



# TEXAS FIREFIGHTER CANCER STUDY RESEARCH UPDATE

November 2025

UTHealth  
Houston  
School of  
Public Health

## RECRUITMENT EFFORTS



Photo credit: Cormier©2025

Recruitment efforts at fire departments across the state, as well as among retired firefighters, are now underway. Recently, the Texas Firefighter Cancer Study (TFCS) team met with a group of retired firefighters at Champ Burger, one of Houston's oldest burger establishments. Over a shared meal, we presented details about the study, addressed questions, and provided an overview of the next steps. The response was overwhelmingly positive—approximately half of attendees expressed interest in participating in the study.



Photo credit: Cormier©2025

MEETING WITH RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS  
AT CHAMP BURGER IN HOUSTON



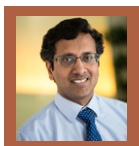
If you're a **retired firefighter with 15+ years of service**, we'd love to connect with you! Learn more about the study and contact us: [go.uth.edu/TexasFirefighterCancerStudy](https://go.uth.edu/TexasFirefighterCancerStudy)

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

We're pleased to share that the TFCS team has received approval to begin research activities! This approval comes from the UTHealth Houston Institutional Review Board (IRB), a committee that ensures studies involving people are conducted safely and ethically. With this green light, we're now ready to begin enrolling participants in our sampling campaign.

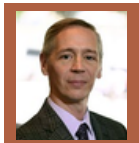
## SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

The first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board was recently held to introduce its members, share the study's vision, and provide updates on our early progress. During the meeting, the team outlined plans for engagement throughout the project, which will include regular meetings and opportunities for input. We're delighted to welcome this distinguished group of experts and invite you to learn more about them:



**Gurumurthy Ramachandran, PhD (Board Chair)**

Professor, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health  
Environmental Health and Engineering  
Director, Johns Hopkins Education and Research Center for Occupational Safety and Health



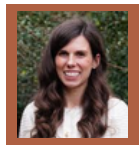
**Drew Helmer, MD**

Professor, Baylor College of Medicine, Health Services Research  
Deputy Director, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center,  
Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness & Safety



**Shine Chang, PhD**

Professor, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Health Disparities  
Research, Division of Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences  
Director, Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences,  
Cancer Prevention Research Training Program



**Caitlin Murphy, PhD**

Professor, University of Chicago, Pediatrics-Hematology,  
Oncology and Epidemiology

## NEXT STEPS

We're preparing for our first Stakeholder Advisory Board meeting, which will bring together representatives from fire departments, firefighter unions, and firefighter associations. The goal of this meeting is to ensure that their perspectives, experiences, and expertise help guide the project so that the study reflects what matters most to the firefighting community.

The research team will also be conducting a full-scale simulation exercise at the fire academy to review sampling logistics, test equipment, and refine team coordination. This exercise will serve as the final readiness check to validate all operational study protocols before upcoming emergency response activities.

Additionally, Principal Investigator Dr. Jooyeon Hwang will be traveling to Austin, TX to present an overview of the Texas Firefighter Cancer Study at the upcoming Texas Commission on Fire Protection meeting.

## WAYS TO ENGAGE



[TFCS@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:TFCS@uth.tmc.edu)



[go.uth.edu/TexasFirefighterCancerStudy](http://go.uth.edu/TexasFirefighterCancerStudy)