

STATE OF NEW YORK

583

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sens. BENJAMIN, BAILEY, COMRIE, HOYLMAN, JACKSON, LIU, PARKER, RAMOS, SALAZAR, SANDERS, SEPULVEDA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Finance

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to ethnic or racial profiling

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 837-w
2 to read as follows:

3 § 837-w. Ethnic and racial profiling. 1. For the purposes of this
4 section:

5 (a) "Law enforcement agency" means an agency established by the state
6 or a unit of local government engaged in the prevention, detection, or
7 investigation of violations of criminal law.

8 (b) "Law enforcement officer" means a police officer or peace officer,
9 as defined in subdivisions thirty-three and thirty-four of section 1.20
10 of the criminal procedure law, employed by a law enforcement agency.

11 (c) "Racial or ethnic profiling" means the practice of a law enforce-
12 ment agent or agency, relying, to any degree, on actual or perceived
13 race, color, ethnicity, national origin or religion in selecting which
14 individual or location to subject to routine or spontaneous investigato-
15 ry activities or in deciding upon the scope and substance of law
16 enforcement activity following the initial investigatory procedure,
17 except when there is trustworthy information, relevant to the locality
18 and timeframe, that links a specific person or location with a partic-
19 ular characteristic described in this paragraph to an identified crimi-
20 nal incident or scheme.

21 (d) "Routine or spontaneous investigatory activities" means the
22 following activities by a law enforcement agent:

23 (i) Interviews;

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (ii) Traffic stops;
2 (iii) Pedestrian stops;
3 (iv) Frisks and other types of body searches;
4 (v) Consensual or nonconsensual searches of persons, property or
5 possessions (including vehicles) of individuals;
6 (vi) Data collection and analysis, assessments and investigations; and
7 (vii) Inspections and interviews.

8 2. Every law enforcement agency and every law enforcement officer
9 shall be prohibited from engaging in racial or ethnic profiling.

10 3. Every law enforcement agency shall promulgate and adopt a written
11 policy which prohibits racial or ethnic profiling. In addition, each
12 such agency shall promulgate and adopt procedures for the review and the
13 taking of corrective action with respect to complaints by individuals
14 who allege that they have been the subject of racial or ethnic profil-
15 ing. A copy of each such complaint received pursuant to this section and
16 written notification of the review and disposition of such complaint
17 shall be promptly provided by such agency to the division.

18 4. Each law enforcement agency shall, using a form to be determined
19 by the division, record and retain the following information with
20 respect to law enforcement officers employed by such agency:

21 (a) the number of persons stopped as a result of a motor vehicle stop
22 for traffic violations and the number of persons stopped as a result of
23 a routine or spontaneous law enforcement activity as defined in this
24 section;

25 (b) the characteristics of race, color, ethnicity, national origin or
26 religion of each such person, provided the identification of such char-
27 acteristics shall be based on the observation and perception of the
28 officer responsible for reporting the stop and the information shall not
29 be required to be provided by the person stopped;

30 (c) if a vehicle was stopped, the number of individuals in the stopped
31 motor vehicle;

32 (d) the nature of the alleged violation that resulted in the stop or
33 the basis for the conduct that resulted in the individual being stopped;

34 (e) whether a pat down or frisk was conducted and, if so, the result
35 of the pat down or frisk;

36 (f) whether a search was conducted and, if so, the result of the
37 search;

38 (g) if a search was conducted, whether the search was of a person, a
39 person's property, and/or a person's vehicle, and whether the search was
40 conducted pursuant to consent and if not, the basis for conducting the
41 search including any alleged criminal behavior that justified the
42 search;

43 (h) whether an inventory search of such person's impounded vehicle was
44 conducted;

45 (i) whether a warning or citation was issued;

46 (j) whether an arrest was made and for what charge or charges;

47 (k) the approximate duration of the stop; and

48 (l) the time and location of the stop.

49 5. Every law enforcement agency shall compile the information set
50 forth in subdivision four of this section for the calendar year into a
51 report to the division. The format of such report shall be determined by
52 the division. The report shall be submitted to the division no later
53 than March first of the following calendar year.

54 6. The division, in consultation with the attorney general, shall
55 develop and promulgate:

1 (a) A form in both printed and electronic format, to be used by law
2 enforcement officers to record the information listed in subdivision
3 four of this section; and

4 (b) A form to be used to report complaints pursuant to subdivision
5 three of this section by individuals who believe they have been
6 subjected to racial or ethnic profiling.

7 7. Every law enforcement agency shall promptly make available to the
8 attorney general, upon demand and notice, the documents required to be
9 produced and promulgated pursuant to subdivisions three, four and five
10 of this section.

11 8. Every law enforcement agency shall furnish all data/information
12 collected pursuant to subdivision four of this section to the division.
13 The division shall develop and implement a plan for a computerized data
14 system for public viewing of such data and shall publish an annual
15 report on data collected for the governor, the legislature, and the
16 public on law enforcement stops. Information released shall not reveal
17 the identity of any individual.

18 9. The attorney general may bring an action on behalf of the people
19 for injunctive relief and/or damages against a law enforcement agency
20 that is engaging in or has engaged in an act or acts of racial profiling
21 in a court having jurisdiction to issue such relief. The court may award
22 costs and reasonable attorney fees to the attorney general who prevails
23 in such an action.

24 10. In addition to a cause of action brought pursuant to subdivision
25 nine of this section, an individual who has been the subject of an act
26 or acts of racial profiling may bring an action for injunctive relief
27 and/or damages against a law enforcement agency that is engaged in or
28 has engaged in an act or acts of racial profiling. The court may award
29 costs and reasonable attorney fees to a plaintiff who prevails in such
30 an action.

31 11. Nothing in this section shall be construed as diminishing or abro-
32 gating any right, remedy or cause of action which an individual who has
33 been subject to racial or ethnic profiling may have pursuant to any
34 other provision of law.

35 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately; provided that:

36 1. the provisions of subdivision 4 of section 837-w of the executive
37 law as added by section one of this act shall take effect on the nineti-
38 eth day after it shall have become a law; and

39 2. the provisions of subdivision 6 of section 837-w of the executive
40 law as added by section one of this act shall take effect on the sixti-
41 eth day after it shall have become a law.