

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Blood Donation/Drive Fact Sheet



**American  
Red Cross**

In response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), government agencies recommend limiting social gatherings exceeding 10 people for non-essential activity. **It is very important to understand, that the American Red Cross mission IS an essential service, like hospitals, grocers, pharmacies, energy and transportation infrastructure, that will remain in service as part of emergency preparedness plans.** The need for blood is constant and patients will continue to need lifesaving blood products during the crisis.

**Following is guidance that blood drives are a safe process and blood donation must continue:**

[Health and Human Services and the Food and Drug Administration](#) video

[U.S. Surgeon General](#) video

[Center for Disease Control](#) statement-call for donations

[Food and Drug Administration](#) statement-call for donations

[FEMA](#) FAQs citing need for donations

[Dept of Homeland Security \(CISA\)](#) Essential Industries/Workers



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It is safe to [#donateblood](#) and blood centers need healthy individuals to donate now to help others in need. Find a local blood center at [aabb.org/giveblood](#) and make an appointment.

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**As of 3/23, 7,000 American Red Cross blood drives have been cancelled, resulting in about 200,000 fewer blood donations.**

"I want Americans to know that blood donation is safe and blood centers are taking extra precautions at this time based on new CDC recommendations, including spacing beds 6 ft apart, disinfecting surfaces between patients, temperature-checking staff, and encouraging donors to make appointments ahead of time so we can space them out. Social distancing does not have to mean social disengagement, so give blood today. You'll feel good about it, and you'll be helping your country and your community during this crisis, and you might even save a life."

—U.S. Surgeon General, Jerome Adams, speaking at the White House, 3/19/20

The Surgeon General is right. What makes us most vulnerable in this challenging time is also our greatest strength—our humanity. In response to his public comments and those of other government agencies calling for blood donation to continue, the Red Cross has received an influx of donors seeking drives. Our current priority is finding suitable site locations to place blood drives nationwide. If you can share a site(s) that might be suitable, we can share lifesaving blood with the most vulnerable among us.

To express interest in serving as a site location, please visit <https://rcblood.org/impact>. We're so grateful for your partnership!

## Added Safety Precautions at Our Drives

### Temperature Screenings

- All donors have their temperature taken before being permitted into the blood drive
- If a donor has a temperature greater than 99.5°F they will be asked to donate another time instead

### Enhanced Disinfecting

- Hand sanitizer will be available at check-in, health history and refreshment areas
- Blood donors will be asked to use hand sanitizer before and during the donation process
- Donor beds will be sanitized between each and every donor

### Social Distancing

- We're taking extra measures to institute medically-recommended 6ft space wherever possible

### Staff Wellness and Protection

- All staff have their temperature taken before beginning work and are asked not to report for work if they are feeling sick or test above 99.5°F
- Staff wear gloves throughout entire blood drive, changing gloves between every donor

Each day, the American Red Cross assesses the need and opportunity for additional safety precautions. The health of our staff, volunteers and donors are every bit as important to us as that of the patients we serve daily.