	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	<b>Subject:</b> <i>Neighbors Portal</i>	<b>08/01/2020</b>	TBP:  Number: <b>E-20</b>

**Purpose**

The Department recognizes that robust crime prevention efforts combined with community cooperation is essential to the reduction of crime in our community. The following provides police personnel with direction and guidelines for the Neighbors Portal.

**Access and Use**

Access and use will be controlled and managed by the Department’s designated Neighbors Portal Administrators. All use of the Law Enforcement Portal shall be for law enforcement purposes only. The use of videos or photos from the publicly shared feed shall be downloaded and shared only for legitimate investigatory or intelligence gathering purposes and shall be stored in compliance with Department record retention and evidence retention policies. Unless specifically authorized by the Chief of Police or designee, members shall access the Law Enforcement Portal only from Department computers and devices and only while on duty.

The Department does not have the ability or authority to obtain any information that is not affirmatively provided by the neighbors.

Use of the Portal to assist another agency in their investigation is discouraged and shall only be done with the approval of the investigators chain of command. Agencies requesting access to our information from the Portal should be referred to the vendor.

**Coordinators/Administrators Duties and Responsibilities**

Will determine appropriate access levels for department members based on their operational need and in the best interest of the Department.


Ensure members are appropriately trained to their level of access.

Periodically audit the use of the Portal to ensure compliance with this policy.

**Community Engagement**

Community engagement is essential to the success of this digital neighborhood watch. The interaction with Portal users will primarily be the responsibility of the Public Information Officer and Criminal Investigators. Their duties include:

- A. Monitor and actively engage the community on the Portal.
- B. Guide the public on crime reporting procedures.
- C. Identify crime trends or suspicious activity and refer to sworn supervisors for dissemination.
- D. Educate potential Portal users and administrators.

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### **Investigative Operation**

The Law Enforcement Portal allows investigators (officer or detective) to request videos from device owners within a specified area and post a request for information from Portal users.

Video Requests: All video requests shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- A. Investigators should attempt to narrow the scope of the video request to an appropriate time period and duration to avoid an overly broad request.
- B. Investigators should remain aware that device locations are offset to protect privacy and adjust the area of request accordingly.
- C. Investigators will not use video requests as a substitute for a neighborhood canvas.
- D. All posts requesting information shall utilize pre-approved language for the posting.

Digital files obtained from Portal users will be reviewed to determine evidentiary value. Investigators who determine digital files are of evidentiary value shall download the file and store the evidence according to the Department's evidence storage policy.