



**American  
Red Cross**

## Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19)

THREE-MONTH UPDATE | AUGUST 2020

### Delivering the Red Cross Mission Nationwide During the COVID-19 Pandemic

When help can't wait, people in need know they can turn to the American Red Cross—even during a public health emergency like the coronavirus outbreak. Some rely on the Red Cross for relief and comfort after disasters. For example, Carol and her family experienced a three-alarm fire that forced them to flee their Bronx apartment building. Outside, she met a Red Cross disaster worker who, at a safe distance, offered her guidance, reassurance and financial assistance. “[The Red Cross] gave me a sense of security that everybody needs in this very moment, and not everybody has it,” Carol said.

Others count on the Red Cross for blood products as part of treatment for serious medical conditions. One recipient, Robert, has a disease called beta thalassemia major that causes him to be severely anemic. He needs

blood transfusions every three weeks. “The Red Cross is a big reason why I am here today,” he told us.

Emergencies like home fires, accidents and illnesses don't stop during a pandemic, and neither do the urgent needs of people like Carol and her family, Robert, and thousands more across the U.S. That's why the Red Cross began working in early March to ensure the continued delivery of our lifesaving mission amid the many challenges presented by this coronavirus outbreak. As part of our planning, we examined the potential impact of the coronavirus outbreak on our entire operation—particularly how we carry out our critical services, including blood collection and disaster relief—and identified additional investments required to safely support people across the U.S. who rely on those services each day.

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**“As a nation, this is a time when we must take care of one another—an imperative that lies at the heart of all we do at the American Red Cross. While facing the unique challenges presented by the coronavirus outbreak, Red Crossers around the country continue working with compassion and determination to help people in need every day. Whether it's a phlebotomist collecting blood that will treat patients with cancer, sickle cell disease and other life-threatening medical conditions, or a disaster action team volunteer who helps a family left homeless by a fire or tornado to find a place to lay their heads and a way forward, our work has not—and will not—stop during this pandemic. I've never been prouder to be a part of our Red Cross family, nor more grateful for the generous donors who have helped us adapt and carry forward our lifesaving mission.”**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gail McGovern".

Gail McGovern, President and CEO, American Red Cross

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Red Cross has continued to be there for those we serve every day—whether it's through maintaining and equipping the workers who collect life-sustaining blood across

the country, raising awareness about the ongoing need for blood and inspiring blood donors to give, or adapting the way we care for people following disasters large and small.

## Collecting Lifesaving Blood for People with Serious Medical Conditions

The Red Cross provides about 40% of the nation's blood supply for patients with serious illnesses, mothers giving birth, accident victims, cancer patients, and many others. To meet this need, Red Cross employees need to collect about 13,000 blood donations and more than 2,500 platelet donations every day. In the U.S., an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations during the early stages of this coronavirus outbreak caused a severe blood

shortage in March, resulting in hundreds of thousands fewer blood donations collected across the country.

Through an awareness and outreach campaign funded by financial contributions, generous in-kind advertising support, and donated media, we shared this critical need with the public. From mid-March to mid-June, we received in-kind paid advertising from partners valued at approximately \$33.1 million as well as additional donated media placements across all channels (TV, radio, digital, print, and out-of-home)—translating to over 1.8 billion impressions (the number of times that consumers saw our advertising).



Photo by American Red Cross

**“Despite the tragic scenes that we see on TV regarding the effects of COVID-19, seeing a community of donors coming in to donate blood, platelets or plasma gives me hope that in the end we will make it through this. Working for the American Red Cross during this pandemic means to me that there will always be hope.”**

Christian Zaldivar, Collections Specialist, American Red Cross of Southern California

### Working to Maintain a Sufficient Blood Supply

**Mitigation Efforts Reduced Net Loss of Collected Units:** Even with unprecedented cancellations, your support helped us significantly offset lost collections:



Increased performance:  
Over **180,700 units** were collected from additional donors presenting at retained drives.



New drives added:  
Over **203,600 units** were collected from additional drives added at short notice.



Thanks to the impact of mitigation measures, the Red Cross has reduced our net loss of blood collections by **57%** to date.

On TV alone, Red Cross blood messaging received over 206,300 airings, 90% of which ran during waking hours, ensuring they were widely seen. These airings occurred on 102 networks nationally and in all 210 Designated Market Areas that comprise local media markets in the U.S. In addition, 1,300 radio stations supported our messaging, along with streaming audio services that ran both the audio public service announcements (PSAs) and digital banners. The breadth and depth of donated media for our awareness and outreach campaign has been unprecedented, surpassing any previous PSA support we have received for a specific event.

This outreach paid off, as people across the country answered the urgent call and rolled up their sleeves to give the lifesaving gift of blood. As schools and businesses closed and tens of thousands of blood drives were canceled, the public awareness campaign helped us quickly recoup more than half of the donations that were lost—more than 380,000 units were collected through increased productivity at retained blood drives and new drives added at short notice. All told, the Red Cross was still able to collect over 1 million units of blood during this three-month period, an extraordinary result. Thanks to these efforts and the generosity of our volunteer blood donors, we successfully met the needs of hospital patients requiring transfusions during this period.

To ensure that our blood drives and donation centers had appropriate safety protocols in place, we purchased equipment like infrared thermometers for temperature checks, additional personal protective equipment (PPE) like masks and gloves, as well as hand sanitizer, disinfectant, and supplies for enhanced cleaning measures. To increase efficiency with a reduced number of blood drives, the Red Cross also made capital investments in double red cell machines (which can collect more blood from eligible donors) and electronic blood donation record equipment.

We are profoundly grateful for the selfless and compassionate blood donors who responded to our public awareness campaign, as well as the financial donors who funded added resources and supplies to meet important new safety guidelines. Powered by



A Red Cross blood donor offers a double thumbs-up after giving blood during the COVID-19 outbreak at the Mount Hope Blood Donation Center in Baltimore, Maryland. Photo by Dennis Drenner/American Red Cross

their commitment, the Red Cross helped stabilize the nation's blood supply in the early days of the pandemic.

As blood donors rallied to alleviate this initial shortage, the Red Cross worked to maintain our existing blood services structure, so we could continue to provide a sufficient supply for patients with ongoing needs during the pandemic. To do this, we needed to make sure that we would have enough staff members available to safely collect, process and deliver donated blood to hospitals both in the near-term and over the coming months.

Today, as some areas have begun the re-opening process and elective surgeries resume, we are experiencing an increase in the demand for blood. Blood is perishable and cannot be stockpiled, so the Red Cross must continue to balance increased demand with scheduling blood drives nationwide. With steadfast support from both financial and blood donors, we will continue to make vital investments in our dedicated staff, essential safety equipment and public awareness outreach needed to meet our nation's critical need for blood in the months ahead.

## Caring for Survivors after Home Fires and Other Disasters

For more than a century, Red Cross disaster workers have brought comfort and care to millions of disaster survivors, but what does our disaster relief work look like in a time of social distancing?

During this coronavirus outbreak, the Red Cross has continued responding to multiple home fires every day—bringing help and hope around the clock to heartbroken individuals and families, many of whom have lost dwellings and belongings to the flames. Our trained disaster volunteers and employees were also on hand following the devastating impact of severe weather, like tornadoes and floods this spring.

To bring relief to communities after home fires and other disasters big and small, we have adapted our disaster services to help ensure the safety of both our workers and those affected—while also still offering the compassionate and empathetic support that survivors sorely need.

We have provided disaster workers with IT equipment—including hundreds of mobile phones—and training to deliver services virtually. Red Cross health services volunteers call disaster survivors to ask screening questions for COVID-19 and find out about any immediate needs, such as replacement medications, while also providing virtual mental health and spiritual care services. In addition, we have worked with partners to prioritize sheltering and feeding families displaced by disasters in hotels with appropriate social distancing measures rather than opening congregate shelters.

We have also used technology to limit in-person contact while assessing storm damage. By using satellite technology and partnering with local governments, along with volunteers on the ground, we aim to get resources to as many impacted people as possible.

In the last 90 days, even as this coronavirus has completely changed many aspects of our lives, Red Cross volunteers have responded to more than 9,000 local disasters with different protocols, using virtual tools including Facetime and Zoom videos to connect with people in need and offer personal support.

To keep workers and those they serve safe, we have purchased additional cleaning supplies, equipment and

PPE, including gloves, gowns, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, thermometers, face shields and goggles. These items are being distributed to all 50 Red Cross regions across the country for use by people affected by disasters and our disaster relief and recovery workforce.

“The level of anxiety is higher than normal,” said volunteer Jared Issacs, who worked with a Red Cross disaster response team to shelter families at a Philadelphia-area hotel in May, providing rooms for more than 40 people displaced by an apartment fire. “To have this happen on top of the additional stresses of COVID just makes things more difficult for them. We just have to be understanding.”

At the hotel, Red Cross workers wore masks and gloves as they served pre-packaged meals for the impacted families. “No matter where we respond in our county or region, I know that I’m simply helping my own neighbors,” said disaster team member Debbie Tevlin. “Serving and sharing meals...is simply extending a communal hug.”

In addition to relief and comfort for disaster survivors, the Red Cross is also offering a Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC) to support families struggling with loss and grief due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. People can visit [redcross.org/VFAC](https://redcross.org/VFAC) to access a support hub with special virtual programs, information, referrals and other services to support families in need. The hub will also connect people to community resources provided by partners in their area.



Red Cross volunteer Debbie Tevlin gives packaged dinners to families at a hotel shelter in Philadelphia following an apartment-complex fire in May. Photo by American Red Cross

## 'A Disaster on Top of a Disaster'

On April 18, a blaze tore through a 24-unit apartment complex on the southwest side of Madison, Wisconsin. All of the approximately 65 residents were at least temporarily displaced, and the Red Cross provided rooms, meals and support for basic needs at a local hotel for more than half of those affected.

One survivor, Seth Hellenbrand, shared his thoughts on the last few "complicated" weeks for him and his family—the stay-at-home orders, a layoff from a food service sales job, general uncertainty with COVID-19. Add to that the new challenges his family faced, after the fire tore through their apartment complex. What does "safer at home" mean when home is unknown?



The American Red Cross helped dozens of families on April 18 after a fire ravaged an apartment complex in Madison, Wisconsin. Photo by Tom Mooney/American Red Cross

"It's a disaster on top of a disaster," Seth said. "In this disaster, the Red Cross was there for us. It's been one of the weirdest times of my entire life."

## No Known End Date for this Coronavirus Outbreak

Thanks to our compassionate supporters, the American Red Cross has raised \$92.7 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to continue delivering its lifesaving mission nationwide due to this public health emergency. As of June 10, 2020, we had already spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$72.3 million (including in-kind gifts of paid advertising) to support the safe delivery of blood and disaster relief services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is no known end date in this fight against this coronavirus, and the Red Cross will continue our blood donation public outreach and awareness campaign well into the summer months. We will also work to ensure the health and safety of our blood collection employees, volunteers and donors to maintain our collection capacity and meet increases in demand.

We will continue to purchase the supplies needed to safely deliver our vital disaster relief services, both in-person and virtually. In addition, we will work to safely shelter people displaced by disasters, either in available hotel space or, when necessary and in coordination with

local government officials, in congregate shelters with appropriate PPE and enhanced safety, social distancing and cleaning protocols.



Red Cross phlebotomist Benedictor Asumadu. Photo by American Red Cross.

**Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19) Expenses and Commitments (in millions)**  
as of June 10, 2020 (\$92.7 million raised)

Expense Categories	Total	Expense %
<b>Implement public awareness and targeted outreach campaign to increase blood donations</b> In-kind donations of paid advertising, paid search, special offers for donors, augmented donor recruitment workers	\$33.1	46%
<b>Ensure availability of frontline workers to safely collect and manufacture blood</b> Retain workers and backfill expected vacancies; expand capacity where needed	\$23.2	32%
<b>Provide resources to safely collect blood</b> Provide supplies and equipment in line with safety protocols; includes thermometers, masks, gloves and handheld equipment at blood drives	\$4.4	6%
<b>Total Biomedical Services Expenses</b>	<b>\$60.7</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Provide a safe environment for people affected by disasters and disaster workers</b> Handwashing stations, critical hygiene items, enhanced cleaning, staff accommodations in line with social distancing guidelines	\$4.0	6%
<b>Create increased capability for disaster service delivery</b> Virtual assistance workers, provision of laptops and additional IT equipment	\$0.3	0%
<b>Work with community partners as requested to provide supplies and meals</b> Cots, blankets, comfort kits, meals	\$0.1	0%
<b>Total Disaster Services Expenses</b>	<b>\$4.4</b>	<b>6%</b>
Total Program Expenses	\$65.1	90%
Management, general and fundraising <sup>1</sup>	\$7.2	10%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$72.3</b>	<b>100%</b>
Program dollars remaining to be spent	\$18.3	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied	\$2.1	
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$92.7</b>	

<sup>1</sup>Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications capabilities, HR and payroll systems for approximately 19,000 employees, and more than 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. 90 cents of every dollar received for the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak will be spent to support continued delivery of our blood and disaster relief services due to this public health emergency.

*Thank you!*

In this challenging time for people across the country, those in need turn to the Red Cross for vital support when help can't wait. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. The Red Cross is deeply grateful for the remarkable commitment of our donors, which has already made a meaningful impact for those we serve, and will continue to enable vital services as we carry out our lifesaving mission amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.