



NEW KENT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Lee S. Bailey, Sheriff

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Flock Camera Crime Deterrence and Investigative Impact

Currently, our agency has not conducted a formal analysis to determine the specific impact Flock cameras have had on deterring or preventing crime. Crime deterrence is difficult to accurately measure because there are numerous variables that can influence criminal activity, including the date, time, location, type of crime, opportunity, offender behavior, and many other factors. Because of these variables, it would be difficult to definitively attribute an increase or decrease in crime directly to the presence of Flock cameras.

Additionally, our agency does not currently have a dedicated crime analyst who can devote the necessary time to reviewing large amounts of crime data, identifying trends, comparing locations, and analyzing patterns associated with the placement and use of Flock cameras. Having a crime analyst would be extremely beneficial to our agency; however, such a position has not been funded at this time.

While we cannot provide statistical data regarding crime deterrence, based upon my personal observations and experience with criminal investigations and calls for service, I am very confident that Flock has significantly improved our ability to develop investigative leads and identify or locate vehicles and suspects much more quickly than we could without this resource.

We have had investigations where information obtained through Flock cameras has helped deputies and investigators develop leads and close cases within minutes. Without Flock, some of these same investigations may have taken days or weeks to develop the same information, and in some instances, we may never have been able to identify the vehicle or suspect involved.

It is also important to understand exactly what information our Flock cameras collect. The cameras do not contain or provide personal identifying information such as a person's name, home address, driver's license information, or vehicle registration information. The information available through the Flock system generally consists of:

- A photograph/image of the vehicle;
- The visible license plate number;
- The date and time the vehicle passed the camera; and
- The location of the Flock camera that captured the image.

Once a deputy or investigator obtains information from Flock that may be relevant to a criminal investigation or missing/endangered person investigation, it remains the responsibility of that law



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enforcement officer to verify the information. The officer must then use authorized law enforcement databases, such as DMV, VCIN, and/or NCIC, when appropriate, to obtain additional information necessary for the investigation.

Flock is therefore best described as an investigative lead and resource, not a replacement for traditional investigative work. It can point an investigator in the right direction much faster, but the information must still be independently reviewed, verified, and connected to the investigation by the deputy or investigator handling the case.

From our experience, the greatest measurable benefit of Flock has been the speed at which it can provide actionable investigative leads. That reduction in investigative time has helped us identify vehicles, locate suspects and missing people, develop additional evidence, and resolve cases considerably faster than would have been possible in many instances without this technology.