

**For Immediate Release**



**Date:** 23 March 2020

**Contact:** John Yeager | 425-765-9845 | [JYeager@BloodworksNW.org](mailto:JYeager@BloodworksNW.org)

Karen Kirby | 206-689-6359 | [karenk@bloodworksnw.org](mailto:karenk@bloodworksnw.org)

## **Blood supply stabilized; community action critical to make it resilient**

*Will our community have enough blood for uncertain months that loom ahead?*

**Seattle, WA** – As the massive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local communities becomes apparent, Bloodworks Northwest officials reached out today to thank people for their extraordinary response over the past three weeks to make up for a giant 11, 500 donation shortfall after hundreds of cancelled drives since March 1. “We sounded the alarm that the blood supply was in danger of collapse, and the community responded. We sincerely thank regular and new donors who stepped forward to restock our shelves,” said Curt Bailey, president and CEO of Bloodworks Northwest. “They are humble heroes who are giving back to the community and saving lives.”

“It’s clear now that this massive public health crisis will go on for months, and we anticipate further shocks to the blood supply in the coming days and weeks. The community must act by [making their appointments now](#) to donate blood in April and again when they become eligible. This is the only way the Pacific Northwest will meet the unprecedented demands facing our healthcare system and those lives depending on it,” Bailey said. “We have seen how extraordinary our community is. The community will have safe and reliable blood supply when donating blood becomes a habit—when donors commit to donating two or three times a year or more.

“Blood is perishable, just like the milk on you shelf,” Bailey added. “That’s why donors must commit their April appointments now to keep the shelves stocked for the transfusion needs that are coming.”

About 60% of the blood supply is collected daily through mobile drives hosted by blood drive sponsors: the amazing people who organize drives multiple times a year on bloodmobiles or inside schools, workplaces, offices, factories, community spaces and places of worship. Along

with cancellations due to school closures and work from home programs, Bloodworks has taken all bloodmobiles out of service due to social distancing and space needs – a significant step to ensure safety all involved. Amazingly, the community has stepped-up and-into Bloodworks donor centers and newly scheduled inside blood drives and, so far, is making up the difference. The challenge now is spacing appointments out through April and appealing to donors to keep their commitments to donate.

“Local hospitals are counting on all of us to meet their commitment to provide the best patient care possible, and we will not let them down,” vowed Vicki Finson, executive vice president of blood services. “Even with hospitals suspending elective and other non-life threatening surgeries, we need people of every blood type to donate – every day – to help patients -cancer treatment, trauma care, transplant surgeries, care for premature babies, and even for treatment of severely-ill COVID-19 patients, among others.”

“Now more than ever before the act of donating blood is a way for people to look after their families, colleagues, friends and neighbors. It’s a way to do something known and powerful act in a time of such uncertainty,” Finson said.

Although authorities are now implementing dramatic measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 -- working remotely, staying home, closures, suspending travel – they remain united in urging people to *donate blood now* ([CDC](#), [FDA](#), [US Surgeon General](#), [Washington State Department of Public Health](#), [Tacoma-Pierce County Department of Health](#), and [King County Public Health](#), among others).

“In the Pacific Northwest we pride ourselves on being caring, resilient people and communities,” noted Bailey. “And right now, communities across the nation are watching and learning from one another. When it comes to a safe and reliable blood supply, let’s be the community that leads the way.”

Whole blood donors can give blood once every 56 days, up to 6 times a year. Those aged 16 & 17 who meet donation weight and eligibility requirements may donate with a signed [Bloodworks permission form](#).

**Appointments are required to donate blood and no one under the age of 16 is allowed at a center or drive to support safe social distancing, minimize wait time, and ensure the best donation experience possible.** Donating blood is safe, and there is no risk of contracting coronavirus from the 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 advised to stay home if they feel unwell. 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](http://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](http://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](http://bloodworksnw.org).