

**THE COMMUNITY BLOOD SUPPLY HAS A SEVERE SHORTAGE.** Due to coronavirus closures, the American Red Cross has seen blood drive cancellations grow at an alarming rate. As of March 27, the Red Cross has had more than 9,000 drives cancelled and nearly 300,000 fewer blood donations.

As the number of COVID-19 cases grow, we do expect cancelled blood drives to increase. That's why we are reaching out and asking for partners to host blood drives in the community so we can continue to deliver our essential service and donors can continue to give. Together, we must ensure a readily available blood supply for patients who are counting on us.

If you are able to host a blood drive, please reply online at <https://rcblood.org/boma> and a representative from the local office will then get back to you shortly.

### **Safety First**

We are dedicated to ensuring the safety of your donors as well as our employees, volunteers and host customers as we continue to run our blood drive operations.

First, only healthy people can donate blood. Many donors complete the questionnaire portion of their donation at home and would be deferred before arrival if they were sick. At each blood drive, we have implemented pre-screening protocols to check the temperature of donors before they enter the blood drive. Red Cross employees follow thorough safety protocols including wearing gloves, wiping down donor-touched areas after every collection, using sterile collection sets for every donation, and arm scrubbing. Social distancing is also used to space donors and avoid the spread of germs. These mitigation measures will help ensure the safety of all.

In addition, please note that there are no data or evidence to show that this coronavirus can be transmissible by blood transfusion, and there have been no reported cases of transmissions for any respiratory virus including this coronavirus. Nonetheless, the Red Cross has implemented new blood donation deferrals out of an abundance of caution, asking individuals to postpone their donation for 28 days if they meet certain risk criteria like travel to highly effected areas.

### **The Need**

Potential hosting organizations are asked to make space available for community blood drives for the foreseeable future. In the coming months, the Red Cross is looking for stable locations to continuously hold drives as traditional sponsoring organizations are closed. The frequency of hosting a blood drive would be discussed locally based on collection needs and capacity.

### **Site Requirements**

Below are the general site requirements. Our local team would review a site to determine how best to set up the drive and meet social distancing requirements. Blood drive hours and goals would also be recommended after a physical site review. We would work with you in advance to review any blood drive site and answer any questions. In general, the location would need to have:

- Optimally 1,200 sq. ft. or more. Location on the first floor or with minimal stairs or elevator access.

- Donation site is in one room with no obstacles (i.e. columns.). Pre-screening would generally take place outside the donation site.
- Minimum 4 electrical outlets
- Tables and chairs, depending on the blood drive size
- Bathrooms are close to donation site on same floor.
- Site has ability to control temperature in the room (AC or heat)
- Site will accept wireless equipment; site has nothing to impact wireless signal.
- Site has good lighting.
- Parking is accessible for donors, staff; easy access to unloading of equipment (ramp or dock if needed)

If you can share a space with us, we can share lifesaving blood with the most vulnerable among us right now.

Thank you for your consideration and support during this unprecedented public health crisis.