

Speed & Red Light Management Camera - Fact Sheet

The following questions arose during the recent legislative council meeting and were openly discussed, raising concerns about the implementation of Speed & Red Light Management Cameras (ATESDs).

Background on Speed & Red Light Management Cameras and Data Security

Modern automated traffic management has been implemented in the U.S. for 39 years, beginning in the mid-1980s. ATESDs are regulated by the same federal and state laws that oversee Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS). Any state, federal, or private vendor working with CJIS must be certified by a law enforcement agency and follow applicable laws and security protocols.

This technology is widely used throughout the US and worldwide, such as these systems:

- Bridge, Tunnel, and Highway Toll systems (EZPass, etc.)
- Parking garages
- Parking Enforcement vendors
- Passing School Bus Enforcement vendors
- Raptor System (BOE)
- Property tax enforcement vendors

1. Addressing Privacy Concerns on Implementing Speed & Red Light Management Cameras

While privacy concerns around Speed & Red Light Management devices linger, courts have consistently held that there is **no reasonable expectation of privacy** when driving on public roads.

Driving is a highly regulated activity, and as established in cases interpreting *Katz v. United States*, "what a person knowingly exposes to the public... is not a subject of Fourth Amendment protection." ATESD cameras capture only publicly observable behavior, similar to a police officer watching from the roadside.

Pursuant to [CGS 14-307c](#), municipalities that adopt an ordinance authorizing the use of ATESDs must also adopt a written privacy policy that meets or exceeds the standards of CTDOT's model privacy policy and protocol. Please refer to the guidance document for more information ([CT DOT Guidance](#)).

Recorded data (images, plates) is handled under strict privacy rules: encrypted storage, with access limited to authorized personnel for enforcement purposes only. Registration

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information is destroyed within 30 days of resolution, and non-violating data (e.g., innocent vehicles) is not stored.

2. Newtown PD Lacks a Dedicated Traffic Enforcement Officer

Newtown Police Department (NPD) currently has a full-time Traffic Officer, Officer Leonard Penna, who handles enforcement requests, complaints, and related duties. The department fields traffic concerns through its dispatch (203-426-5841) and assigns them to patrol officers, with a focus on high-complaint areas. With 46 officers covering 60 square miles, staffing is often at minimum levels (e.g., 4 officers per shift); therefore, ATESD would be a force multiplier.

CT law requires a sworn police officer or trained municipal employee to review captured images before issuing citations, ensuring human oversight. This could be managed by reassigning duties within the Traffic Unit and among current administrative staff, without requiring a new hire. CTDOT guidelines emphasize integrating ATESD into existing enforcement strategies ([CGS 14-307c](#)).

3. Issues in Towns Deploying ATESD

The Newtown Police Department has been active in attending training hosted by the CT DOT T2 Center on the deployment of ATESDs. We have had the opportunity to learn from panel discussions comprised of municipal employees who have already implemented ATESD in their communities (https://www.cti.uconn.edu/cti/Automated_Traffic_Enforcement_Safety_Devices.asp).

4. Is This Revenue-Driven?

While towns emphasize safety—revenue generation is often falsely criticized. CT law prohibits revenue-driven models. Vendor fees cannot be based on citations or fines collected, and all revenue must support transportation safety improvements (such as signage and road upgrades) or program costs.

Fines are capped at \$50 (for the first offense) or \$75 (for subsequent offenses), plus a \$15 processing fee ([CGS 14-307c](#)).

5. Expenses to Implement, Operate, and Maintain the Program

Startup and operational costs vary depending on the vendor and their payment structures. Some vendors run full no-cost programs, while others run fee-reimbursed programs. Most vendors provide turnkey services (design, installation, operation, and maintenance). Formal pricing survey is in progress.

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6. Collection of Tickets if Driver Does Not Pay

ATESD citations are civil violations under municipal ordinances:

- **Unpaid Process:** Citations must be paid within 30-60 days; if uncontested and unpaid for 90 days,
 - The vehicle may be booted until fines are paid.
 - Refer the owner to a debt collection agency for recovery, including additional collection fees (typically 20–35% of the original fine).
 - Report the unpaid debt to credit bureaus if it remains delinquent for an extended period (a common practice for civil fines in CT).

8. Signs Are Not Movable, So People Will Avoid Those Stretches of Road, Diverting Traffic & Causing Problems Elsewhere

CT law requires signage to be fixed and conspicuous, with at least two signs per approach (e.g., "Photo Enforced"), and to comply with the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). They are not designed to be moved and must remain in place while devices are operational.

Traffic diversion is a potential issue, where drivers reroute to avoid cameras, potentially increasing congestion or risks on untreated roads. However, studies show this effect is often temporary or minimal if placements are strategic (e.g., school zones), and overall safety benefits outweigh it by reducing speeds system-wide (<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>).

9. Concerns About Hefty Fines for Minimal Violations – e.g., Going a Couple of MPH Over the Limit Down a Hill.

Fines are not issued for minor violations: Cameras trigger only for speeding 10 mph or more over the limit or for full red-light runs, avoiding penalties for slight exceedances like "a couple of mph down a hill." **This threshold, set by state law**, accounts for factors such as hills or minor fluctuations, and devices are calibrated annually for accuracy.

Fines remain modest (\$50 for the first, \$75 for subsequent), and the first 30 days at each site issue only warnings, allowing adjustment.

10. Whether There Is an Appeal Process – e.g., What If Someone Is Speeding en Route to the ER or the Devices Malfunction? ([CGS 14-307c](#))

State law mandates an appeal process: Owners receive citation details and can request a hearing within 10-30 days (depending on the ordinance) before a municipal hearing officer.

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Defenses Defined in Statute:

1. Vehicle was reported stolen,
2. Emergency vehicle operation,
3. Traffic control signal malfunction,
4. Device out of calibration,
5. Operation at the direction of a law enforcement officer,
6. To make way for an emergency vehicle.

Device malfunctions are addressed via annual calibration certificates; if proven, citations are dismissed. Towns must report hearing outcomes annually to CTDOT for transparency.

11. Whether the Devices Will Fit Aesthetically

ATESD devices are typically pole-mounted cameras (similar to traffic signals), designed for functionality over aesthetics, but can be customized to blend with surroundings (e.g., slim profiles, neutral colors). No specific aesthetic requirements in CT law, but placements must comply with local zoning and MUTCD for signs to avoid visual clutter.

12. Does the Company Get a Percentage of the Revenue?

No, CT law explicitly prohibits vendor fees contingent on citations issued or fines collected, avoiding "quota" incentives. Contracts must be fixed-fee or rental-based; CT requires non-contingent arrangements to prioritize safety over profit ([CGS 14-307c](#)).

13. Police Enforcement Seems More Effective

Traditional police enforcement works well for discretionary, targeted stops but is limited by resources (such as NPD's staffing constraints) and competing priorities. It also cannot provide 24/7 coverage as cameras do. (<https://www.police1.com>).

Studies show ATESD complements patrol officers: Cameras reduce speeds by 14-88% (esp. high speeds), collisions by 30%, and injuries by 16-330 annually in urban areas, without biases of human enforcement. Cameras deter low-range speeding better than officers in some cases. (<https://rscj.newark.rutgers.edu>)

Middletown Police Chief Erik Costa said he would need significantly more police officers to catch as many people speeding as the cameras could. He said it has also "changed the culture" of driving in that part of the city, where there are multiple apartment buildings and large retail stores." [CT Mirror 2026](#)

Key Points from CT's ATED Law

- **Focus of CT Statutes** — These laws authorize municipalities to use **Automated Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices (ATESD)**, such as red-light and speed cameras, to enforce traffic ordinances. They emphasize:
 - Data privacy (e.g., personally identifiable information must be destroyed within 30 days after fine collection or hearing resolution).
 - Limited use (only for traffic violations, not general surveillance).
 - No mention of facial recognition or biometric identification.
- **Camera Design** — ATESD systems typically capture **rear license plates and vehicle images**, not driver faces, making facial recognition unnecessary and impractical for issuing citations (which go to the registered owner).
- **Broader CT Privacy Context** — Connecticut has restrictions on facial recognition in other areas (e.g., warrants required for law enforcement use in many cases; bans in police body cameras; biometric consent under CTDPA for private entities). However, these do not extend to automated traffic cameras.

CT Towns using ATEDs

https://portal.ct.gov/dot/programs/automated-traffic-enforcement-safety-device/approved-plans?language=en_US