





# DECEMBER 2025

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398891b0a42940c5b6f152723e174b08	San Diego CA PD	1	484	08/01/2025	01:30:00 PM UTC	12/02/2025	02:29:55 PM UTC	lookup

4TH AMENDMENT PROJECT | LICENSE PLATE READERS | PRIVATE PROPERTY

# Police Have Reportedly Used License Plate Readers to Stalk Romantic Interests at Least 14 Times in Recent Years

Christopher Ingraham · April 27, 2026



Across the United States, communities are [rethinking their use](#) of Flock cameras and other automated license plate reader (ALPR) systems, and in many cases [ending them completely](#). Concerns about privacy, security, and always-on government surveillance are driving these changes, especially as new police technologies [test the limits of the Fourth Amendment](#).

The proliferation of police surveillance has led to repeated abuse. One shockingly common form: police officers using ALPR camera networks to keep tabs on their romantic interests, including current partners, exes, and even strangers who unwittingly caught their eye in public.

An Institute for Justice review of media reports has identified at least 14 cases nationwide of officers allegedly abusing ALPR data this way, with the bulk of those incidents happening since 2024. Nearly all of these officers were criminally charged and lost their jobs, either by resigning or getting fired.

Flock Safety and other ALPR providers emphasize that they have internal safeguards to prevent this kind of misuse. But only a few of the 14 analyzed cases were initially discovered through internal investigations, according to media reports. Most incidents came to light only after victims reported the officers' behavior to the police, typically in the context of a broader stalking allegation.

"The fundamental problem with these systems is that they place private information about people's movements over time in the hands of every officer," said [Michael Soyfer](#), an Institute for Justice attorney who is representing residents of [San Jose](#) and [Norfolk](#) in lawsuits challenging their cities' ALPR surveillance networks. "Without the constitutional safeguard of a warrant requirement, that predictably allows officers to abuse their access to these systems for things like stalking romantic partners."

In March, for instance, an officer [resigned from the Milwaukee Police Department](#) after allegedly using the department's network of ALPRs to track his romantic partner and one of the partner's exes nearly 180 times over a two-month period. His misconduct surfaced only after his victims [looked up their license plate numbers](#) on [HaveIBeenFlocked.com](#), which collects

Flock audit data that some local governments have made publicly available. MPD [subsequently revoked most officers' access](#) to the Flock database.

Two other Wisconsin officers have also been accused of Flock stalking in the past year. In Menasha, an officer was [placed on leave and charged with misconduct in office](#) after his ex-girlfriend filed a complaint with another police department. Two hours away in Kenosha, a sheriff's deputy [resigned](#) after internal investigators found he used the department's Flock system to keep tabs on a coworker with whom he was romantically involved. The sheriff's office still gave him severance pay.

In at least one instance, an officer used an ALPR system to stalk a stranger they wanted to pursue romantically. Earlier this year in Florida, a Monroe County sheriff's deputy allegedly used an ALPR system to [track and eventually pull over](#) a woman he met while providing security on a TV set.

The 14 cases listed below are almost certainly an undercount. Not all police misconduct gets detected, and some cases likely get resolved quietly. Officers frequently [cite vague or inaccurate reasons](#) for their searches in ALPR systems, sometimes to evade detection of misconduct.

The list also excludes ALPR abuse that doesn't conclusively involve romantic partners, like the Georgia police chief arrested for using Flock data to [stalk and harass multiple unidentified people](#), or the Joplin, Missouri, officer who left his department after committing [unspecified policy violations](#) involving Flock cameras.

Last year the Institute for Justice launched the [Plate Privacy Project](#), a joint effort to push back against warrantless mass surveillance through litigation, legislation, activism, and media.

#### List of known ALPR romantic stalking cases

- **Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, 2021:** Officer Michael McSherry [pleaded guilty to stalking charges](#) after [using readers](#) to track his estranged wife and other family members.
- **Kechi, Kansas, 2023:** Kechi Lieutenant Victor Heiar [pleaded guilty to computer crime and stalking](#) after using Flock cameras to track his estranged wife.
- **Sedgwick, Kansas, 2023:** Police Chief [Lee Nygaard resigned](#) after using Flock cameras to track his ex-girlfriend and her new boyfriend more than 200 times over several months.
- **Costa Mesa, California, 2023:** Officer Robert Josett [used a Flock camera system](#) to track his mistress and her other romantic interests. Josett pleaded guilty to multiple criminal charges in April 2026.
- **Riverside County, California, 2024:** After being arrested for kidnapping his ex-fiancée, Deputy Alexander Vanny allegedly used the department's Flock system to [track one of her friends](#). In December 2025 he was [convicted of multiple charges](#) in a jury trial.
- **Orange City, Florida, 2024:** Officer Jarmarus Brown allegedly used ALPRs to stalk his girlfriend and her family members more than 100 times over seven months. Brown was [arrested and charged in 2025](#).
- **Shelby County, Tennessee, 2024:** Deputy Thadius Gordon was [relieved of duty](#) after allegedly using an ALPR database to track his ex-wife's location more than 100 times.
- **Louisville, Kentucky, 2025:** Officer Roberto Cedeno was [charged with multiple felonies](#) after allegedly using the city's ALPR system to track an ex-partner and her friends hundreds of times over two months.
- **Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 2025:** Officer Josue Ayala allegedly used the department's network of Flock ALPRs to track a woman he was dating and her ex-partner nearly 180 times over a two-month period. Ayala [resigned](#) in 2026 after being charged with misconduct in public office.
- **Jerome County, Idaho, 2025:** Sheriff George Oppedyk used a Flock system to search for his wife's vehicle hundreds of times. Idaho's Attorney General concluded that no crime was committed, but [Oppedyk retired in April 2026](#), two years before his term of office ended.
- **Kenosha County, Wisconsin, 2025:** Sheriff's Deputy Frank McGrath [resigned with severance pay](#) after internal investigators found he used the department's Flock system to keep tabs on another deputy with whom he was

romantically involved.

- **Menasha, Wisconsin, 2025:** Officer Cristian Morales was [placed on leave and charged with misconduct in office](#) after his ex-girlfriend filed a complaint alleging that he used a Flock system to track her.
- **Bonner Springs, Kansas, 2025:** Detective Kyle Rector [allegedly used license plate readers to track his estranged wife](#) and two men he suspected were her new romantic partners. He was charged with multiple crimes in March 2026.
- **Monroe County, Florida, 2026:** Sheriff's Deputy Lamar Roman allegedly used an ALPR system to [track and eventually pull over](#) a woman he had met while providing security on a TV set. Roman was arrested and charged with accessing a computer or electronic device without authorization.