

STARTER PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST — ANY TEXAS COUNTY

Find out what is actually happening in your county

WHY THIS DOCUMENT EXISTS

One Texas county party sent eleven separate records requests before learning which questions actually matter. **This is the distillation of that work — the fourteen items that produced everything useful.** You can skip the eleven.

Three things learned the hard way, built into the request below:

- 1. Address it to the County, not just the Sheriff.** Requests sent only to a sheriff's office come back "no responsive documents" — because the contract, the invoices, and the governing-body records sit with the Auditor and the County Judge. That single error accounts for most stonewalling.
- 2. Demand item-by-item answers.** A blanket "we have nothing" is unfalsifiable. A per-item answer is a document you can hold up against their own policy.
- 3. Ask for the ALPR policy first.** Almost every agency has one, most will produce it without a fight, and it will tell you exactly what audits, logs, and agreements are *supposed* to exist. **Then ask for those.** When they say those records don't exist, you have the agency's own policy contradicting it — and that contradiction is worth more than any argument you could make.

Send it to two custodians in parallel — the Sheriff's Office and the County Auditor — and to your city police department separately. *Delete this box before sending.*

[DATE]

BY EMAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL

[Sheriff / Chief of Police / County Auditor / City Secretary]
[Agency], [Address]

cc: County Judge · County Auditor · County Clerk

RE: REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION — Texas Government Code Chapter 552

Pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act, I request copies of the existing public records described below in the possession, custody, or control of [COUNTY] County / the City of [___] — including records held by the Sheriff's Office, the County Judge, the Commissioners Court, the County Auditor, and the County Treasurer.

“ALPR” means any automated license plate reader or comparable vehicle-identification technology, regardless of vendor, including systems provided by Flock Safety.

Time period: January 1, 2020 to the present.

RECORDS REQUESTED

Policy and authorization

1. The agency’s written **ALPR policy**, including every version and revision, with effective dates.
2. All **Commissioners Court or City Council orders, resolutions, minutes, and agenda items** approving, ratifying, or authorizing any ALPR contract, purchase, or program.
3. The **posted agenda and notice** for each such meeting, with the complete caption text, and records showing the **date and time of posting**.
4. Records identifying **who signed** any ALPR contract on behalf of the government, the **date signed**, and the **written authority** relied upon to bind it.

Money

5. The complete **contract**, including all exhibits, amendments, renewals, and the **current term and renewal date**.
6. All **invoices, purchase orders, and payment records**, and the total paid by fiscal year.
7. All **bid solicitations, bid tabulations, sole-source justifications, or exemption determinations** relied upon to acquire the system, including any determination under Chapter 262 of the Local Government Code.
8. All **grant applications and awards** funding any part of the program.

Operations — ask for these using your own agency’s policy as the roadmap

9. All **audit trails and access logs** required by the agency’s ALPR policy, including records of queries run, by whom, when, and the stated justification.
10. All **completed audits or compliance reviews** required by that policy.
11. All **data-sharing agreements, MOUs, or user agreements** with any other agency, including the Texas Department of Public Safety, any fusion center, any federal agency, and any out-of-state agency.
12. All records identifying **camera locations** and installation dates.
13. All records of any **misuse, unauthorized access, security incident, or disciplinary action** involving the system.
14. All records of any **TxDOT Multiple Use Agreement or roadway permit** for camera placement in state right-of-way.

PROCEDURAL REQUESTS — DO NOT DELETE THESE

- Please produce in electronic format by email or download link.

- **If no responsive record exists as to a numbered item, please state that in writing as to that item specifically.** A general statement that no responsive records exist will not permit me to evaluate the response.
- Please identify **which offices and custodians were searched** and **what search terms were used**, including whether email, text messages, and personally owned devices were searched as contemplated by §552.233.
- Under **§552.022(a)(3)**, information in a contract or account relating to the expenditure of public funds is expressly public. I ask that items 5 through 8 be treated accordingly and produced promptly under §552.221.
- If any portion is withheld, identify the specific exception as to **each record** and comply with §552.301, including providing me the written notice and copy of the ruling request required by §552.301(d).
- If a previous determination is relied upon, identify it specifically.
- Under §552.222, if any portion requires clarification, identify **that specific portion** rather than treating the request as overbroad. I am glad to narrow by date or custodian.
- If costs will exceed \$40.00, provide an itemized estimate before proceeding, per §552.2615.
- Public information includes information held by a vendor on the government's behalf where the government owns it or has a right of access. Please include records held by the ALPR vendor on that basis.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

[NAME]

[Address] · [Email] · [Phone]

WHAT TO DO WITH WHAT COMES BACK — delete before sending

Log every response the day it arrives, quoting the agency's exact words.

Paraphrases are useless as evidence.

Compare item 1 against items 9, 10, and 11. If the policy mandates audit trails and the agency says no audit records exist, you have documented either non-compliance with its own policy or an inadequate search. **That is your strongest finding and it costs nothing to obtain.**

Compare item 1's effective date against item 2's earliest date. If the policy predates any governing-body approval, ask who authorized the program in the gap.

Put item 5's renewal date on your calendar immediately. It is the only date on which a camera actually comes down.

Ten business days is the benchmark. If the agency neither produces nor seeks an Attorney General ruling within ten business days, note it — that is a §552.221 problem.

Never explain why you want the records. §552.222(a) forbids them from asking, and you do not answer.