

Frequently Asked Questions

Permitting for the Installation and Maintenance of Public Safety Sensors

1. What is a public safety sensor?

A public safety sensor is a device used to capture specific data for processing by law enforcement and public safety entities. Examples include license plate readers (LPRs), gunshot detection devices, surveillance cameras, and other similar devices.

Cameras intended for automated active traffic enforcement—red light running, speed, stop sign, and railroad crossing—are not considered public safety sensors.

2. Who can apply for a permit to install public safety sensors?

ALDOT will only grant permits for public safety sensors to law enforcement agencies, whether connected to city/municipality, county, or State government. Similarly, the use of the accommodated sensors and all collected data must be strictly limited to law enforcement or public safety purposes.

3. How do I apply to install a public safety sensor on ALDOT right-of-way (ROW)?

Go to www.dot.state.al.us and click on Business, then click on Permits and Agreements, then click on the Public Safety Sensors section. Then download Permit Form MB-14 and fill it out completely, including the required signatures. Attach any required supporting documentation as listed in Question 9 below to create a complete permit package. Submit the complete package by email to publicsafetysensors@dot.state.al.us for review and approval. If electronic submission is not an option, mail the package to:

The Alabama Department of Transportation
Attn: Maintenance Bureau, Permits & Operations
1409 Coliseum Blvd.
Montgomery, AL 36110

ALDOT can only receive files of up to 25MB in size through email submission. If your files are greater than 25MB, then either split the package into multiple emails or submit the package by mail to the above address.

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4. Where can a permanent public safety sensor be installed on ALDOT ROW?

Attachment of permanent facilities to existing structures will be limited to utility and luminaire poles. ALDOT may also choose to accommodate attachment to wooden traffic signal power disconnect poles located at signalized intersections, on the vertical elements of overhead sign structures, or on the vertical elements of green destination signs.

Attachment within controlled-access ROW (i.e. interstate highways, primarily) will be limited to the vertical elements of overhead sign structures and to the vertical elements of green destination and/or blue information signs. Accommodation for attached sensors will not be made on any other type of roadway sign—regulatory, warning, cultural interest, recreational, memorial, etc.

The installation of new structures for sensor accommodation will be restricted to locations approved by ALDOT personnel, with the primary goals of (1) monitoring a corridor of traffic rather than a specific location and (2) limiting impact to maintenance operations and other current and future accommodated utilities. Installation of these new structures will be located outside of the established clear zone. If ALDOT allows a device to be located within the clear zone, that device must be mounted on a breakaway post from the ALDOT List of Qualified Materials, Sources, and Devices. New structures may be accommodated on controlled-access ROW only within the limits of an interchange. Any installed posts must stand no more than 10 feet above ground level.

Devices proposed for controlled-access routes (i.e. interstates) may be permitted within one (1) mile each direction of the limits of an interchange.

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5. How many permanent public safety sensors can be attached to a new or existing structure?

ALDOT will allow only one device per structure for green destination and blue information sign structures. Applicants will also be limited to one device per structure as a rule for all other circumstances unless (1) the Applicant can demonstrate, using engineering documentation, that a given structure can safely support more than one device and (2) ALDOT allows the placement of more than one sensor on said structure.

6. Where can a portable public safety sensor be temporarily placed on ALDOT ROW?

Portable facilities cannot be placed on controlled-access ROW. Portable facilities may be accommodated within non-controlled-access ROW at ALDOT discretion, provided the Applicant accounts for applicable road safety provisions, including but not limited to appropriate stopping sight distance, clear zone restrictions, and lack of interference with maintenance operations. In no case will a portable facility be located immediately adjacent to a traveled way or within the limits of a safety shoulder. All such facilities should remain in a single location for a period no greater than one (1) month in duration. The Applicant should notify the local ALDOT District Office when the facilities are first placed on ROW and any time said facilities are relocated.

7. Can more than one public safety sensor location be permitted with a single permit application?

A consolidated “batch” application for the accommodation of multiple sensors may be submitted using a single agreement and package, provided that all sensors are of the same type (with permanent and portable being considered separate types), within a single entity’s jurisdiction, and within the limits of a single ALDOT District. Proposed sites within a consolidated application will be evaluated individually, and one or more sites may be denied without resulting in the denial of the application entirely. Individual sites may become ineligible in the future without revoking an entire permit.

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8. What if I have already installed public safety sensors on ALDOT ROW without a permit?

For any public safety sensors already placed or erected on State ROW, law enforcement agencies have until January 31, 2023, to submit requests to allow those devices to remain. Even installations erected under a prior agreement with ALDOT must be permitted under these new requirements. All existing devices must be brought into compliance with current ALDOT requirements for public safety sensors. For areas with multiple existing sensors, each agency can submit a single consolidated application for all devices within their jurisdiction and within the limits of a single ALDOT District. If a permit application has not been submitted for a specific device before February 1, 2023, that unpermitted facility will be considered an unlawful encroachment and ALDOT will pursue removal per established encroachment procedures.

9. What needs to be included for my permit submittal to be considered complete?

The following items represent the most common requirements from applicants for submittals of this type. Applicants can consult the District Office Permit Coordinator prior to submission to help develop a complete permit application based on the scope of an individual proposal. To find which District personnel to contact, visit the Public Safety Sensors webpage. ALDOT, at Departmental discretion, may require additional information not listed herein to better define project scope or variance to common procedures.

- A complete MB-14 Permit Form
- Originating Agency Identifier (ORI) for the Applicant
- Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Access Security Agreement for each and every LPR Vendor
- North arrow and legend
- Posted Speed Limit
- Scale
- Highway plan view including:
 - ❖ Interstate or State highway numbers and milepost to the nearest 0.01 mile
 - ❖ Highway width (include median width if multiple lanes)
 - ❖ All travel ways if multiple lane and service roads
 - ❖ Name and direction of nearest town each way

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- Distance from edge of traveled way to facility location
- Distance from facility location to ROW line
- Lat/Long for each device location
- Indication of device orientation and field of view
- Device specifications (including power source, method of data transmission, and manufacturer details)
- If external fiber or power connection required/allowed:
 - ❖ Depth of Bury along path to connection point (36” minimum beneath the flow line of ditch all ROW, 48” minimum under pavement). Additional depth may be required at Departmental discretion.
 - ❖ Survey of existing utilities and possible conflicts (2’ minimum separation from existing buried utilities)
 - ❖ Compliance with relevant Utility Permitting requirements—found at ALDOT’s website (www.dot.state.al.us) by going through Business > Permits and Agreements > Public Safety Sensors > Permitting Resources > Utilities Manual
- Diagram of structure, whether attachment or installation
 - ❖ If new structure for permanent installation, a survey of existing utilities in ground is required.
 - ❖ New structures must be selected from the ALDOT List of Qualified Materials, Sources, and Devices.
- Stopping sight distance profile for portable facilities
- Temporary traffic control plans for placement/installation
- Applicable ALDOT standard permitting notes

10. Do I need a bond to install public safety sensors on ALDOT ROW?

No. Since these devices will only be permissible to law enforcement agencies connected to city/municipality, county, or State government, ALDOT will waive the standard performance bond requirements.

11. How long does it take for ALDOT to review a permit once it has been submitted?

ALDOT has a target review and approval period of 90 days for all permit types.

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12. Who at ALDOT must review the submitted permit package for approval?

The permit package will be reviewed by the appropriate ALDOT District office, Area office, and the Central Office. The Central Office has final approving authority.

13. If approved, how long is a public safety sensor valid?

Approved permits will be valid for a contract period of three (3) years. The applying law enforcement agency will be responsible for maintaining internal record of the renewal timeline for any active permit(s) and for seeking reapplication in a timely manner to avoid any lapse in permitted accommodation.

14. What would cause my permit to be denied or revoked?

Applicants must provide a verifiable ORI and any relevant ALEA CJIS Access Security Agreements. Failure to do so will result in a **denied** application.

Applicants insisting upon placing a public safety sensor at a location that cannot be approved by ALDOT will have that application **denied**.

Any data collected via public safety sensor cannot be monetized or remonetized post-collection or used for purposes beyond the scope of the agreement(s) approved as part of a permit. Failure to abide by this condition or any of the provisions in Permit Form MB-14 will result in any connected permit agreement being **revoked**.

15. If I have any additional question(s), who do I contact?

Please send your question(s) regarding this permitting process to publicsafetysensors@dot.state.al.us. Any question(s) regarding the vendor packet or ALEA's role can be submitted to ICU@alea.gov.