

The DeFlock Playbook

DeFlock California

Public Playbook V1.5 · Revised 29 August 2026

Our point of view. DeFlock California opposes indiscriminate automated tracking of people who are not suspected of a crime. We believe law enforcement should have effective tools to investigate actual suspects without creating searchable histories of everybody else's movements. This is an advocacy project with a point of view, not a government information service. Our factual claims, however, should still be checkable against credible sources.

Catch the bad guys. Don't track anybody else.

1. Facts first

- Every factual claim should be verified. We do not invent people, titles, incidents, quotations, statistics, costs, camera counts, dates, contact information, product capabilities, or deployment claims.
- If evidence is missing or conflicting, we say what we could not verify and leave unsupported claims out.
- Advocacy, opinion, sourced fact, and legal conclusions should remain distinguishable.

2. Show the sources

- Whenever practical, factual assertions on DeFlock websites are accompanied by clickable sources that directly support them.
- We prefer primary records: city and county documents, police or sheriff transparency pages, contracts, agendas, staff reports, minutes, budgets, official GIS, statutes, attorney-general guidance, and manufacturer documentation.
- We do not stretch a source beyond what it establishes. Proposed, approved, deployed, suspended, delayed, rejected, and ended are different facts.
- Facts that change over time — officials, camera counts, budgets, contracts, policies, and retention periods — should be dated.

3. Verify the local facts

- Each jurisdiction should have a verified local fact sheet behind its published material. A neighboring city's facts are never assumed to apply locally.
- We independently verify local vendor/program status, camera counts, contracts, spending, retention, sharing, policies, decision-makers, and other jurisdiction-specific claims before publication.
- Phone numbers and email addresses for decision-makers are held to an especially high standard: each field is published only after triple verification from credible or reliable sources. Unverified fields are omitted rather than guessed.

4. Follow the money — carefully

- We distinguish contract ceilings from actual spending and distinguish general-fund or taxpayer spending from grants, asset-seizure funds, and other sources.
- Where records allow it, we also want to understand the broader taxpayer cost of an ALPR program: subscriptions, installation, maintenance, staff time, dispatch, IT, administration, training, facilities, and other defensible costs.
- We label numbers as documented, calculated, estimated, or unknown rather than presenting assumptions as facts.

5. Ask for the surveillance denominator

- Success stories often report an arrest, recovery, alert, or investigative result. Those outcomes matter, but scale matters too.
 - Where records exist, we seek the total observations captured, unique plates or vehicles recorded, searches, alerts, actionable alerts, stops, recoveries, arrests, and false or non-actionable alerts over the same period.
 - That makes it possible to discuss not only what the system found, but how much routine travel was recorded in order to find it.
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6. Peaceful, lawful advocacy

- DeFlock advocacy is peaceful and lawful. We reject vandalism, property damage, threats, harassment, and illegal activity.
 - We direct public pressure toward officials who can actually change policy — councils, boards of supervisors, city or county executives, police chiefs, sheriffs, and other decision-makers — not dispatchers or front-line employees.
 - We encourage people to use their First Amendment rights loudly, proudly, peacefully, and legally to defend their Fourth Amendment rights.
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7. Careful constitutional language

- ALPR programs can raise serious Fourth Amendment and privacy concerns, particularly when observations are retained, shared, aggregated, and made searchable.
- We do not casually declare that a specific local deployment is unconstitutional. Legal claims should be supported by authority that actually applies to the facts at hand.
- Our core policy objection does not depend on pretending ALPRs never help solve crimes: the question is whether solving some crimes requires creating searchable records of everybody else.

8. Technology claims require evidence

- We distinguish technology that exists in the market from technology actually deployed in a particular jurisdiction.
 - A vendor capability, product announcement, or feature description is not proof that a city or county uses that capability.
 - When discussing sharing, retention, hotlists, search requirements, integrations, or other features, we look for local records or other evidence that connects the capability to the jurisdiction.
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9. DeFlock means all ALPRs

Flock Safety is a company, and Flock is not the only manufacturer of automated license plate readers. Because Flock is one of the most recognizable names associated with roadside ALPR systems, people sometimes use “Flock” conversationally as shorthand for the broader technology — much as familiar brand names such as Kleenex or Xerox are sometimes used conversationally for an entire category of products.

That is how we use the term DeFlock. Our concern is not limited to one company or one logo on a camera. Replacing a Flock Safety camera with another manufacturer’s ALPR does not address our underlying concerns about indiscriminate collection, retention, sharing, and searching of vehicle-location information.

Our concern is ALPR surveillance regardless of the logo on the camera.

“Flock” remains a brand and trademark associated with Flock Safety. This comparison describes conversational shorthand; it is not a claim that the Flock name has legally become a generic trademark.

The public Resources pages maintain a growing, sourced directory of ALPR manufacturers and product families, with links to manufacturer information where practical. Inclusion of a product in that directory is not evidence that it is deployed in any particular community.

10. Corrections and uncertainty

- If credible criticism identifies a possible error, we go back to the current page and the underlying records rather than defending an old draft.
 - If official sources conflict, we investigate dates and authority and prefer the current authoritative record. Material uncertainty should be disclosed.
 - Readers who can document an error or provide a better primary source should be able to contact the campaign.
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11. How DeFlock California is organized

- DeFlock California is organized geographically: California → region → county → city/town. Local pages carry local evidence while statewide and regional material can be shared so common explanations do not drift from place to place.
- Within the Bay Area hierarchy, **DeFlock Bay Area** remains the primary regional brand. The **BASTARDS Project — Bay Area Stop Tracking, Automated Recording Devices and Surveillance** originated in the Bay Area and is a project signature used throughout the DeFlock network. Its Bay Area origin does not limit its appearance to Bay Area jurisdictions.
- DeFlock.org is a separate, unrelated project; our sites should not imply ownership of or affiliation with it.
- Livermore is the reference implementation for the current city-site content model. Other jurisdictions should match its depth and evidence discipline while retaining their own facts.
- Every county and city page should make it easy to move back up the geographic hierarchy and find the appropriate local community.

12. Maps and graphics

- Jurisdiction boundaries should come from authoritative government GIS when available. We do not hand-trace a boundary merely because obtaining the real geometry is inconvenient.
- Map graphics are presentation assets derived from verified geometry; the source geometry remains the geographic source of truth.
- Camera maps should include a completeness caveat. A public map is evidence of what we have documented, not a claim that every camera has been found.
- The canonical Map Disclaimer is a network-wide footer requirement and should appear on every DeFlock page, whether or not that particular page contains a map.

Map Disclaimer: Maps and geographic artwork on this site are for illustrative purposes only. They may not be accurate and should not be used for navigation—or you **will** get lost!

13. Our campaign language

- Campaign rhetoric is advocacy, not evidence. We use it to express our position, not to substitute for sourcing.
- Approved lines include: “One ALPR camera is one ALPR camera too many.”; “Let’s get rid of these Orwellian nightmares before they grow roots.”; “Catch the bad guys. Don’t track anybody else.”; and “The photograph isn’t the issue. The searchable history is.”
- We interleave campaign language with substantive information rather than presenting a wall of slogans.

14. Reproduce this in your community

- Start with primary records: contracts, agendas, staff reports, budgets, policies, transparency pages, public-records responses, and official GIS.
- Build a dated local fact sheet before writing advocacy copy. Separate what you know from what you suspect.
- Identify the officials who actually control the program. Verify their contact information. Publish sources beside important claims.
- Ask about cost, retention, sharing, searches, alerts, outcomes, and the surveillance denominator. Keep records of what could not be verified.
- Advocate forcefully, peacefully, and legally. Invite corrections. Make it easy for residents to inspect the evidence themselves.

15. Funding and independence

- DeFlock is a volunteer advocacy effort. Contributions may help pay for domains, hosting, public-records requests, printed materials, and otherwise unpaid campaign work.
- Contributions do not purchase favorable coverage, access, or influence over what the project publishes.
- Support information is available through participating DeFlock project websites.

16. Publish the Playbook in accessible formats

- The public Playbook should be available both as a normal responsive HTML page that can be read without downloading a file and as a downloadable PDF.
- The HTML and PDF editions are two representations of the same publication and should be updated together.
- Shared Resources pages should offer readers both choices: **Read Online (HTML)** and **Download PDF**.

A standing invitation: check our work

You do not have to agree with DeFlock California's policy position to evaluate our evidence. Follow the sources, compare our wording with the underlying records, and tell us when something is wrong or incomplete. A public-interest campaign should be willing to show its work.

DeFlock California · Catch the bad guys. Don't track anybody else.

A volunteer advocacy resource for privacy, civil liberties, transparency and accountable government.

Not affiliated with Flock Safety, DeFlock.org, EFF, ACLU, Leonardo, Axon, @LoyalMoses, or any government agency unless expressly stated.

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Accuracy Disclaimer: We work to keep this information accurate and current. Government policies, officials, contracts, deployments, and technology can change. Readers are encouraged to consult the cited primary sources and report documented corrections.

Peaceful & Lawful Advocacy: DeFlock does not condone vandalism, threats, harassment, or illegal activity. We advocate peaceful, lawful civic participation.

BASTARDS Project: *(Bay Area Stop Tracking, Automated Recording Devices and Surveillance)*

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