

# ACLU of Wisconsin: Responds to accusations of Milwaukee police officer misusing Flock surveillance technology

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 25, 2026

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MILWAUKEE – The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Wisconsin today responded to the criminal charges [filed against a Milwaukee Police Officer](#) who allegedly used Flock’s Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) system to track the location of two women — nearly 200 times — for personal reasons.

Flock’s surveillance technology scans and stores license plate data from countless drivers every day, enabling the government to track where people drive and when — without their knowledge or consent and without a warrant. These devices collect everyone’s data, not just data on vehicles associated with a crime.

Reporting has also revealed [searches carried out by local officers](#) across the country on behalf of ICE for immigration purposes.

ACLU-WI Policy Analyst Jon McCray Jones said the following:

“The accusations made against Milwaukee Police Officer Josue Ayala exemplify just how easily Flock cameras can be turned against the very people the technology purports to protect. Officer Ayala is alleged to have run the license plates of two women nearly 200 times over two months, unrelentingly monitoring their locations for personal reasons.

This incident displays a pattern we’ve seen across the country. Law enforcement using taxpayer-funded policing tools and turning them into a means of private

surveillance to use however they wish — often to spy on women they have a romantic interest in. Flock is used by at least 221 law enforcement agencies across Wisconsin, so its growing track record of misuse has profound implications for all of us.

Although Flock is ripe for abuse, the public knows very little about how it's deployed. Officers do not have to provide a clear rationale for a license plate search; all they have to do is log the search under a vague, nebulous category like "investigation" — as Officer Ayala is alleged to have done. In 2025, MPD logged the term "investigation" as its reason for conducting a Flock search more than 1,000 times, according to the Wisconsin Examiner. These meaningless, one-word descriptions make it impossible to know what the technology is being used for or whether it's justified.

Cases like these demonstrate why we can't afford to allow Flock's ALPR system — or any other surveillance tool law enforcement has at its disposal — to operate without proper oversight or safeguards to protect against misuse. While choosing not to disclose Flock usage during an active investigation is understandable, that does not mean this system should exist free from regulation and public scrutiny.

We need to establish basic transparency standards, such as annual public reporting on surveillance technology acquisition and use across the state and a requirement to notify prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges whenever surveillance tools are used in a criminal case. Agencies must also have written, formal policy guidelines governing how and when these tools can be used. This is why we continue to advocate for the passage of a Community Control Over Police Surveillance (CCOPS) Ordinance in Milwaukee to ensure transparency and democratic accountability. "

Read the ACLU of Wisconsin's piece *Surveillance Technology is Ripe for Abuse* here: <https://www.aclu-wi.org/news/what-the-flock-police-surveillance-is-ripe-for-abuse/>.

Read a coalition letter sent to the Milwaukee Common Council in May 2025 urging implementation of CCOPS here: <https://www.aclu-wi.org/app/uploads/2025/05/ccopscoalitionletter.pdf>.

A copy of this statement is available at: <https://www.aclu-wi.org/press-releases/aclu-of-wisconsin-responds-to-accusation>

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