

# Stop-and-frisk forms would require more detailed explanations from NYPD officers

BY ROCCO PARASCANDOLA | March 23, 2016



If the forms are approved, officers would have to explain in greater detail their reasons for conducting a stop. (Joe Marino/for New York Daily News)

A new NYPD form will require cops to explain in greater detail why they conduct any stop — and it does away with what critics considered catch-all excuses for making stops, such as “furtive movements.”

Peter Zimroth, the federal monitor appointed after Judge Shira Scheindlin ruled in 2013 that the NYPD’s stop, question and frisk tactics violated the constitutional rights of minorities, submitted the new form in Manhattan Federal Court Wednesday.

If the new form is approved, the NYPD will alert its officers to the new requirements via an internal order and it will have to change its database to conform to the form.

Deputy Commissioner Stephen Davis, the NYPD’s top spokesman, said the department helped design the form and that supervisors will be instructed to make sure officers follow the new protocol.

The new form, known in police parlance as a UF-250, will replace one that relied heavily on checkboxes and had little blank space for an officer to articulate the reason for a stop.

Lawyer Darius Charney of the Center for Constitutional Rights, which was involved in a class action lawsuit against the NYPD,

said some of those checkboxes were ripe for abuse, such as those that indicated the person stopped and made a furtive movement, had a suspicious bulge under clothing or was in a high-crime area.

Charney said those reasons “gave the NYPD license to conduct so many discriminatory stops and frisks.”

“Having a new narrative section on the stop forms means officers actually have to explain why they stopped someone” he said. “But, ultimately, the form is only as good as the people using it. So training and supervision will be critical to ensuring that officers have the knowledge and incentives to use the form to document their stops properly.”

Chris Dunn, associate legal director for the New York Civil Liberties Union, said the new form is a positive step.

“While changing paperwork is only a small part of stop-and-frisk reform, this new form should help cut down on bad stops and improve accountability by requiring officers to write out the reasons for their actions,” he said.

The stop-and-frisk controversy peaked in 2011, when nearly 700,000 people were stopped by cops.