

For Immediate Release



Date: 09 March 2020

Contact: John Yeager | 425-765-9845 | JYeager@BloodworksNW.org

Karen Kirby | 206-689-6359 | karenk@bloodworksnw.org

Blood Supply Hits Emergency Level Due to Coronavirus Concerns

Community Action Needed to Prevent Blood Supply Collapse

Seattle, WA – The Pacific Northwest’s blood supply is at risk of collapse in coming days. The accelerating number of blood drive cancellations due to the closure of schools, businesses, and events over coronavirus concerns has put nearly 60% of the community’s blood supply in jeopardy. With exponentially decreasing opportunities for the public to donate, our community blood supply is in real danger. For the safety and care of current and future patients, Bloodworks is urging the community to step up to donate and spread word of the current need.

“It is our shared civic responsibility to get the word out that our community is under a grave threat,” said Curt Bailey, CEO and president of Bloodworks Northwest. “The cancellation of blood drives creates a serious public health concern since nearly 60% of our blood supply is collected at mobile blood drives. Without access to locations where the public can donate blood, we’re at a tipping point where children and adults experiencing trauma, those going through cancer treatment, and premature babies, among others, will not have blood available. Together, we can rise up to this challenge, but we must act now.”

Compounding the problem is the nationwide blood shortage due to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation. Bloodworks confirmed they’re starting to receive assistance from blood centers across the U.S.

“Other blood centers are fully aware of the serious position we’re in and are offering help where they can,” said Bailey. “The shipments they’re sending us help, but won’t solve the problem. If the virus spreads, assistance from other parts of the country will be unlikely. We owe it to our community to each do our part locally to ensure a safe and reliable blood supply.”

“Without available blood, doctors will have to make life or death decisions about who receives blood and who doesn’t,” added Vicki Finson, executive vice president of blood services. “We know that fears of coronavirus are threatening our blood supply, but even scarier is the idea that we won’t have enough blood for people who desperately need it. We need donors to keep their appointments and for blood drive sponsors to keep hosting drives.”

Donating blood is a safe activity. Individuals are not at risk of contracting coronavirus through the blood donation process. (Source: [AABB](#)) Bloodworks policies comply with FDA, CDC, local health departments, and other recommendations related to COVID-19. Bloodworks routinely sanitizes donation areas, chairs, surfaces and common objects like door knobs and light switches, and use hand sanitizer. Staff, donors, and volunteers are encouraged to stay home if they feel unwell.

Routine blood donor screening methods that are already in place would be expected to reliably protect the blood supply, and it's important to note that there have been no reported cases of transfusion-transmitted coronavirus anywhere in the world. (Source: [FDA](#))

It takes 1,000 people showing up to donate at a [donor center](#) or [blood drive](#) every day to keep our community's blood supply at stable levels. Bloodworks has posted information addressing questions and concerns for blood donors at [bloodworksnw.org/coronavirus](#). Blood donation takes about an hour from registration to post-donation refreshment. Information about [who can donate](#) and where, is available at [www.bloodworksnw.org](#).

Additional Resources:

For the latest information on COVID-19 please visit the [CDC website](#) and Washington State Department of Health [COVID-19 main page](#).

Bloodworks Donor Centers:

Appointments and information at [BloodworksNW.org](#), 800-398-7888, or text bloodapp to 91985 to receive a link on your phone. Please check [website](#) for extended donor center hours.

- [Bellevue Center](#)
1807 132nd Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98005
425-453-4011
- [Bellingham Center](#)
410 W Bakerview Rd., Suite 117
Bellingham, WA 98226
360-671-8848
- [Central Seattle](#)
921 Terry Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104
206-292-6500
- [Everett Center](#)
2703 Oakes Avenue
Everett, WA 98201
425-740-2909
- [Federal Way Center](#)
1414 S 324TH Street, B101
Federal Way, WA 98003
253-945-8660
- [Lynnwood Center](#)
19723 Highway 99, Suite F
Lynnwood, WA 98036
425-412-1000
- [Olympia Center](#)
1220 Eastside Street SE
Olympia, WA 98501
360-596-3950
- [North Seattle Center](#)
10357 Stone Avenue N
Seattle, WA 98133
206-526-1970
- [Silverdale Center](#)
3230 NW Randall Way
Silverdale, WA 98383
360-308-7340
- [Tukwila Center](#)
130 Andover Park E
Tukwila, WA 98188
206-241-6300
- [Vancouver, WA Donor Center](#)
9320 NE Vancouver Mall Blvd, Suite100
Vancouver, WA 98662
360-567-4800
- [Lane Center](#)
2211 Willamette St
Eugene, OR 97405
541-484-9111

About Bloodworks Northwest – Bloodworks Northwest is backed by 75 years of Northwest history and 250,000 donors. It is local, nonprofit, independent, volunteer-supported and community-based. A recognized leader in transfusion medicine, Bloodworks serves patients at hospitals in Washington, Oregon and Alaska — partnering closely with local hospitals to deliver the highest level of patient care. Comprehensive services include blood components, complex cross-matching, specialized lab services for organ transplants, care for patients with blood disorders, and collection of cord blood stem cells for cancer treatment. Bloodworks Research Institute performs leading-edge research in blood biology, transfusion medicine, blood storage and treatment of blood disorders. Patients with traumatic injuries, undergoing surgeries or organ transplantation, or receiving treatment for cancer and blood disorders all depend on our services, expertise, laboratories and research. Blood donation appointments can be scheduled on the [Bloodworks App](#). For more information visit bloodworksnw.org.

###