



**American Red Cross**

## **DONATE BLOOD**

The American Red Cross now faces a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Healthy individuals are needed now to donate to help patients counting on lifesaving blood.

Individuals can schedule an appointment to give blood with the American Red Cross by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org), using the [Red Cross Blood Donor App](#), calling 1-800-RED-CROSS or activating the Blood Scheduling Skill for Amazon Alexa.

As the coronavirus pandemic has grown here in the U.S., blood drive cancellations have grown at an alarming rate. To date, nearly 2,700 Red Cross blood drives have been canceled across the country due to concerns about congregating at workplaces, college campuses and schools amidst the coronavirus outbreak. These cancellations have resulted in some 86,000 fewer blood donations. More than 80 percent of the blood the Red Cross collects comes from drives held at these locations.

The Red Cross expects the number of cancellations to continue to increase, which is causing heightened concern for blood collection organizations and hospitals across the country. This blood shortage could impact patients who need surgery, victims of car accidents and other emergencies, or patients suffering from cancer.

### **The Red Cross is Committed to Blood Drive Safety**

The Red Cross has implemented new measures to ensure blood drives and donation centers are even safer for our donors and staff, including:

Checking the temperature of staff and donors *before* entering a drive to make sure they are healthy

- Providing hand sanitizer for use before the drive, as well as throughout the donation process
- Spacing beds, where possible, to follow social distancing practices between blood donors, and
- Increasing enhanced disinfecting of surfaces and equipment.

At each blood drive and donation center, Red Cross employees already follow thorough safety protocols to help prevent the spread of any type of infection, including:

- Wearing gloves and changing gloves with each donor
- Routinely wiping down donor-touched areas
- Using sterile collection sets for every donation, and
- Preparing the arm for donation with an aseptic scrub

There is no data or evidence that this coronavirus can be transmitted by blood transfusion, and there have been no reported cases of transfusion transmission for any respiratory virus including this coronavirus worldwide.

## **VOLUNTEER**

### **Blood Ambassadors**

The Ohio Buckeye Region of the American Red Cross needs Volunteer Blood Donation Ambassadors. These are friendly, customer service-oriented volunteers to help create a positive donor experience at local blood drives. These volunteers were needed prior to the severe blood shortage brought about by the recent blood drive cancellations, but are even more critical in light of the current situation.

Volunteer Blood Donor Ambassadors need to be courteous, well-organized and enthusiastic to ensure that blood donors have a pleasant and fulfilling experience. During a blood drive, these volunteers will greet donors, answer questions, provide refreshments, and create a favorable impression that encourages ongoing donor support. Each volunteer shift as a Blood Donor Ambassador is another opportunity to be a part of our life saving mission. To volunteer to become a Blood Donor Ambassador please go to [www.redcross.org/volunteer](https://www.redcross.org/volunteer).

### **Virtual and Remote Volunteer Roles**

There are a number of volunteer opportunities critical to carrying out the mission of the Red Cross that can be conducted from home. These positions fall within various Red Cross lines of service and cater to a variety of skill sets and areas of interest. You can search the various opportunities available by going to [www.redcross.org/volunteer](https://www.redcross.org/volunteer) and clicking on “Find my volunteer opportunity.”

## **MAKE A FINANCIAL DONATION**

The American Red Cross needs financial donations to help continue to deliver our lifesaving mission nationwide due to this public health emergency. Donations will be used to ensure that the Red Cross can maintain a sufficient supply of blood to help patients in need. This may include adding more staff and resources to ensure we have enough people to collect vital blood products for hospital patients in need across the country. In addition, donations will ensure that due to this coronavirus outbreak, the Red Cross is able to provide critical relief services to people affected by disasters big and small. This includes equipping and training volunteers and staff during this outbreak to safely provide food, shelter, comfort and relief supplies to people affected by disasters of all types. Donations may also be used to invest in technology and training to make sure we can provide counseling, financial assistance and other relief services virtually.

To donate to help the American Red Cross continue to deliver its lifesaving mission nationwide due to this public health emergency, visit [www.Redcross.org](https://www.Redcross.org), call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or text the word CORONAVIRUS to 90999. You can also donate by check by writing “Coronavirus Outbreak” in the memo line, and mailing it to your local Red Cross chapter located at 995 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43205.