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Stephen Z. Williamson:

If you file a lawsuit against the City of New York before appearing for and testifying in a 50-H proceeding, that may be fatal to your lawsuit. You have to do two things and there's no way around it before you file a lawsuit against the City of New York: the Notice of Claim within 90 days, and then after that, appear for the 50-H proceeding. For both of those, the 50-H and the Notice of Claim that comes before it, it's advisable to have a lawyer at your side.