, and document its source and chain of custody.
- c. Coordinate requests for ALPR data from outside agencies through the Agency LPR Administrator.

426.4.4 Supervisors

- a. Ensure members under their command use ALPR resources only for authorized purposes and address suspected misuse without delay.
- b. Approve queries of stored historical ALPR data conducted outside an assigned case, and any bulk or date-range canvass of stored reads.
- c. Review reports in which an ALPR hit supported a stop, arrest or seizure to confirm that verification and confirmation occurred.

426.4.5 Division Commanders

- a. Ensure members within their commands are trained and use ALPR resources consistent with this policy.

- b. Review audit findings referred by the Agency LPR Administrator and address patterns of noncompliance through the chain of command.

426.4.6 Agency LPR Administrator

The CSI Captain serves as the Agency LPR Administrator and is responsible for:

- a. Installation, maintenance and configuration of ALPR equipment, and the systems and processes for proper collection and retention of ALPR data.
- b. Maintenance of hot list data and removal of stale or unsupported manual entries.
- c. Maintaining and monitoring the list of active authorized users, and ensuring that no vendor adds a user or grants system access without coordination with PCSO.
- d. Reviewing and approving requests for ALPR data and searches of ALPR data.
- e. Conducting and documenting system audits and query inspections.
- f. Maintaining training records for all authorized users.
- g. Maintaining on file the written agreement governing storage of PCSO ALPR data.
- h. Preparing the annual report required by Section 426.7.3 for the Sheriff.

The CSI Captain may assign members under his or her command to administer day-to-day ALPR operations.

426.5 PROCEDURES / OPERATIONS

426.5.1 Authorized Use

Sworn personnel are authorized to use ALPR technology only for the following purposes:

- a. To identify or locate a vehicle related to an investigation.
- b. To identify a vehicle owner or occupant when that individual has committed a criminal offense, is involved in or planning criminal conduct or activity, or is a possible missing person, crime victim or witness to criminal activity.
- c. To prevent, detect or assess a potential safety threat to members of the public or to public officials.
- d. To identify vehicles during routine patrol with suspended or revoked registrations.
- e. To regulate public parking areas.
- f. To monitor access to secured areas.

No member shall use, or allow another person to use, ALPR equipment or ALPR data for any purpose not listed above.

426.5.2 Prohibited Use

- a. Use of ALPR technology or ALPR data for personal, curiosity, financial, political or other non-official purposes is prohibited.
- b. ALPR technology shall not be used for investigative purposes when the request for identification is based solely upon religious, political or social views or activities, or upon participation in a noncriminal organization or lawful event.
- c. ALPR technology shall not be used to target any person or group based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, immigration status, or the exercise of rights protected by the First Amendment.

- d. No member shall query ALPR data concerning himself or herself, a family member, an acquaintance, or a public figure absent a documented official purpose.
- e. ALPR technology shall not be used to identify a driver, passenger or other occupant of a vehicle by facial recognition. No ALPR system operated by PCSO shall be integrated with any facial recognition system.
- f. PCSO shall not publish or transfer ALPR data to any national or commercial plate sharing network, and shall not store ALPR data on any system not operated by a law enforcement agency.
- g. No member shall disclose ALPR data to any person not authorized to receive it, and no member shall export, photograph or copy ALPR data except for a documented official purpose.

426.5.3 Hot List Management

- a. Prior to a tour of duty, members using an ALPR shall ensure that an upload of hot list data from the eJusticeNY Integrated Justice Portal has been performed for that day.
- b. Members shall not operate an ALPR on hot list data known to be out of date.
- c. A manual hot list entry shall be tied to a specific criminal investigation and shall identify the entering member and the associated case number. The Agency LPR Administrator shall remove manual entries when the underlying investigative need ends.

426.5.4 Alert Verification and Enforcement Action

When an ALPR indicates a hit, the following sequence applies:

- a. Before initiating a stop, the member shall visually verify that the captured plate image matches the plate number and state of registration of the subject vehicle.
- b. The member shall confirm the hit through the eJusticeNY Integrated Justice Portal or through dispatch.
- c. The member shall take enforcement action only after confirmation, and only where the stop is independently and constitutionally valid. An ALPR alert alone does not establish reasonable suspicion to stop a vehicle.
- d. The member shall advise dispatch of the action taken and shall document the hit, the verification, the confirmation and the disposition in the associated report.
- e. If verification or confirmation fails, or the plate does not match, the member shall not initiate a stop on the basis of the alert and shall report the discrepancy to the Agency LPR Administrator.

426.5.5 Automated Capture Compared to Query of Stored Data

- a. The automated capture of a license plate exposed to public view, and the comparison of that plate against hot list data, do not require reasonable suspicion or probable cause. An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation.
- b. A query of stored ALPR data is a separate action. A query shall be conducted only in furtherance of an active criminal investigation or another purpose authorized by Section 426.5.1.
- c. A query of stored historical ALPR data conducted outside a member's assigned case, and any bulk or date-range canvass of stored reads, requires supervisor approval before the query is run.

426.5.6 Crime Scene Canvass and Partial Plates

- a. An ALPR may be used to canvass license plates in the area of a crime scene. Particular consideration should be given to canvassing the areas around homicides, shootings and other major incidents.
- b. A partial license plate reported during a major crime should be entered into the ALPR system to attempt to identify a suspect vehicle, with the associated case number recorded.

426.5.7 Data Storage, Transfer and Retention

- a. PCSO ALPR data is recorded to and stored on a government-operated server maintained through the regional Real Time Crime Center partnership. Storage of PCSO ALPR data on any system not operated by a law enforcement agency is prohibited.
- b. ALPR data shall be transferred from mobile workstations to designated storage in accordance with Office procedures, and shall be purged from mobile workstations within three days.
- c. PCSO retains plate reads for approximately two years, after which reads age out of the system. This retention exceeds the eighteen-month minimum established by the County ALPR policy and the retention period established by the New York State Archives records retention and disposition schedule.
- d. Any change to the configured retention period shall be reported to the County Legislature in the annual report required by Section 426.7.3.
- e. Plate reads that have not become evidence and are not subject to a preservation request, disclosure order or other lawful hold shall be purged at the end of the retention period with the approval of the Agency LPR Administrator.

426.5.8 Evidence Preservation

- a. ALPR data that has become, or that a member reasonably believes will become, evidence in a criminal or civil action, or that is subject to a discovery request, preservation request, disclosure order or other lawful action to produce records, shall be preserved before the retention period expires.
- b. Preserved data shall be downloaded to portable media and booked into evidence, or printed and added to the case file, in accordance with Office evidence and records policies.
- c. ALPR data determined to have investigative or prosecution value shall be archived in accordance with applicable statutory timeframes.
- d. The member shall notify the Agency LPR Administrator of every preservation request and disclosure order received so that it is recorded for the annual report.

426.5.9 Releasing ALPR Data to Law Enforcement and Prosecutorial Agencies

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

- a. The requesting agency submits a written request that includes the name of the agency, the name and title of the person requesting, and the intended purpose of obtaining the information.
- b. The CSI Captain or the authorized designee reviews and approves the request before it is fulfilled.

- c. The reason for the dissemination and the identity of the authorized requesting person or agency shall be documented and approved by the Sheriff or the Sheriff's designee.
- d. The approved request and the record of dissemination are retained on file.
- e. Sharing is subject to the terms of any existing sharing agreement between PCSO and the receiving agency, and to all federal and New York State law on privacy, confidentiality and dissemination.
- f. PCSO may grant another law enforcement agency access to query PCSO ALPR data only where the receiving agency is bound by the permissible and prohibited uses of this policy under a written agreement.
- g. The number of requests received and whether each was granted shall be recorded for the annual report required by Section 426.7.3.

426.5.10 Federal and Out-of-State Requests

- a. A request for ALPR data from a federal agency or from an agency outside New York State shall be processed under Section 426.5.9 and shall additionally require the approval of the Sheriff.
- b. An out-of-state requester shall provide a written affirmation that the data will not be used to investigate, enforce or assist in the enforcement of any law that penalizes conduct lawful in New York State, including conduct relating to reproductive health care or gender-affirming care.
- c. PCSO shall not provide ALPR data in response to a request for the purpose of civil immigration enforcement.
- d. This section stands until the County Legislature and the County Attorney direct otherwise. The Sheriff's Office recommends that those bodies review whether further provisions governing federal and out-of-state access should be adopted.

426.5.11 Requests From Persons and Entities That Are Not Law Enforcement

- a. A request for ALPR data from a person or entity that is not a law enforcement or prosecutorial agency, including a request under the Freedom of Information Law, shall be processed under the Records Maintenance and Release Policy and applicable law.
- b. Such a request should be reviewed by the County Attorney or the Office's legal advisor before response.
- c. The number of such requests, including FOIL requests, and whether each was approved shall be recorded for the annual report required by Section 426.7.3.

426.5.12 Misuse and Data Breach

- a. A member who becomes aware of a suspected unauthorized use of ALPR data, or of a breach of an ALPR system or its data, shall report it to the Agency LPR Administrator and to the Sheriff without delay.
- b. The Agency LPR Administrator shall maintain a record of each reported incident, the inquiry conducted and the disposition.
- c. Confirmed misuse shall be referred through the chain of command and handled under the Personnel Complaints and Standards of Conduct policies. Misuse may result in loss of access and disciplinary action up to and including termination, and shall be referred for criminal investigation where the conduct warrants.
- d. Affected agencies and individuals shall be notified as required by law.

e. Every incident recorded under this section shall be reported in the annual report required by Section 426.7.3.

426.6 SUPERVISORY OVERSIGHT

- a. Supervisors shall ensure that members under their command use ALPR resources only for authorized purposes, and shall address suspected misuse promptly.
- b. Supervisors shall approve queries of stored historical ALPR data conducted outside an assigned case and any bulk or date-range canvass before the query is run.
- c. Supervisors shall review reports in which an ALPR hit supported a stop, arrest or seizure to confirm that plate verification and eJustice confirmation occurred and were documented.
- d. The Agency LPR Administrator or designee shall conduct ALPR system audits monthly, and when directed by the Sheriff. Monthly audits satisfy and exceed the quarterly minimum established by the County ALPR policy.
- e. In addition to system audits, the Agency LPR Administrator shall institute procedures and practices to evaluate and monitor the use of ALPR data and to measure compliance with this policy, including periodic and random inspections of individual queries against available query logs and associated case documentation.
- f. Audit and inspection results shall be documented, reported to the Sheriff, and summarized in the annual report required by Section 426.7.3. Findings of noncompliance shall be referred through the chain of command and addressed under Section 426.5.12.

426.7 DOCUMENTATION / TRAINING / REVIEW

426.7.1 Documentation and Query Logs

- a. All ALPR data downloaded to a mobile workstation and in storage shall be accessible only through a login and password protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time. Access shall be granted only on the written authorization of the Sheriff or the Sheriff's designee.
- b. ALPR systems shall record a query log identifying the user, the date and time of the inquiry, and the plate or criteria queried. Query logs shall be securely maintained and retained for audit purposes for six years in accordance with the New York State Archives records retention and disposition schedule.
- c. Where the ALPR system in use supports entry of a reason for search and an associated case or incident number, members shall record both at the time of the inquiry, and the Agency LPR Administrator shall configure the system to require those entries.
- d. Where the ALPR system in use does not support those fields, the query log required by subsection b, together with the case or incident report documenting the investigative purpose, serves as the record of the inquiry. Members shall document ALPR queries in the associated case or incident report so that each logged inquiry can be matched to an authorized purpose during audit.
- e. The Agency LPR Administrator shall report to the Sheriff, and in the annual report required by Section 426.7.3, which ALPR systems in use lack a reason and case number field, and the status of any effort to obtain that capability.

426.7.2 Training

- a. No member shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing Office-approved training. Training shall include, at a minimum, how to use the ALPR technology, this policy and its associated procedures, and applicable laws and privacy protections.
- b. Any change in hardware, software or applicable law, and any amendment to this policy resulting from review, shall be the subject of continued in-service training or the issuance of a training bulletin.
- c. Training completion shall be documented and maintained by the Agency LPR Administrator, and confirmed in the annual report required by Section 426.7.3.
- d. This policy is not a substitute for proper training in the use of ALPR technology.

426.7.3 Annual Report to the County Legislature

- a. The Sheriff shall produce an annual report to the Putnam County Legislature concerning PCSO use of ALPR technology. The report may be made available to the public.
- b. The report shall be filed no later than March 31 of each year and shall cover the preceding calendar year. The CSI Captain shall prepare the report for the Sheriff.
- c. Where a required figure cannot be produced from available records, the report shall state that expressly, state the reason, and state the date by which the figure will become reportable. No figure shall be estimated.
- d. The report shall also summarize audits and inspections conducted under Section 426.6 and training completed under Section 426.7.2.

426.7.4 Required Contents of the Annual Report

The annual report shall include, at a minimum:

- a. The total number of license plates scanned.
- b. The number of preservation requests.
- c. The number of disclosure orders.
- d. Any changes within PCSO that affect access to, use of, or retention of ALPR data.
- e. The number of disclosure orders resulting in criminal charges.
- f. The total number of license plate readers operated by PCSO.
- g. The number of license plate reads being retained.
- h. The number of requests made for ALPR data by private persons or commercial entities, including requests made under the Freedom of Information Law, and whether the requests were approved.
- i. The number of requests made for ALPR data by law enforcement agencies, to the extent known, and whether each request was granted.
- j. Any data breaches or unauthorized uses of the ALPR database.

426.7.5 Policy Review and Publication

- a. This policy shall be reviewed at least every five years, and sooner when ALPR capability, the storage or Real Time Crime Center arrangement, the County ALPR policy, or applicable law materially change.

b. This policy contains no law enforcement sensitive tactical information and is suitable for publication. A current copy shall be made available to the public on request and may be posted on the PCSO website.

426.8 REFERENCES / RELATED POLICIES

A. NYS DCJS Accreditation Standards

50.7 Intelligence Collection and Sharing
8.5 Records Retention
8.7 Records Management System
8.13 Legal Process
14.1 Rules of Conduct
25.1 Internal Affairs Function
33.3 Specialized Training
35.1 Personnel Training Records
47.2 Stopping Violators

B. PCSO Policies

320 Standards of Conduct
321 Information Technology Use
343 Body-Worn Cameras
422 Mobile Video Recorder
804 Records Maintenance and Release
805 Protected Information
808 MERLIN Platform and Real Time Crime Center
1010 Personnel Complaints

C. Labor Agreements

No provision of the PBA Contract or the PBA Memorandum of Agreement restricts the operational use of ALPR technology or the audit of ALPR system use. Discipline arising from misuse is subject to PBA Contract disciplinary and grievance provisions.

D. Other Sources

Putnam County Legislature Resolution #289 (December 19, 2023), Putnam County Policy for the Use of Automated License Plate Readers
NYS DCJS Municipal Police Training Council, License Plate Reader Model Policy (June 2022)
NYS Archives, Retention and Disposition Schedule LGS-1, Law Enforcement: Motor Vehicles, item 1241
Arts and Cultural Affairs Law Section 57.25; 8 NYCRR Part 185
IACP, Statement on the Responsible Use of Automated License Plate Recognition
Saratoga County Sheriff's Office Policy 422, Automated License Plate Readers

CHANGE SUMMARY TABLE

Section	Change Summary	Reference Source	Compliance / Impact
All	Full rewrite of Policy 426 into PCSO standard structure (Purpose, Policy, Definitions, Responsibilities by role, Procedures, Supervisory Oversight,	PCSO drafting standard; DCJS 50.7, 2.3	Aligns 426 with all current PCSO rewrites and with 808 MERLIN.

	Documentation/Training/Review, References). Lexipol filler removed.		
426.1	Scope expanded to cover vehicle-mounted readers, PCSO fixed readers, and member access to regional or vendor plate read pools through MERLIN. States that the policy implements County Resolution #289.	Res #289; PCSO 808	Closes the gap in which the prior policy addressed only vehicle-mounted units.
426.2	Adds First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment protections and the public view limitation. States that an ALPR read is lead information only. Replaces the categorical statement that data is not open to public review with FOIL and legal review.	Res #289, Policy and Section H	Removes an unsupportable disclosure position; resolves conflict with 808.
426.3	New Definitions section. Defines ALPR, plate read, hot list, hit, query, query log, Agency LPR Administrator, preservation request and disclosure order.	Res #289 Definitions; MPTC LPR Model Policy (2022)	Defines the two County report terms that previously had no PCSO meaning.
426.4	New Responsibilities section assigning standing role ownership to Dispatch, Deputies, Investigators, Supervisors, Division Commanders, and the Agency LPR Administrator.	PCSO role grouping standard; Res #289 Section A	Program ownership is now assignable and auditable.
426.4.6	Operations Captain replaced by CSI Captain as Agency LPR Administrator throughout. Adds vendor user control and hot list maintenance duties.	Sheriff's direction (2026); Res #289 Section A(1)-(3)	Matches system administration in 808 MERLIN.
426.5.1	Open-ended purpose language, including the undefined term electronic surveillance, replaced with six enumerated permissible uses.	Res #289, Permissible Use A and B	Removes authority broader than the County policy grants.
426.5.2	New Prohibited Use section. Bars personal and curiosity use; targeting by protected characteristic, immigration status or First Amendment activity; facial recognition integration; commercial network publishing, and non-law-enforcement storage.	Res #289 Section V; IACP ALPR statement	Prior policy had no prohibited use section.
426.5.4	Plate image verification and eJustice confirmation made mandatory rather than conditional. States that an alert alone does not establish reasonable suspicion.	Res #289, Use of Hot Lists 2; DCJS 47.2	This is the provision most likely to be tested after a contested stop.
426.5.5	Distinguishes automated capture and hot list comparison, which require no individualized suspicion, from a query of stored data, which requires an authorized purpose. Supervisor approval required for out-of-case, bulk and date-range queries.	Res #289, Permissible Use B and Section E	Ends the reading that the database may be searched without suspicion.
426.5.7	States the retention period: approximately two years, exceeding the eighteen-month County minimum and the State schedule. Documents government-server storage through the RTC partnership and bars non-law-enforcement storage.	Res #289 Sections B, C, D; LGS-1 item 1241	Resolves inconsistent retention figures in County publications.

426.5.9-426.5.11	Adds Sheriff approval and documentation for outside dissemination; a written-agreement requirement for granting query access; a new federal and out-of-state provision requiring Sheriff approval and a written affirmation from out-of-state requesters; and a bar on release for civil immigration enforcement.	Res #289, Use of Hot Lists 3 and Section H; S7713A (pending)	Closes a category the prior policy and the County policy left unaddressed.
426.5.12	New misuse and data breach section: immediate reporting, administrator record, referral under 1010 and 320, criminal referral where warranted, and legal notification.	Res #289, audit content (j); DCJS 25.1	Neither prior document stated how such an event is handled.
426.6	Audits set at monthly, exceeding the County quarterly minimum. Adds random inspection of individual queries, supervisor review of ALPR-supported stops, and documented findings reported to the Sheriff.	Res #289 Section G; DCJS 50.7	Prior policy audited the system but not whether searches were justified.
426.7.1	Adds six-year retention of query logs. Requires reason and case number entry where the system supports those fields, and case report documentation where it does not, with the capability gap reported annually.	Res #289 Sections E and F	Documents a known system limitation rather than stating a requirement PCSO cannot meet.
426.7.2	Training content, in-service refresher on hardware, software, law or policy change, and documented training records.	Res #289 training A and B; DCJS 33.3, 35.1	Prior policy required training without specifying content.
426.7.3-426.7.4	New annual report to the County Legislature with the ten required elements, a March 31 filing date, and a bar on estimated figures where a figure is not producible.	Res #289, Accountability c and audit contents (a)-(j)	Prior policy contained no reporting requirement.
426.7.5	Five-year review cycle and a statement that the policy is suitable for publication.	DCJS 2.3; A907A (pending)	Positions PCSO ahead of pending public-posting legislation.

COMMANDING OFFICERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO SEE THAT MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMANDS ARE APPRISED OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS ORDER AND THAT ITS PROVISIONS ARE MET

Brian M Hess
Sheriff