

## TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND PREVENT CANCER IN FIREFIGHTERS

Reducing occupational cancer among firefighters is the long-term goal of the National Firefighter Registry (NFR). Achieving that goal is perhaps the most important step that can be taken to protect the health and safety of firefighters.

Numerous studies show that firefighters' exposure to smoke and other chemical products released from burning materials increases their risk of disease and mortality, including cancer. However, more information about these health risks is needed.

The NFR is a groundbreaking surveillance program developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) with guidance from the scientific and firefighting community to address the growing health crisis of cancer in the fire service. It will provide critical information needed to better understand the link between on-the-job exposure to toxicants and cancer so communities can better protect the health of firefighters.

### Essential Cancer Surveillance

The objective of the NFR is to become the world's largest database of health and occupational information for firefighters. This database will track and analyze the incidence of cancer and provide critical information for the public safety community, researchers, scientists and medical professionals to find better ways to protect firefighters and other first responders.

With broad participation from firefighters around the nation, the NFR will go a long way toward answering many questions regarding firefighters' exposures and cancer and lay the groundwork to help prevent these cancers in the future. The NFR will:

- *Track cancer incidence (including rare types of cancer) among the full range of firefighters throughout the U.S.*
- *Explore cancer risks among specific groups of firefighters, including women, minorities, and sub-specialties of the fire service.*
- *Investigate whether the cancer risk is higher or lower among more recent firefighters.*
- *Evaluate how exposures, including large or unusual incidents, relate to firefighters' cancer risk.*
- *Evaluate how control interventions relate to firefighters' cancer risk.*



**Our goal is to better understand the link between workplace exposures and cancer among firefighters.**

## Firefighter Participation is Crucial

Participation in the NFR is voluntary. But all firefighters—career and volunteer, active and retired, those who have had or currently have cancer and those who have never received the diagnosis—should take part. For the NFR to contribute to reducing cancer, the database must be large and encompass the full array of different types of firefighters.



**Firefighters do not need to have cancer or any other health condition to participate in the NFR.**

By providing information about their own health and work experiences, firefighters will play a critical role in helping to understand more about the health risks the profession faces.

Working closely with stakeholders and health experts, NIOSH, a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is taking the lead on managing the NFR.

## How Can I Enroll?

Please visit our website <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/firefighters/registry.html> to learn more about the NFR, including frequently asked questions (FAQs). To enroll, follow the link on our website, which will take you to a secure web portal. The web portal will walk you through the registration process, which is expected to take 30 minutes or less.

## What else should I know about the NFR?

- The NFR came about through legislation (Firefighter Cancer Registry Act of 2018).
- The NFR is completely voluntary, and no one can force a firefighter to join.
- After you register, NIOSH will have the necessary information to link you (and your profession) to any current or future cancer diagnoses that are systematically documented in state databases of cancer. These databases often do not include occupation, which is an important gap that the NFR will fill. You will not need to report your health condition to NIOSH.
- NIOSH will protect your personal information according to strict Federal privacy laws. Any information that identifies you will not be shared with any outside organizations, including fire departments, unions, or other researchers without your permission.
- Results will be summarized and shared broadly with the fire service and the public health community.

## Where can I get more information?

- Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/firefighters/registry.html>
- Email: [NFRegistry@cdc.gov](mailto:NFRegistry@cdc.gov)



Contact Us: [NFRegistry@cdc.gov](mailto:NFRegistry@cdc.gov)  
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