



March 31, 2020

Coronavirus Outbreak: Help Us Continue to Deliver Our Lifesaving Mission Nationwide Due to This Public Health Emergency

Public health concerns caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic present significant challenges as the American Red Cross continues to deliver its lifesaving mission. To meet these challenges, we are investing an estimated \$150+ million to make sure we can support people across the U.S. who count on Red Cross blood and disaster relief services.

When help can't wait, people in need turn to the Red Cross. To continue carrying out this vital work nationwide in the weeks and months ahead, we are focusing on two pillars:

- Ensure that we have a sufficient supply of blood to help patients in need and help address potential shortages through our blood services.
- Ensure that we can continue to provide critical relief services to people affected by disasters big and small.

Providing Lifesaving Blood for Patients in Need

Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. requires blood—like a child with sickle cell disease or a neighbor receiving treatment for cancer—and we collect about 40% of the nation's blood supply to meet this constant demand.

Blood donations are essential to ensuring the health of our communities, and we greatly appreciate the generosity of volunteer donors who have helped stock hospital shelves for people with critical medical needs. As experts have emphasized, there is no certain end date in this fight against coronavirus, and the Red Cross will continue to need the help of blood donors and blood drive hosts to maintain a sufficient blood supply in the weeks ahead.

To help maintain a sufficient supply of blood for patients with critical needs over the coming weeks, we are:

- Ensuring that we have enough workers and resources to collect vital blood products.
- Investing in a public awareness and targeted outreach campaign to raise awareness and inspire the public to donate blood.

As part of this effort, we must also ensure the ongoing availability of frontline workers and resources to safely collect, test and manufacture blood as the COVID-19 outbreak continues. To help, we are working to recruit, hire and train additional phlebotomists.

The Red Cross is also taking added precautions to ensure safety, such as temperature checks for workers and donors; providing basic face masks for workers; providing hand sanitizer for use before and during the donation process; spacing beds, where possible, to follow social distancing practices between blood donors; and enhanced disinfection of surfaces and equipment.

In addition, we have invested in a public awareness and targeted outreach campaign to highlight this critical need and inspire the public to continue making appointments and donating blood over the coming weeks.

Delivering Help and Hope after Disasters

Our disaster teams are incorporating several new steps to adapt to the changing public health situation. We have implemented enhanced cleaning protocols for shelters, and we will begin health screenings for disaster workers and the people coming into our shelters.

We are also augmenting our capabilities to provide services virtually, including counseling and financial assistance, for people affected by disasters like home fires. This will require added investments in workers and IT equipment, such as laptops, wireless hotspots and mobile devices.

And, when requested, we will work with community partners to provide meals and relief supplies like cots, blankets and comfort kits.

How You Can Help

Help the American Red Cross continue to deliver its lifesaving mission nationwide due to this public health emergency. To donate online, visit [redcross.org/donate](https://www.redcross.org/donate) and select “Coronavirus Outbreak.” To donate by check, write “Coronavirus Outbreak” in the memo line, and mail it to your local Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P.O. Box 37839, Boone, IA 50037-0839.



**American
Red Cross**

To ensure that we can continue to provide critical relief services to people affected by disasters big and small, we will:

- Equip and train disaster workers to provide a safe environment for those affected, as well as our volunteers and employees.
- Increase our ability to provide some key services virtually through additional investments in workers and technology.
- When requested, work with community partners to provide supplies and meals.

