



**American  
Red Cross**

**Blood Program**  
*Leader*

## CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) UPDATE

The American Red Cross is closely monitoring the evolving situation regarding the outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). While there is no evidence that this coronavirus or any respiratory illness can be transmitted through a blood transfusion, out of the abundance of caution, we are taking actions to help ensure the safety of our donors, recipients, volunteers, staff and the blood supply.

The Red Cross is asking that individuals postpone their donation for 28 days following:

- Travel to China, Hong Kong, Macau, as Iran, Italy and South Korea;
- Diagnosis of COVID-19, contact with a person who has or is suspected to have the virus.

### SAFETY FIRST

Blood donation is a safe process, and people should not hesitate to give and receive blood. At each blood drive, Red Cross employees follow thorough safety protocols. In addition to our standard procedures, you will notice the following at your local blood drive:

#### Pre-Donation Donor Temperature Screening

- All donors will be asked to 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 come back to donate when they are healthy and will be asked to leave the drive.

#### Enhanced Disinfecting

- Hand sanitizer will be available at check-in, health history and refreshment areas.
- Blood donors will be asked to use hand sanitizer prior to using tablets and laptops.
- Donors beds will be sanitized between every donor.

#### Social Distancing

- Implementation of separated drive set up to allow as much distance as possible between donors.

#### Staff Wellness and Protection

- All staff members will have a temperature check before presenting to work, and they've been asked not to come to work if they are feeling sick.
- Staff will wear gloves throughout entire blood drive, changing gloves between every donor.

#### Increased Educational Materials

- Donor educational materials on COVID-19.
- Stop sign at entrances to avert ineligible donors from presenting.

### BLOOD SUPPLY PROTECTION

- The Red Cross uses safety measures to protect the blood supply from all respiratory viruses including COVID-19.
  - In addition to the travel deferral, the health history screening also helps to protect the blood supply.
  - Blood is only collected from individuals who are healthy and feeling well at the time of donation.
  - Call back number, to connect with trained donor counselors, is provided if donor develops any symptoms of illness within the days following donation. Donations from such donors are immediately quarantined and not used.
- During this public health emergency, donation information may change in the days and weeks ahead, so please be sure to consult with your Red Cross representative or staff at your blood drive with any questions.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Provide the [Volunteer Document](#) to your volunteers, before your blood drive, so they know what to expect. Volunteers helping at your drive may be asked on-site to assist with some of the new safety tasks, training on-site will be provided. If your volunteers are not comfortable completing the new safety tasks, please have them inform the charge person at the drive. In addition, volunteers must have their temperatures taken to ensure they are healthy to work.
- Recruit a few additional donors to your blood drive to help offset any individuals that may postpone their donation due to travel to affected areas.
- Educate your donors on the deferral guidelines and the new enhanced safety measures that are being implemented at blood drives to help reduce any fears of donating blood during this time.
- For detailed donor eligibility questions, please have your donors call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org). For more information on the COVID-19, visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>.

Thank you for your support! Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your Red Cross representative.