



## LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

**LTC No: 26-076**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission  
**FROM:** Rickelle Williams, City Manager *RW*  
**DATE:** March 17, 2026  
**SUBJECT: Fire Rescue Department Launches Whole Blood Program**

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The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to inform the City Commission of the successful launch of the Whole Blood Program via the Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue (FLFR) Department.

Whole blood, which contains red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets, and plasma, provides a comprehensive and immediate resuscitative solution for patients suffering from severe blood loss. On December 16, 2026, the City Commission approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Broward Health to implement a Whole Blood Program (CAM #25-1084). The Program commenced operations on March 10, 2026. This milestone marks a significant advancement in the City's emergency medical service capabilities and represents a lifesaving enhancement for residents and visitors experiencing severe traumatic injuries or life-threatening hemorrhage.

Prehospital whole blood programs remain extremely rare in the United States. Fewer than 200 fire-rescue or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies nationwide currently carry whole blood in the field, a number representing only a small fraction of the EMS systems across the country. With the launch of this initiative, Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue joins an elite group of progressive EMS agencies leading the nation in advanced, evidence-based trauma care.

Through proactive administrative planning, this program was implemented without any additional financial impact to the City's operating budget. In July 2025, the City was awarded \$17,396.27 through the Florida Department of Health EMS Matching Grant Program, supplemented by a Scope of Work grant. These funds were used to procure critical equipment necessary for safe and effective prehospital blood administration, including:

- Three (3) Delta2 temperature-controlled coolers for field-ready blood storage;
- Advanced monitoring systems to ensure regulatory compliance and thermal integrity; and
- Specialized transfusion equipment for immediate on-scene deployment.

Through the clinical partnership with Broward Health Medical Center, Broward Health supplies and exchanges units of whole blood every fourteen (14) days at no cost to the City. Due to a shelf life of approximately twenty-one (21) days for whole blood, any unused units are returned to the hospital for use in clinical care, guaranteeing zero (0) waste of this critically scarce resource while maintaining a continuous supply for EMS services.

To ensure rapid access to lifesaving intervention throughout the city, whole blood has been strategically deployed across three (3) Battalion Chief units:

- Battalion 46 – North and West areas of Fort Lauderdale
- Battalion 13 – Fort Lauderdale Beach
- Battalion 2 – South Fort Lauderdale and the Downtown District

This distribution model dramatically reduces “time to transfusion,” a metric widely recognized as one of the most influential factors in trauma survival.

Under the leadership of Medical Director Dr. James P. Roach, FLFR established a comprehensive Whole Blood Transfusion Protocol. All Battalion Chiefs, Fire Captains, and Fire Lieutenants have completed extensive training on prehospital transfusion procedures.

Regional data further underscores the necessity of this Program. Since 2020, peer agencies administering prehospital whole blood have reported twenty-four (24)-hour survival rates approaching eighty-two percent (82%) for critically injured patients. By standing up this program internally, FLFR reaffirms its commitment to modern, data-driven, world-class emergency medical care.

The launch of the Whole Blood Program positions the City of Fort Lauderdale at the forefront of EMS innovation nationwide. This initiative ensures our residents and visitors receive the highest possible chance of survival during the most critical moments of their lives and reflects the City’s ongoing commitment to excellence in public safety.

For further information, please contact Stephen Gollan, Fire Chief, at 954-828-6863 or [SGollan@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:SGollan@fortlauderdale.gov).

c: Shari McCartney, City Attorney  
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