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For immediate release

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Some citizens will get new kind of “receipt” from police after being detained

SPRINGFIELD – Some pedestrians may be surprised to receive a new kind of “receipt” from a police officer starting January 1 because of a new state law.

The law requires police to give a “stop receipt” to citizens who are walking or standing on public sidewalks and streets if they are frisked or searched. The receipt will have the officer’s name, badge number, and reason for the search or frisk.

And in situations where the officer detains a person in a public place, the officer must also fill out a “pedestrian stop card” with detailed information such as the race and gender of the individual and the reason the person was stopped. If there is a patdown or search, the stop card will also indicate what contraband, if any, was found. “Detention” has a narrow definition in this law – it means that there was a search, frisk, summons, or arrest. Police departments will file regular reports to the state with information from the pedestrian stop cards.

The “stop receipts” and “pedestrian stop cards” are among many requirements effective January 1 in the lengthy Police and Community Relations Improvement Act, which the legislature passed as SB1304 in May 2015. Governor Rauner signed it in October.

Illinois police departments have been preparing to implement this law for several months. “We want citizens to know that their many normal, friendly interactions with police officers in public and private places will continue as usual,” said Ed Wojcicki, Executive Director of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, which has been conducting training on the new law this past fall.

Under the new law, if police officers merely stop a pedestrian in a public place to ask what’s going on or to ask citizens if they have seen something, the police typically would not give a stop receipt to those citizens or complete a pedestrian stop card. The receipt is given only when there is a frisk or search.

“We also want citizens to continue to feel free to approach the police and ask them questions or provide information about suspicious activity,” Wojcicki said. “Records of these conversations generally will not be documented with a pedestrian stop card or stop receipt because those citizens are not detained.”

But citizens should also know that if they are frisked or searched, they will have the benefit of receiving a “stop receipt” with the officer’s name, badge number, and a reason for the stop.