

A LETTER TO YOUR DEPARTMENT.

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To every member of **[DEPARTMENT]**,

This September marks twenty five years since September 11, 2001. We will remember the 343 firefighters killed that day, as we do every year. This year I am asking you to think about what came after it as well.

More than 400 FDNY members have since died of World Trade Center-related illnesses. The deaths since have surpassed the deaths on the day itself. And this is not only a New York story. A NIOSH study of nearly 30,000 career firefighters found 9% more cancer diagnoses and 14% more cancer deaths than expected based on U.S. population rates. In 2022 the International Agency for Research on Cancer classified occupational exposure as a firefighter as carcinogenic to humans, its highest category. According to the IAFF, 247 of the 311 IAFF members honored at the IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial in September 2025 died of occupational cancer.

The fire is not the only thing that gets in. It is inhaled, it is absorbed through hot skin, it is ingested, and it is carried home on our gear, in the cab, and on our bodies. Exposure is cumulative and it does not reset between fires. Your risk clock started the day you were hired.

There is one thing we can still change, and that is when the cancer is found. Exposure cannot be undone. Detection can be moved earlier. The Firefighter Cancer Support Network is building the first national firefighter cancer screening recommendations, with rollout beginning in 2027. Until those land, I am asking every member of this department to do four things.

Get an annual physical and complete every age-appropriate cancer screening.

Know your screening history, and keep it current.

Talk to a clinician who understands occupational exposure.

Keep your gear, your cab, and your station clean, every time.

If you or someone in your family is facing a diagnosis, FCSN will stand with you through it. That is what they do, and it costs you nothing.

Follow the campaign at thesacrificecontinues.com.

[NAME]

[TITLE], [DEPARTMENT]

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