

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas As Engrossed: H2/5/25 H2/10/25 H2/17/25

2 95th General Assembly

## A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1148

4

5 By: Representatives Vaught, Milligan

6 By: Senator B. Johnson

7

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### For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PRIVACY ACT; TO ADDRESS  
10 CERTAIN IMAGES CAPTURED BY UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS;  
11 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

12

13

14

### Subtitle

15 TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PRIVACY ACT; AND  
16 TO ADDRESS CERTAIN IMAGES CAPTURED BY  
17 UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

20

21 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Title.

22 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas Privacy Act".

23

24 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 5-60-103 is amended to read as follows:

25 5-60-103. Unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft system related to  
26 infrastructure – Unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft system related to  
27 images.

28 (a) As used in this section:

29 (1) "Critical infrastructure" means:

30 (A) An electrical power generation or delivery system;

31 (B) A petroleum refinery;

32 (C) A chemical or rubber manufacturing facility;

33 (D) A petroleum or chemical storage facility;

34 (E) A railroad operating facility;

35 (F) A communication tower or facility or a communications  
36 or broadband wireline facility;



1 (G) A food processing or manufacturing facility; ~~or~~  
2 (H) A correctional or detention facility; ~~and~~ or  
3 (I) A natural gas distribution or transmission line,  
4 natural gas facility, or natural gas storage; and

5 (2)~~(A)~~ "Image" means a capturing of sound waves, thermal,  
6 infrared, ultraviolet, or visible light, or other electromagnetic waves,  
7 odor, or other conditions existing on or about real property or an individual  
8 located on the real property; and

9 (3)(A) "Unmanned aircraft system" means an unmanned, powered  
10 aircraft that:

11 (i) Does not carry a human operator;  
12 (ii) Can be autonomous or remotely piloted or  
13 operated; and

14 (iii) Can be expendable or recoverable.

15 (B) "Unmanned aircraft system" does not include:

16 (i) A satellite orbiting the earth;  
17 (ii) An unmanned aircraft system used by the United  
18 States Government or a person who is acting pursuant to contract with the  
19 United States Government to conduct surveillance of specific critical  
20 infrastructure;

21 (iii) An unmanned aircraft system used by the state  
22 after consultation with the Governor or a person who is acting under contract  
23 with the state to conduct surveillance of specific critical infrastructure;

24 (iv) ~~An unmanned aircraft system used under a~~  
25 ~~certificate of authorization issued by the~~ operated by a person for a  
26 commercial purpose pursuant to and in compliance with Federal Aviation  
27 Administration regulations, authorizations, or exemptions; or

28 (v) An unmanned aircraft used by a law enforcement agency, emergency  
29 medical service agency, hazardous materials response team, disaster  
30 management agency, or other emergency management agency for the purpose of  
31 incident command, area reconnaissance, personnel and equipment deployment  
32 monitoring, training, or a related purpose.

33 (b) A person commits the offense of unlawful use of an unmanned  
34 aircraft system related to critical infrastructure if he or she knowingly  
35 uses an unmanned aircraft system to conduct surveillance of, gather evidence  
36 or collect information about, or photographically or electronically record

1 critical infrastructure without the prior written consent of the owner of the  
2 critical infrastructure.

3 (c) ~~This Subsection (b) of this~~ section does not prohibit:

4 (1)(A) A person from using an unmanned aircraft system to  
5 conduct surveillance of, gather evidence or collect information about, or  
6 photographically or electronically record his or her own property that is:

7 (i) Located on his or her own immovable property; or

8 (ii) Located on immovable property owned by another  
9 person under a valid lease, servitude, right-of-way, right of use, permit,  
10 license, or other right.

11 (B) A third person retained by the owner of the property  
12 described in subdivision (c)(1)(A) of this section to conduct activities  
13 described in subdivision (c)(1)(A) of this section is not prohibited under  
14 this section from using an unmanned aircraft system to conduct the activities  
15 described in this subdivision (c)(1); ~~or~~

16 (2) An insurance company or a person acting on behalf of an  
17 insurance company from using an unmanned aircraft system for purposes of  
18 *underwriting an insurance risk or investigating damage to insured property;*  
19 *or*

20 (3) The Arkansas Department of Transportation, the State Highway  
21 Commission, a city or county department of public works, or a contractor,  
22 consultant, employee, or state entity that is a partner of the department,  
23 commission, or a city or county department of public works from using an  
24 unmanned aircraft system to perform work authorized by the department,  
25 commission, or a city or county department of public works.

26 (d) Unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft system related to critical  
27 infrastructure is:

28 (1) A Class B misdemeanor; or

29 (2) A Class A misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

30 (e)(1) A person commits the offense of unlawful use of an unmanned  
31 aircraft system related to images if the person purposely uses an unmanned  
32 aircraft system to capture an image of an individual or private property with  
33 the purpose to conduct surveillance on the individual or private property  
34 captured in the image.

35 (2) It is a defense to prosecution under subdivision (e)(1) of  
36 this section that the person:

1 (A) Destroyed the image:

2 (i) As soon as the person had knowledge that the  
3 image was captured in violation of this section; and

4 (ii) Without disclosing, displaying, or distributing  
5 the image to another person; or

6 (B) Captured the image lawfully as authorized under § 27-  
7 118-101.

8 (f) Unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft system related to images is a  
9 Class C misdemeanor.

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11 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 5, Chapter 60, Subchapter 1, is amended  
12 to add an additional section to read as follows:

13 5-60-126. Unlawful possession, disclosure, display, distribution, or  
14 use of an image captured by an unmanned aircraft system.

15 (a) A person commits the offense of unlawful possession, disclosure,  
16 display, distribution, or use of an image captured by an unmanned aircraft  
17 system if the person:

18 (1) Captures an image in violation of § 5-60-103; and

19 (2) Possesses, discloses, displays, distributes, or otherwise  
20 uses the image captured in violation of § 5-60-103.

21 (b) Unlawful possession, disclosure, display, distribution, or use of  
22 an image captured by an unmanned aircraft system is a:

23 (1) Class C misdemeanor if the person only possessed an image in  
24 violation of § 5-60-103; or

25 (2) Class B misdemeanor if otherwise committed.

26 (c) Each image a person possesses, discloses, displays, distributes,  
27 or otherwise uses in violation of this section is a separate offense.

28 (d) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that the person:

29 (1) Destroyed the image as soon as the person had knowledge that  
30 the image was captured in violation of § 5-60-103 for a charge related to  
31 possession;

32 (2) Stopped disclosing, displaying, distributing, or otherwise  
33 using the image as soon as the person had knowledge that the image was  
34 captured in violation of § 5-60-103 for a charge related to disclosure,  
35 display, distribution, or other use of an image; or

36 (3) Captured the image lawfully as authorized under § 27-118-

1 101.

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3 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Title 12, Chapter 6, Subchapter 7, is amended  
4 to add an additional section to read as follows:

5 12-6-703. Rules on use of unmanned aircraft system by law enforcement.

6 (a) The Department of Public Safety shall adopt rules for the use of  
7 an unmanned aircraft system by a law enforcement agency in this state.

8 (b) The rules adopted under subsection (a) of this section shall not  
9 apply to the Arkansas Highway Police Division of the Arkansas Department of  
10 Transportation.

11  
12 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code Title 16, Chapter 40, Subchapter 1, is  
13 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

14 16-40-108. Illegally or incidentally captured images not subject to  
15 disclosure – Definitions.

16 (a) As used in this section:

17 (1) "Image" means the same as defined in § 5-60-103; and

18 (2) "Unmanned aircraft system" means the same as defined in § 5-  
19 60-103.

20 (b) Except as otherwise provided by subsection (c) of this section, an  
21 image captured in violation of § 5-60-103 or an image captured by an unmanned  
22 aircraft system that was incidental to the lawful capturing of an image:

23 (1) May not be used as evidence in any criminal proceeding,  
24 juvenile proceeding, civil action, or administrative proceeding;

25 (2) Is not subject to disclosure, inspection, or copying under  
26 the Freedom of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq.; and

27 (3) Is not subject to discovery, subpoena, or other means of  
28 legal compulsion for its release.

29 (c) An image described by subsection (b) of this section may be  
30 disclosed and used as evidence to prove a violation of § 5-60-103 and is  
31 subject to discovery, subpoena, or other means of legal compulsion for the  
32 purpose of proving a violation of § 5-60-103.

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34 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code Title 16, Chapter 118, Subchapter 1, is  
35 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

36 16-118-119. Civil action for damages caused by violation of §§ 5-60-

1 103 and 5-60-126 – Definition.

2 (a) As used in this section, "malice" means a specific intent by a  
3 person to cause substantial injury or harm to an owner or tenant of private  
4 real property.

5 (b) An owner or tenant of private real property may bring an action  
6 against a person who, in violation of § 5-60-103, captured an image of the  
7 private real property or the owner or tenant of the private real property  
8 while on the private real property, with a reasonable expectation of privacy  
9 to:

10 (1) Enjoin a violation or imminent violation of § 5-60-103 or §  
11 5-60-126;

12 (2) Recover a civil damage of:

13 (A) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for all images captured  
14 in a single episode in violation of § 5-60-103; or

15 (B) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for disclosure,  
16 display, distribution, or other use of an image captured in a single episode  
17 in violation of § 5-60-126; or

18 (3) Recover actual damages if the person who captured the image  
19 in violation of § 5-60-103 discloses, displays, or distributes the image with  
20 malice.

21 (c) For purposes of recovering the civil damages or actual damages  
22 under subsection (b) of this section:

23 (1) All owners of a parcel of real property are considered to be  
24 a single owner; and

25 (2) All tenants of a parcel of real property are considered to  
26 be a single tenant.

27 (d) In addition to the civil damages and actual damages authorized  
28 under this section, the court shall award court costs and reasonable  
29 attorney's fees to the prevailing party in an action under this section.

30 (e) An action brought under this section shall be commenced within two  
31 (2) years from the date the image was:

32 (1) Captured in violation of § 5-60-103; or

33 (2) Initially disclosed, displayed, distributed, or otherwise  
34 used in violation of § 5-60-126.

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36 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code Title 27, Subtitle 8, is amended to add an

1 additional chapter to read as follows:

2 CHAPTER 118

3 UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

4  
5 27-118-101. Use of unmanned aircraft system to capture image.

6 (a) As used in this section, "unmanned aircraft system" means the same  
7 as defined in § 5-60-103.

8 (b) It is lawful to capture an image using an unmanned aircraft system  
9 in this state:

10 (1) For the purposes of professional research, scholarly  
11 research and development, educational, agricultural, or athletic purposes,  
12 gathering data for modeling, or the collection of data to further a body of  
13 knowledge by a person acting on behalf of an institution of higher education,  
14 including without limitation a person who is:

15 (A) A professor, an employee, or a student of the  
16 institution of higher education; or

17 (B) Under contract with or otherwise acting under the  
18 direction of or on behalf of the institution of higher education;

19 (2) In airspace designated as a test site or range authorized by  
20 the Federal Aviation Administration for the purpose of integrating unmanned  
21 aircraft systems into the national airspace;

22 (3) As part of an operation, exercise, or mission of the United  
23 States Armed Forces;

24 (4) If the image is captured by a satellite for the purposes of  
25 mapping;

26 (5) If the image is captured by or for an electric utility,  
27 natural gas utility, or water and wastewater utility:

28 (A) For operations and maintenance of utility facilities  
29 for the purpose of maintaining utility system reliability and integrity;

30 (B) For inspecting utility facilities to determine repair,  
31 maintenance, or replacement needs during and after construction of the  
32 facilities;

33 (C) For assessing vegetation growth for the purpose of  
34 maintaining clearances on utility easements; and

35 (D) For utility facility routing and siting for the  
36 purpose of providing utility service;

1           (6) With the consent of the individual who owns or lawfully  
2 occupies the real property captured in the image;

3           (7) Pursuant to a valid search warrant executed by the  
4 following:

5                   (A) The Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission;

6                   (B) A Division of Arkansas State Police officer;

7                   (C) A sheriff;

8                   (D) The Arkansas Highway Police Division of the Arkansas  
9 Department of Transportation; or

10                   (E) A city or county law enforcement officer;

11           (8) If the image is captured by a law enforcement agency or a  
12 person who is under contract with or otherwise acting under the direction of  
13 or on behalf of a law enforcement agency:

14                   (A) In immediate pursuit of a person that law enforcement  
15 officers have reasonable suspicion or probable cause to suspect has committed  
16 an offense, not including misdemeanors or offenses punishable by a fine only;

17                   (B) For the purpose of documenting a crime scene where an  
18 offense, not including misdemeanors or offenses punishable by a fine only,  
19 has been committed;

20                   (C) For the purpose of investigating the scene of a:

21                           (i) Human fatality;

22                           (ii) Motor vehicle accident causing death or serious  
23 bodily injury to a person; or

24                           (iii) Motor vehicle accident on a state highway or  
25 federal interstate or highway;

26                   (D) In connection with the search for a missing person;

27                   (E) For the purpose of conducting a high-risk tactical  
28 operation that poses a threat to human life; or

29                   (F) Of private property that is generally open to the  
30 public where the property owner consents to law enforcement public safety  
31 activities;

32           (9) If the image is captured by a state or local law enforcement  
33 agency, or a person who is under contract with or otherwise acting under the  
34 direction of or on behalf of a state or local law enforcement agency for the  
35 purpose of:

36                   (A) Surveying the scene of a catastrophe or other damage

1 to determine whether a state of emergency should be declared;

2 (B) Preserving public safety, protecting property, or  
3 surveying damage or contamination during a lawfully declared state of  
4 emergency; or

5 (C) Conducting routine air quality sampling and  
6 monitoring, as provided by state or local law;

7 (10) At the scene of a spill, or a suspected spill, of hazardous  
8 materials;

9 (11) For the purpose of fire suppression;

10 (12) For the purpose of rescuing a person whose life or well-  
11 being is in imminent danger;

12 (13) If the image is captured by an Arkansas-licensed real  
13 estate broker in connection with the marketing, sale, or financing of real  
14 property, provided that no individual is identifiable in the image;

15 (14) From a height no more than eight feet (8') above ground  
16 level in a public place, if the image was captured without using any  
17 electronic, mechanical, or other means to amplify the image beyond normal  
18 human perception;

19 (15) Of public real property or property of a state-supported  
20 institute of higher education or a person on the public real property or  
21 property of a state-supported institute of higher education;

22 (16) If the image is captured:

23 (A) By the owner or operator of an oil, gas, water, or  
24 other pipeline for the purpose of inspecting, maintaining, or repairing  
25 pipelines or other related facilities; and

26 (B) Without the intent to conduct surveillance on an  
27 individual or real property;

28 (17) In connection with oil pipeline safety and rig protection;

29 (18) In connection with port authority surveillance and  
30 security;

31 (19) By an assessor with the consent of the owner of the  
32 property;

33 (20) By a surveyor within the Department of Transformation and  
34 Shared Services for mapping and land surveying tasks;

35 (21) If the image is captured by an employee, consultant,  
36 contractor, or other person acting on behalf of the Arkansas Department of

1 Transportation, State Highway Commission, Arkansas Highway Police Division of  
2 the Arkansas Department of Transportation, or a city or county department of  
3 public works;

4 (22) If the image is captured by an employee of an insurance  
5 company or an affiliate of an insurance company in connection with the  
6 underwriting of an insurance policy, or the rating or adjusting of an  
7 insurance claim, regarding real property or a structure on real property;

8 (23) By an engineer or surveyor licensed in the State of  
9 Arkansas for the purpose of:

10 (A) Mapping and land surveying tasks;

11 (B) Collecting geographical information system data  
12 supporting public or private infrastructure; or

13 (24) For the operation by or on behalf of an owner or operator  
14 of a critical infrastructure facility for the purpose of siting, deploying,  
15 inspecting, monitoring, operating, or maintaining the facility.

16 (c) This section does not apply to the manufacture,  
17 assembly, distribution, or sale of an unmanned aircraft.

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