



U.S. Department of Transportation
**National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration**

**1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590**

September 15, 2026

26V581

Tom Single
Ford Motor Company
330 Town Center Drive
Suite 500
Dearborn, MI 48126

Subject: Passenger Air Bag May Deploy Improperly

Dear Tom Single:

This letter serves to acknowledge Ford Motor Company's notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a safety recall which will be conducted pursuant to Federal law for the product(s) listed below. Please review the following information to ensure that it conforms to your records as this information is being made available to the public. If the information does not agree with your records, please contact us immediately to discuss your concerns.

Makes/Models/Model Years:
FORD/EXPLORER/2026

Mfr's Report Date: September 09, 2026

NHTSA Campaign Number: 26V581

Components:
AIR BAGS:FRONTAL

Potential Number of Units Affected: 7

Problem Description:
Ford Motor Company (Ford) is recalling certain 2026 Explorer vehicles. The active vent on the passenger side may not open as intended, preventing the air bag from deploying properly.

Consequence:
An air bag that does not deploy as intended increases the risk of injury in a crash.

Remedy:
Dealers will replace the passenger air bag module, free of charge. Owner notification letters are expected to be mailed September 25, 2026. Owners may contact Ford customer service at 1-866-436-7332. Ford's number for this recall is 26S65. Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs) involved in this recall became searchable on NHTSA.gov on September 14, 2026.



Notes:

Owners may also contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-888-275-9171), or go to www.nhtsa.gov.

We have received your proposed owner notification letter and it is approved for distribution.

Please be reminded of the following requirements:

Copies of all notices, bulletins, dealer notifications, and other communications that relate to this recall, including a copy of the final owner notification letter and any subsequent owner follow-up notification letter(s), are required to be submitted to this office no later than 5 days after they are originally sent (if they are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser/owner).

Please be reminded that under 49 U.S.C. § 30112(a)(3), it is illegal for a manufacturer, to sell, offer for sale, import, or introduce or deliver into interstate commerce, a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment that contains a safety defect once the manufacturer has notified NHTSA about that safety defect. This prohibition does not apply once the motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment has been remedied according to the manufacturer's instructions.

As stated in 49 U.S.C. § 30118(f), submission of eight consecutive quarterly reports followed by three annual reports is required. As described in 573.7, submission of the first of eight consecutive quarterly status reports is required within one month after the close of the calendar quarter in which notification to purchasers occurs. Therefore, the first quarterly report will be due on, or before, 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter. The first of three consecutive annual status reports will be due on, or before, 1 year after the eighth quarterly report was submitted.

Ford Motor Company's contact for this recall will be Dusty Gardner who may be reached by email at dusty.gardner@dot.gov. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Alex Ansley

Alex Ansley
Chief, Recall Management Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement