

# Red Cross: Blood And Platelet Donation Appointments Still Critically Needed

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*Winter weather, ongoing COVID-19 surge continue to threaten blood supply*

**ST. LOUIS** — While there has been a significant and encouraging response to the dire need for blood across the nation, the American Red Cross needs more people to give in the weeks ahead to recover from its worst blood shortage in more than a decade. Those interested in helping are urged to schedule the earliest-available blood or platelet [donation appointment](#) in their area to help ensure accident victims rushed to the emergency room, those being treated for cancer and others who count on blood product transfusions can receive lifesaving care without delay.



Since the Red Cross issued its first-ever blood crisis alert, severe winter weather has further complicated efforts to rebuild the blood supply. Hundreds of blood drives have been canceled across the country due to winter storms in January, forcing about 6,500 blood and platelet donations to go uncollected.

**As February approaches, and the effects from the spread of the omicron variant and winter weather persist, people are urged to make an appointment now to give blood or platelets in the weeks ahead by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).**

As a thank-you for coming out to help save lives during this blood crisis, *Krispy Kreme* is offering those who come to give blood or platelets a free Original Glazed® dozen through the end of January. To receive the free Original Glazed dozen, visit a participating *Krispy Kreme* shop by Jan. 31 and present a donation sticker or a digital blood donor card through the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

Those who come to give blood or platelets Feb. 1-28, 2022, will receive a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card via email, thanks to Amazon.\*

## **Employment and volunteer opportunities available**

During this challenging time, the Red Cross is also actively recruiting blood collection employees and blood drive volunteers who play vital roles in supporting the nation's blood supply. The Red Cross encourages those interested to go to <https://www.redcross.org/about-us/careers/pbjob-types/blood-collection.html>. **Hiring bonuses from \$1,500 to \$3,000** are being offered for some positions including phlebotomist and drivers with a CDL.

For volunteer opportunities to support Red Cross blood collections, visit [redcross.org/volunteertoday](https://www.redcross.org/volunteertoday). **Volunteer positions needed most** are individuals who can greet and assist donors through the process (called ambassadors), and individuals who can drive Red Cross vans to transport blood (called transportation specialists). A CDL is not needed.

## **Blood drive safety**

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and [additional precautions](#)—including face masks for donors and

staff, regardless of vaccination status – have been implemented to help protect the health of all those in attendance. Donors are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving at the drive.

## **Save time during donation**

Donors can also save up to 15 minutes at the blood drive by completing a RapidPass®. With RapidPass®, donors complete the pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire online, on the day of donation, from a mobile device or computer. To complete a RapidPass®, follow the instructions at [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](https://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) or use the [Red Cross Blood Donor App](#).

To donate blood, individuals need to bring a blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification that are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also must meet certain height and weight requirements.

## **Health insights for donors**

At a time when health information has never been more important, the Red Cross is screening all blood, platelet and plasma donations from self-identified African American donors for the sickle cell trait. This additional screening will provide Black donors with an additional health insight and help the Red Cross identify compatible blood types more quickly to help patients with sickle cell disease who require trait-negative blood. Blood transfusion is an essential treatment for those with sickle cell disease, and blood donations from individuals of the same race, ethnicity and blood type have a unique ability to help patients fighting sickle cell disease.

Donors can expect to receive sickle cell trait screening results, if applicable, within one to two weeks through the Red Cross Blood Donor App and the online donor portal at [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org).

## **About the American Red Cross**

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](https://redcross.org) or [cruzrojaamericana.org](https://cruzrojaamericana.org), or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).

