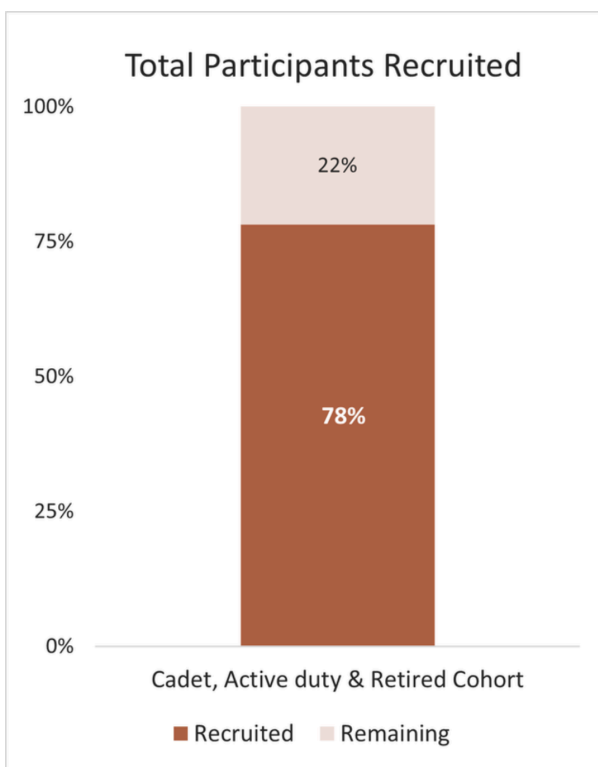


Texas Firefighter Cancer Study

April | 2026

Announcements

Recruitment Progress Update



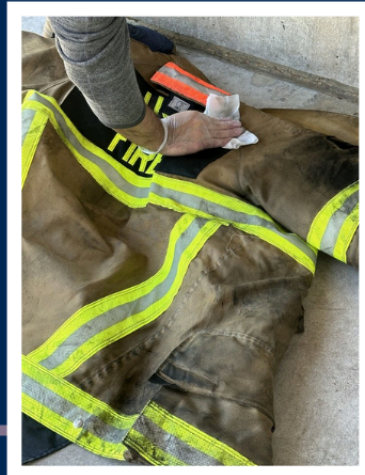
In March, the Texas Firefighter Cancer Study (TFCS) research team conducted another successful round of baseline sampling with the active duty and retiree cohort in Austin Brownsville, and El Paso, TX. A total of **98** individuals have been enrolled in the study since our last visit to Fort Worth.

On March 17 and 19, we also completed **Follow-Up Visit 1** with 19 cadets at the Val Jahnke Training Facility in Houston. The TFCS team conducted ambient aerosol collection following a simulated fire suppression exercise, marking an important milestone for both this cohort and the overall study. The data captured from these ambient aerosol samples will allow researchers to characterize the carcinogens present during fire suppression and their potential

interactions with firefighters' biological systems.

We extend our thanks to all our participants. Your ongoing commitment and engagement are the foundation of this study.

Follow-Up Visit 1 at Val Jahnke Training Facility (VJTF)



TFCS Research Team with cadets onsite at the Val Jahnke Training Facility, highlighting monitoring activities conducted alongside a live-fire training environment, real-time equipment use, turnout gear sampling, and coordinated firefighter operations.

Brownsville Baseline Sampling Campaign

The baseline sampling campaign for the active duty and retiree cohort in Brownsville took place on March 18 and 19 at DHR Health. A total of **34** participants enrolled in the study during this visit.

Thank you to our stakeholders, the Brownsville Fire Department, the Brownsville Fire Fighters Association – IAFF Local 970, DHR Health and the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health at Brownsville for their partnership and support with coordinating our visit.

Brownsville Baseline Sampling Campaign



TFCS Research Team at DHR with Brownsville firefighters and retirees during the baseline sampling campaign, highlighting key activities such as biospecimen collection and laboratory processing at the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health at Brownsville.

During our visit to Brownsville, we had the privilege of sharing dinner with firefighter **Jesse Perez**, who was a speaker at the TFCS launch event in September. Jesse was presented with a custom-made helmet generously gifted by the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, IAFF Local 341, in recognition of his courage and dedication throughout a career spent bravely battling fires. Today, Jesse continues to embody that same strength as he faces his most personal and challenging fight yet—cancer. His story is a powerful reminder that courage does not end when the fire is out. It lives on through resilience, community, and hope—and reinforces why our commitment to firefighters and their health is more important than ever.

Firefighter Jesse Perez holding his custom-made helmet.



From left to right: Brownsville Fire Chief Jarret Sheldon, TFCS Stakeholder Advisory Board Chair Captain Gabriel Dominguez, Brownsville Deputy Fire Chief Gabriel Garza, Jesse Perez's wife, Michelle Flores-Perez, and President of the Brownsville Fire Fighters Association, IAFF Local 970, Joseph Huerta.

El Paso Baseline Sampling Campaign

The baseline sampling campaign for the active duty and retiree cohort in El Paso was on March 24 and 25 at the El Paso Fire Department Wellness Center. A total of **54** participants enrolled in the study during this visit.

We are grateful to the El Paso Fire Department, El Paso Association of Firefighters – IAFF Local 51, and the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health at El Paso for their partnership and support with coordinating our visit.

El Paso Baseline Sampling Campaign



TFCS Research Team with El Paso firefighters and retirees at the El Paso Fire Department Wellness Center including the El Paso Association of Firefighters, IAFF Local 51.

Texas Firefighter Occupational Cancer Epidemiology

We are excited to share that our IRB submission is currently under review with the Department of State Health Services for the Texas Firefighter Occupational Cancer Epidemiology study. All required documentation has been carefully reviewed by the TFCS research team, and we look forward to the next steps.

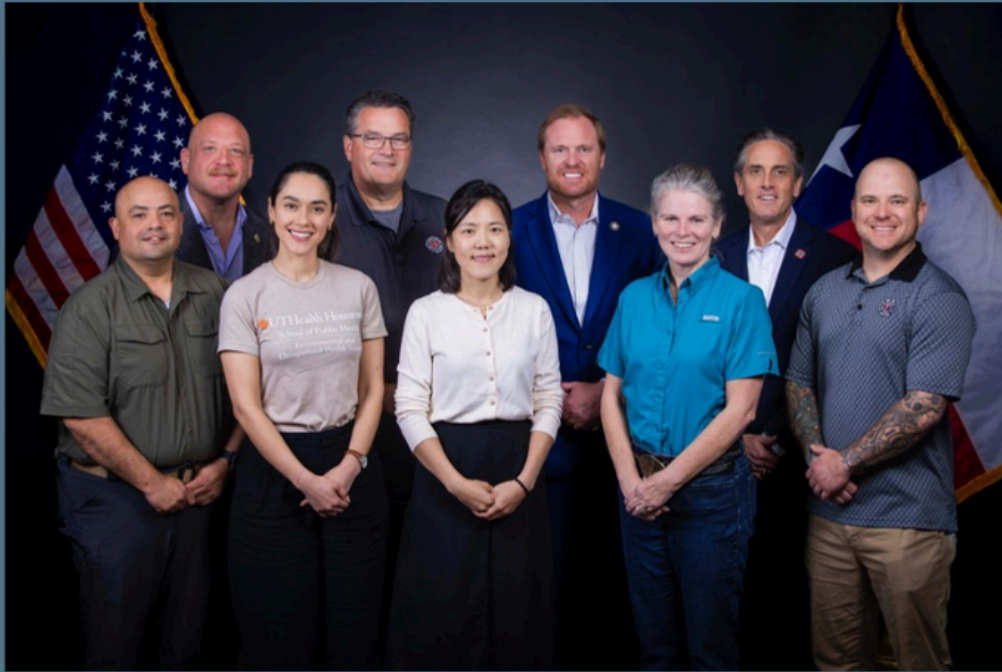
Texas Firefighter Cancer Screening Promotion

In recent weeks, our team has engaged with key stakeholders to better understand prior efforts to promote cancer screening within the Houston Fire Department. These insights will directly inform the development of future cancer screening promotion resources.

Our team has also been refining our recruitment approach to maximize participation in upcoming focus groups. We will leverage an existing firefighter newsletter to raise awareness about the study. This represents a significant step toward generating critical insights and informing tailored and effective cancer screening promotion strategies.

Stakeholder Advisory Board & Stakeholders Meeting

The Stakeholder Advisory Board and Stakeholders Meetings was on March 26 at the Houston Professional Firefighters Association. The team provided comprehensive updates on the study, including information about our enrollment progress, the fireground exposure assessment, our upcoming monitoring efforts during fire suppression activities in Houston, and preparation for the 6-month follow-up visits. We are very appreciative for the valuable feedback we received from participating fire departments across Texas.



 **UTHealth[®] Houston**
School of Public Health



From left to right: TFCS Stakeholder Advisory Board Chair Captain Gabriel Dominguez with HPFFA – IAFF Local 341, HPFFA Director Luke Manion, TFCS Community Health Education Specialist Paulina Romero, Fire Chief Doug Boeker with TCFP, TFCS Principal Investigator Dr. Jooyeon Hwang, HPFFA President Patrick "Marty" Lancton, State Fire Marshal Chief Debra Knight with State Fire Marshal's Office, 11th District Vice President Michael Glynn with the IAFF, and Firefighter Daniel Calhoun with TSAFF.

Coming Up

Visit 2: Post Exposure Sampling

The TFCS research team is looking forward to another round of post-exposure sampling, the first of two follow-up visits with cadets after their live fire suppression training at the Houston Fire Department's Val Jahnke Training Facility.

Houston, TX (Cadets)

May 12, 2026

Val Jahnke Training Facility

8030 Braniff St, Houston, TX 77061

Visit 2: Six-Month Follow-Up (F01) Sampling

The TFCS research team is prepping for Visit 2, the first **six-month follow-up visit (F01)** for participants who have completed the baseline sampling. Stay tuned for more information.

Scientific Advisory Board Meeting

Our next Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2026. These meetings bring together subject matter experts to review study progress, offer scientific guidance, and ensure the research continues to follow rigorous and evidence-based practices.

Ways to Engage

Connect with Us

Visit our [webpage](#) to stay up-to-date on our study. Share this newsletter with your fellow firefighters and encourage them to join our mailing list.

If you are interested in taking part of this study or have questions, please submit an inquiry using the [Contact Us](#) form or by email at: TFCS@uth.tmc.edu



[TFCS Website](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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