



CHAPTER 20
ARTICLE 3D - AUTOMATIC LICENSE PLATE READER SYSTEMS

N.C.G.S. § 20-183.32.

Preservation and disclosure of records.

SOURCE General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT No amendment history on record	RETRIEVED 21 September 2026, 02:13 UTC	SOURCE FINGERPRINT 2e3eba084813052e11054a58 - 5b387e2da7a5013221fb45f8 - eda3a155c8e7bf5c
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§ 20-183.32(a) Captured plate data obtained by an automatic license plate reader system, operated by or on behalf of a law enforcement agency for law enforcement purposes, shall not be preserved for more than 90 days after the date the data is captured.

§ 20-183.32(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, data obtained by an automatic license plate reader may be preserved for more than 90 days pursuant to any of the following:

- (1) A preservation request under subsection (c) of this section.
- (2) A search warrant issued pursuant to Article 11 of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes.
- (3) A federal search warrant issued in compliance with the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

§ 20-183.32(c) Upon the request of a law enforcement agency, the custodian of the captured plate data shall take all necessary steps to immediately preserve captured plate data in its possession. A requesting agency must specify in a written, sworn statement all of the following:

- (1) The location of the particular camera or cameras for which captured plate data must be preserved and the particular license plate for which captured plate data must be preserved.
- (2) The date or dates and time frames for which captured plate data must be preserved.

- (3) Specific and articulable facts showing that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the captured plate data is relevant and material to an ongoing criminal or missing persons investigation or is needed to prove a violation of a motor carrier safety regulation.
- (4) The case and identity of the parties involved in that case.

After one year from the date of the initial preservation request, the captured plate data obtained by an automatic license plate reader system shall be destroyed according to the custodian's own record or data retention policy, unless the custodian receives within that period another preservation request under this subsection, in which case the retention period established under this subsection shall reset.

§ 20-183.32(d) A law enforcement agency that uses an automatic license plate reader system in accordance with G.S. 20-183.31 shall update the system from the databases specified therein every 24 hours if such updates are available or as soon as practicable after such updates become available.

§ 20-183.32(e) Captured plate data obtained in accordance with this Article is confidential and not a public record as that term is defined in G.S. 132-1. Data shall not be disclosed except to a criminal justice officer at a State or local law enforcement agency or a similar official at a federal law enforcement agency for a legitimate law enforcement purpose pursuant to a written request from the requesting agency. Written requests may be in electronic format. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as requiring the disclosure of captured plate data if a law enforcement agency determines that disclosure will compromise an ongoing investigation. Captured plate data shall not be sold for any purpose. (2015-190, s. 1; 2023-151, s. 5(f).)

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS II
2 AUTHORITIES

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 20-183.31	(d)	"plate reader system in accordance with"
G.S. 132-1	(e)	"as that term is defined in"

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-183.32 (2026).

PINPOINT

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-183.32(a) (2026).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

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