

Training Guide: Understanding the Settlement

History & Landscape



Training Guide: Understanding the Settlement – History & Landscape

This workshop is geared towards educating participants on the history of the 2020 NYPD Protest litigation and give them the tools and information necessary to safely exercise their first amendment rights within the new settlement! Participants will leave able to understand the events leading to the NYPD Protest cases. Recognize the patterns of NYPD protest policing. Connect this case to broader movements for justice. Prepare to engage with settlement oversight work (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.) In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Opening & Welcome

Frame the workshop as part of a two-part series

Set a welcoming and inclusive tone

Greet participants warmly and acknowledge the diverse experiences in the room.

Today we're going to walk through the history and landscape that led to the NYPD Protest Settlement Cases and the resulting settlement. Our goal is to make sure we all have a shared foundation for future workshops and to understand our new reporting tool. (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)



Share the agenda slide and explain how the session will be structured —

This workshop includes slides and presentation but features a lot of small and large group discussion.

Encourage active participation and note that lived experience is a valuable form of expertise.

Discussion Questions

Why is it important to start with the historical and political context before diving into legal language?

What do you already know about the NYPD Protest cases or the 2020 protests in NYC? In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

If participants seem hesitant, share a personal story or observation from 2020 to model vulnerability. In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Use a round-robin or popcorn-style introduction if time allows.

Summer 2020 – Context - In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Highlight the role of George Floyd's murder and broader BLM movement.

After George Floyd's murder in May 2020, New York, just like cities across the country, erupted in protest. Tens of thousands took to the streets,



representing every borough and every walk of life. In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Emphasize the leadership of Black youth and the multiracial, cross-class participation.

Connect NYC protests to the national movement for racial justice.

Explain the scale and diversity of participation.

Discussion Questions

Where were you during the summer of 2020? In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

What images or moments from that time still stand out to you?

How did the energy in NYC compare to past protest moments you've experienced?

Facilitation Tips

Validate emotional responses — this period was traumatic for many.

If online, consider using a Jamboard or Miro board for people to drop one-word reflections.

NYPD Tactics & Impact

Identify key policing tactics used during 2020 protests. In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Explain the immediate and long-term impact on communities.

Connect these tactics to a broader strategy of protest control

Show images or clips of kettling, SRG deployment, press harassment, and mass arrests.

The NYPD employed a variety of aggressive tactics, many of which had been documented in prior protest movements.

Explain kettling in detail and its legal implications.

Highlight both physical injuries and the chilling effect on protest participation.

Discussion Questions

What tactics have you personally witnessed or experienced at protests?

How do these tactics shape the risks people weigh when deciding whether to protest?

Facilitation Tips

Avoid sensationalizing violent images — focus on the impact on people's rights and safety.

If someone shares a personal experience, thank them and connect it back to the broader pattern.

The Lawsuits & Plaintiffs

Summarize the NYPD Protest cases.

Introduce who the plaintiffs were and their roles.

Explain why multiple lawsuits were consolidated.



These lawsuits were filed by protesters, legal observers, the Attorney General's office, and journalists, each with their own stories of being targeted during the 2020 protests. In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Discussion Questions

Why do you think it was important for the plaintiffs to represent different roles and experiences?

What strengths come from bringing multiple lawsuits together?

Facilitation Tips

Remind participants this case was about systemic patterns, not isolated incidents.

Historical Patterns of Protest Policing

Place the 2020 response in historical context In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

Highlight repeated NYPD protest policing strategies

Draw lines between past and present.

Show slide with side-by-side examples from 2004 RNC, Occupy Wall Street, 2014 BLM, and 2020 protests. In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

What happened in 2020 wasn't new — it was part of a decades-long pattern of NYPD protest suppression. In 2020, NYPD monitored social media in real time and used posts to shape on-the-ground responses.

*Keep historical context brief — use past protests only to **illustrate the specific NYPD tactics addressed by the settlement**, helping participants recognize and understand why those provisions matter.*

Discussion Questions

Do you see changes or continuity in NYPD protest responses over time?

What might explain the persistence of these tactics despite lawsuits and public outcry?

Facilitation Tips

Invite participants who have been active in earlier movements to share their observations.

Acknowledge the resilience and creativity of protest movements in adapting to repression.

Why This Settlement Matters (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)

Explain why litigation was pursued.

Identify unique aspects of the settlement (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)



Connect this case to broader fights for protest rights.

Facilitation Notes

Show bullet points of key changes from the settlement without going into legal detail. (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)

This settlement is not just a legal victory — it's a tool for movement building and community oversight. (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)

Discuss how years of organizing laid the groundwork for this outcome.

Discussion Questions

What makes a court settlement stronger than internal police reforms? (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)

What limitations do you think still exist, even with this agreement in place?

Closing & Next Steps

Recap main takeaways.

Preview Part 2 workshop on settlement clauses. (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)

Encourage participants to stay connected and engaged.



Ask each participant to share one takeaway from the session.

In other modules, we'll break down the actual clauses of the settlement and talk about how you can help monitor compliance. (Preview: tiered response, ban on kettling, clear dispersal-order rules, protections for press/legal observers, required documentation, and DOI PRO oversight.)

Share sign-up sheets, contact info, or links to ongoing campaigns.