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News Release

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VA encourages donating blood amid blood crisis

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs and its participating VA medical centers across the country are in the midst of [“Roll Up Your Sleeve 2022”](#) blood drives in response to the ongoing national need for blood during the continuing COVID-19 public health emergency.

VA teamed up with the American Red Cross and America’s Blood Centers’ regional blood collection organizations, in December — activating its extensive network of medical facilities to support the nation’s need to replenish the blood supply.

The department is exercising its “fourth mission” to back up the country’s health care systems in times of emergency. Eligible individuals are encouraged to donate blood. Donors may give blood no matter their COVID-19 vaccination status.

“In an effort to continue to save lives, exercising VA’s fourth mission at this critical time greatly helps the department meet the need for blood and blood products in communities across the nation,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “While we continue to focus heavily on the care of Veterans during this challenging pandemic, blood donation is more important than ever, and its impact can result in as many as three lives saved through one blood donation.”

VA facility-based blood drives have instituted safety precautions recommended by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) — requiring masks, following social distancing guidelines and enhancing their disinfection protocols. These practices help ensure the safety of blood donors, blood drive hosts and staff at blood drives.

“As Americans, we recognize that our civic duty is to help our fellow neighbors and stand ready to always support those in need. During this national blood crisis, the Red Cross asks our country to come together and roll up a sleeve to help ensure veterans and all patients receive the care and lifesaving blood products they need,” said President and CEO Gail McGovern.

“Veterans are some of our most dedicated blood donors in this country. We greatly appreciate both their service and commitment. The partnership between the VA and community blood centers is a way to help ensure all patients have access to blood, while spreading awareness of the ongoing need for blood donations,” said America’s Blood Centers CEO Kate Fry.

To find blood donation locations in your community visit RedCrossBlood.org or Americasblood.org to make an appointment. Individuals can mention the VA “Roll Up Your Sleeve 2022” or use [#ROLLUPYOURSLEEVEVA2022](#) at their community blood collection site and their donation will be linked to the VA national campaign.

VA-hosted blood drives are scheduled on a rolling basis. Those wishing to donate blood at a VA facility should contact them directly.

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