

For Immediate Release



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Bloodworks Northwest Declares Code Red Emergency Blood Shortage **Less than half of the donations needed to supply local hospitals**

Western Washington & Oregon Donors Needed to Book Appointments Immediately

(January 27, 2025)—[Bloodworks Northwest](https://www.bloodworksnw.org) is declaring a “Code Red” emergency blood shortage in the Pacific Northwest, asking everyone eligible and feeling healthy to fill immediate appointments to give blood in support of local patients. Declines in blood inventory to emergency levels in certain blood types, especially Type O, combined with high patient need and a low number of people booking appointments to donate, and rush shipments of blood to U.S. communities experiencing severe winter storms, have impacted the available blood supply. Less than half of the donors needed to maintain a safe and reliable blood supply have booked appointments, leaving a gap of 27,000 donation appointments.

“Code Red means we’re running out of blood to concerning levels,” said Curt Bailey, President & CEO of Bloodworks Northwest. “Bloodworks is providing local hospitals with more Type O than is being donated locally, which depletes the supply. Our community needs to act quickly to stabilize the blood supply and to ensure patients experiencing cancer can receive transfusions, surgeries aren’t delayed, and our trauma centers can respond to emergencies. If you’ve been putting off donating blood, now is the time to make an appointment.”

A Code Red is declared after four consecutive days of emergency levels. Type O Positive, Type O Negative, and Platelets have been fluctuating between critical and emergency levels since early December. Demand for blood remains high throughout hospitals in the Pacific Northwest. For example, one local patient needed more than 100 units alone last week. Donors in Western Washington and Oregon must respond to this emergency by booking and keeping appointments to donate every 56 days before the shortage impacts local hospitals.

Severe winter weather across the U.S. has compounded the need for donors of all blood types, especially Type O and Platelets. Bloodworks Northwest recently sent blood to Texas and Tennessee, as requests come in from around the country.

Same-day blood donation appointments are available at most locations, and appointments in the next three to six weeks are just as vital. It takes 1,000 donors a day to keep up with the demand for blood. Right now, universal [Type O blood](#) is extremely important, especially for trauma and emergency situations when the patient’s blood type is unknown. January is *National Blood Donor Month*, and with

this blood donor shortage that is nothing short of a public health emergency, the importance of blood donation is keenly felt. Appointments can be made at www.bloodworksnw.org or by calling 800-398-7888.

Facts:

- Over 25,000 open appointments left to be filled through February.
- Over 7,500 need to be filled in the next 10 days.
- Most regions of the U.S. are currently experiencing a shortage. Bloodworks is on-call with [Blood Emergency Readiness Corps](#) January 27 – February 2 to support emergency needs across the U.S.
- Responding to emergencies requires blood that is already collected, tested, on the shelves, and ready for immediate use by first responders and medical staff.
- 39% of the population has O Positive blood, and only 9% of the population has O Negative blood. You do not need to know your blood type to become a blood donor. [Learn more](#).

About Donating Blood:

- Most people in good health, at least 18 years old, and who weigh at least 110 pounds can donate whole blood every 56 days. See website for ages 16 & 17. Donors can donate blood ten days after COVID symptoms resolve, and COVID, RSV, and Flu vaccinations do not affect your ability to donate blood. Check out [our detailed eligibility Q&A](#) or call us at 800-398-7888.
- The FDA's previous donor eligibility criteria based on sexual orientation, which made it challenging for gay and bisexual men to donate blood, has been eliminated. [See update](#).
- It takes about an hour to give blood from check-in to post-donation cookie. Information about [who can donate](#) and where, is available at www.bloodworksnw.org.

Bloodworks Donor Centers and Blood Drives:

Appointments and information at BloodworksNW.org or 800-398-7888. [See map](#) of Donor Centers and Blood Drives near you.

About Bloodworks Northwest

Donations to Bloodworks Northwest provide lifesaving blood supply to 95% of hospitals in Western Washington and Oregon. Since 1944, Bloodworks has served the Pacific Northwest as a local, nonprofit, independent, volunteer-supported and community-based blood center and research institute. Bloodworks partners closely with local hospitals to deliver the highest level of patient care. Its 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. Patients with traumatic injuries, undergoing surgeries or organ transplantation, or receiving treatment for cancer and blood disorders all depend on its services, expertise, laboratories and research. Hear lifesaving stories by subscribing to the award-winning [Bloodworks 101 podcast](#). Blood donation appointments can be scheduled at BloodworksNW.org.