

# STAND TOGETHER

## JOIN THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY

**Answer the call. Join your brothers and sisters  
in a new effort to understand and reduce cancer.**

### What is NIOSH?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is the part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) responsible for conducting research and making recommendations to reduce workplace illness and injury. NIOSH has a long history of working with the fire service and is committed to firefighter health and safety through investigating line of duty deaths, job hazards, cancer and other illnesses.

### What is the National Firefighter Registry (NFR)?

The NFR is the largest existing effort undertaken to understand and reduce cancer among U.S. firefighters. In 2018, Congress passed the [\*\*Firefighter Cancer Registry Act\*\*](#). This Act directed NIOSH to develop a voluntary registry of firefighters to better understand the link between firefighting and cancer.

### Why was the NFR created?

Studies have shown that firefighters may have a greater risk for some types of cancer due to their exposure to smoke and hazardous chemicals on the fireground.<sup>1,2,3</sup> Many of these studies did not include volunteer firefighters or enough women or firefighters from some racial and ethnic groups to make strong conclusions about their cancer risk. The NFR will include members of these groups to better understand the connection between firefighting activities and cancer among all U.S. firefighters.

### WHO CAN REGISTER FOR THE NFR?

All U.S. firefighters, with or without cancer, no matter their length of service. This includes:

- Active and retired firefighters
- Career, paid-on-call, and volunteer firefighters
- Structural firefighters
- Wildland firefighters
- Instructors
- Fire investigators
- Other fire service members

Having all types of firefighters join the NFR is vital to examining the relationship between firefighting and cancer. Participation is voluntary.

### How do I join?

Registration will take place through a secure website and will take about 30 minutes. When joining, you will provide information about yourself – name, date of birth, and some basic information about your work exposures, health, and lifestyle.

## Why should I join?

The more we know about cancer, the more we can do to prevent it. By joining the NFR, you can:

- Help protect the next generation of firefighters from cancer
- Pave the way for new safety measures to protect your brothers and sisters in the fire service
- Help protect firefighter families and their communities from experiencing the impact of cancer on their loved ones
- Improve our understanding of cancer risk among female firefighters, volunteer firefighters, and firefighters who are Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or from other racial and ethnic groups that have been underrepresented in research

## How does the NFR work?

Every time someone is diagnosed with cancer, details about their cancer are reported to the cancer registry in their state, but detailed information about their work is not captured. By providing information about themselves and their work, NFR participants will allow researchers to match NFR information with cancer diagnosis information to better understand cancer and its risk factors in the fire service.

## Do NFR participants need to contact NIOSH if they are diagnosed with cancer?

No. NIOSH will be able to track information related to cancer by linking information on individual firefighters enrolled in the NFR with state cancer registries. Firefighters should consult with their doctor if they have any concerns about their health.

Sources:

1. Daniels et al. (2014). Doi: 10.1136/oemed-2013-101662
2. Daniels et al. (2015). Doi: 10.1136/oemed-2014-102671
3. Demers et al. (2022). Doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045\(22\)00390-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(22)00390-4)

## What if I don't have cancer, can I still join?

Yes. All firefighters, with or without cancer, are encouraged to join the NFR, and their participation is critical for understanding firefighters' risk of cancer.

## What information do I need to provide and how will it be protected?

When you sign up for the NFR, you will be asked for your name and other identifying information (e.g., date of birth), as well as details about your work as a firefighter. Privacy and data security are top priorities for the NFR. Firefighters join the NFR through a secure website using multi-factor authentication. Firefighter data are stored securely with multiple layers of encryption. Your identifiable information will be kept confidential and only accessible to NIOSH researchers.

## What happens after I join?

Because the NFR is a long-term project, NIOSH researchers may reach out to you about once a year with voluntary, but important follow-up questionnaires. Your continued participation is key to protecting firefighter health.

## When can I join?

The NFR will open to all U.S. firefighters later in 2022.



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**NATIONAL  
FIREFIGHTER  
REGISTRY**  
Understanding &  
Reducing Cancer