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## **Convenient New Screening Program for Syracuse Firefighters Addresses Increased Health Risks**

East Syracuse, NY – Cancer is the leading cause of line-of-duty deaths for firefighters, followed closely by heart disease. On Saturday, May 1, the City of Syracuse is launching a one-stop screening program for firefighters to help identify cancers and heart disease early, when they are easier to treat and potentially curable.

Initiated by the Firefighters Cancer Foundation of NY (FFCF), the City's Personnel Department teamed with Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY (HOA), Crouse Health and CRA Medical Imaging (CRA) to develop the program. Aptly named 9-1-1: Get Screened Like Your Life Depends on It, the program offers nine medical screenings in one day at one location – 5008 Brittonfield Parkway, East Syracuse - scheduled with just one call.

“Our profession is one that comes with great reward each time we get to help save lives. It also comes with adverse health effects and a higher risk of being diagnosed with and passing away from cancer due to the type of work we do,” said Syracuse Fire Department Chief Michael Monds. “Since my time as chief under the Walsh administration, it has been a priority to make sure our firefighters frequently have access to cancer screening opportunities. I am grateful that the City gets to partner with Hematology/Oncology Associates of CNY, Crouse Health and CRA Medical Imaging to provide early disease detection services to the brave women and men who are our local heroes.”

Taking into consideration the firefighters' increased risks for cancer and heart disease, the City of Syracuse lowered the age limits for routine screenings between 10-15 years overall, to provide testing for Syracuse firefighters as follows:

Beginning at age 40:

- Colorectal cancer fecal occult blood test
- Prostate cancer blood test
- Kidney cancer blood test
- Bladder cancer blood test
- Electrocardiogram
- Cardiac stress test

Beginning at age 50:

- Thyroid cancer blood test
- Lung cancer low-dose CT scan

The ninth service offered on May 1 is a cancer genetics survey, available at any age. It determines a firefighter's risk for hereditary cancer and need for testing, which is also covered by their insurance.

“Our most recent data shows that 61% of all firefighters' deaths in the United States were caused by cancer,” explains Steven Duffy, MD, a medical oncologist from HOA. “That's why it is so important for us to raise awareness about the need for screenings and to make them convenient. Firefighters are told to train like their lives depend on it. We want them to think the same way about these medical screenings that can potentially save their lives.”

“After much planning and collaboration among the partner organizations, it is great to see this important, life-saving program come together, with the goal of reducing the risk of cancer in our firefighters,” says Crouse Health CEO Kimberly Boynton.

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