

Retired officers denied gun permits

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Three retired Nassau County correction officers and a retired deputy sheriff claim in a civil suit they've been unjustly denied special police-retiree gun permits and licenses by county authorities.

The suit, filed Monday in federal court in Central Islip, claims Nassau Sheriff Michael Sposato and the Nassau County Police Department have denied licenses to the four because of disabilities.

"This suit is necessary to change how disabled officers, who served this county well, are being treated by the county when they want the same benefits that other retirees get," said Frederick Brewington, the Hempstead attorney representing Alexandros Perros, Thomas Delle, Nicholas Lenoci and Victor Patalano.

"None of their disabilities make them ineligible to own, purchase and carry firearms, and there is no good reason for them to have been treated differently."

The suit seeks monetary and equitable remedies for the wrongful actions, Brewington said.

The four have been denied letters of recommendation from Sposato that would allow them handgun licenses specifically for retired police officers and law en-



Attorney Frederick Brewington, center, says Victor Patalano, left, Alexandros Perros and two other retired officers were denied gun permits due to their disabilities. ■ Video: newsday.com/nassau

forcement officers, Perros and Patalano said yesterday at a news conference.

Without the letters of recommendation — commonly called "good guy" letters — from the agency from which the officers retired, Nassau County police will not issue them the special licenses or permits, the suit says.

Citing the county's pistol license manual, the suit says the good-guy letter is a "prerequisite

to the issuance of a Retired Police Officer/Federal Law Enforcement Officer License."

Both Perros and Patalano said they need to carry guns for personal protection, such as from people they may have evicted or served with warrants.

"These people aren't happy about that situation and now I might run into this person while I'm with my family out in Roosevelt Field mall," said Patal-

ano, a deputy for over 25 years.

Both said their disabilities are strictly physical. Patalano slipped on ice while serving a summons in 2010 and had a hip replacement, according to the suit, and Perros wrestled with an inmate trying to escape in 2013, leaving him with herniations in his knees, shoulders and back.

The other two officers named were similarly injured on the job, the suit says.