

What this Volunteer Update is about

This volunteer update provides new information about the increase in outbreaks of the 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19). It is separated into two sections:

- 1) Actions you'll perform as a volunteer (Sections A-E)**
- 2) Changes you'll see at the mobile drives and donor centers**

Background

The CDC and FDA are closely monitoring the world-wide outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats. COVID-19 was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. At this time, it is unknown if the 2019 Coronavirus is transfusion transmissible. However, respiratory viruses in general, are not transmitted by blood transfusion and there have been no reported cases of transfusion-transmitted coronaviruses.

COVID-19 is spread from person to person like influenza and other respiratory infections by having close contact with respiratory secretions produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus enters the body through your mouth, nose and/or eyes.

How easily a virus spreads from person to person varies. The CDC and FDA are continuing investigations and gathering more information regarding the virus transmission, its severity, and taking steps to slow its spread.

Although routine blood donor screening measures currently in place should prevent individuals who are sick from donating blood, the American Red Cross will implement additional measures in the interest of the safety of recipients, donors, staff, volunteers the blood supply, and general public health, in addition to the current pre-donation reading material used by donors to self-defer.

1. Actions you will perform as a volunteer

A. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Current data shows the single most important preventive measure that one can take to prevent the spread of COVID-2019, is washing your hands regularly with soap and water or the use of a hand sanitizer. Take the following precautions to reduce your risk and the risk to others:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Eliminate hand shaking
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Use the current CDC precautions:
 - Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. It is a good practice to slowly count 1-2-3 etc., to ensure that enough time has elapsed to eliminate any bacteria or viruses.
 - If soap and water is not available use an approved hand-sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing and throw the tissue away after use.
- If a tissue isn't available, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands

B. Additional measures to protect staff, volunteers and donors--please perform prior to your shift:

- Take your own temperature each day before reporting to your blood drive.
- Do not attend a drive or come to the donor center if you have a temperature higher than 99.5°F.
Contact your Volunteer Engagement Rep to let them know.

Refer to the Employee and Volunteer Guidelines for Coronavirus Health Concerns on The Exchange at: https://intranet.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/documents/staff_services/hr_policy/coronavirus-staff-guidelines.pdf.

Contact your healthcare provider and notify your Volunteer Rep if in the last 28 days you have:

- Traveled to areas of risk as defined in the Coronavirus Information Sheet
- Been diagnosed with Coronavirus, or suspected Coronavirus.
- Had close contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with or suspected of Coronavirus.

Seek medical advice if you develop the symptoms of COVID-2019, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

C. Staff and Volunteer Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Gloves

In order to protect you and prevent the spread of COVID-19 from donor to donor all staff and volunteers must use gloves throughout the collection processes and must change gloves between each donor.

D. Enhanced Disinfecting

To help eliminate the virus in the environment in which you work and reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the potential spread of COVID-2019, all staff and volunteers must ensure that donors use hand sanitizer and must clean the surfaces touched by donors. You must clean surfaces touched by donors between each donor throughout the collection site, including refreshment/hospitality areas at all drives and at all times.

You will observe and perform the following actions:

- Hand sanitizer placed at Check-In and Refreshment areas.
- Ask donors to use hand sanitizer prior to touching tablets or laptops and before eating or drinking. Since donors will be sanitizing their hands prior to touching the tablets and laptops they can be cleaned as necessary during the day and must be cleaned at the end of each day.
- Sanitize equipment and surfaces touched by donors **between each donor** using cleaners provided by the Collections Team. Follow their directions regarding the appropriate cleaning for donor tablets and laptops. Equipment that must be cleaned between each donor includes but is not limited to:
 - Reception tables and waiting area chairs
 - Refreshment /hospitality tables and chairs
 - Decrease the number of snacks and water bottles on tables to reduce handling

E. Pre-Donation Donor Temperature Screening Station

The Red Cross will be taking additional pre-donation donor screening measures. A Pre-donation donor temperature screening will be performed on all potential donors and anyone planning to enter the drive, even if they are not planning to donate. This will occur at all drives prior to entry.

You will be asked to assist at the Donor Temperature Screening Station. Collections Team Members will provide training on this task. *If you have questions or concerns about how to perform this task, please inform the Chargeperson at the drive.*

A small table will be set up with the following supplies

- electronic thermometer and probe covers or a disposable thermometer
- trash basket

- gloves
- hand sanitizer
- Sani-cloths or Cavi-cide

Staff and volunteers assigned to the pre-donation temperature screening station must wear gloves.

A donor with a temperature greater than 99.5 °F may not enter the blood drive. If a donor or anyone wanting to enter the drive refuses the temperature check, they cannot be admitted into the blood drive.

Explain to the donor that

- the screening is an additional measure that we are taking as a public health measure to prevent the spread of COVID-2019.
- an elevated temperature can be caused by many things and does not always mean that a person has symptoms of Coronavirus or any illness.
- The donor can return at another time to donate but will still be required to have the screening before entering.

We will continue to require pre-donation temperature screening until further notice. Thank the donor for coming.

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2. Changes you'll see at mobile drives and donor centers to reduce the risk of COVID-19

COVID-19 is spread from person to person like other respiratory infections by having close contact (approximately 6 feet) with an infected person who coughs or sneezes. Using measures to avoiding close contact with other people in a social setting, washing your hands with soap and water, avoiding touching your face and frequently disinfecting surfaces is a best practice measure for the prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses, such as the flu. In abundance of caution and in the interest of the public health and that of our staff, volunteers, donors and recipients, the American Red Cross will take the following additional measures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Social Distancing

Social Distancing is a mitigation measure that can slow and reduce viral transmission and the effects on individuals. People who are in close proximity of an infected person have the greatest risk of infection and people are most contagious when they are ill. Although it may not be possible to implement a 6-foot separation of donors at all times, you must physically separate donors as much as possible and whenever possible to prevent donors from congregating in one area such as in waiting and refreshment areas.

Ensure that seating in the waiting queues is spaced in a manner that prevents physical contact between donors. Examples of these are: **Reception, Health History, Phlebotomy, and the refreshment /hospitality area.**

Methods of separation include but are not limited to:

- Chairs set up back to back or side by side
- Longer/more tables and fewer donors at the drive and at each table
- Donor beds positioned foot to foot or 2 bed units

Social distancing is also expected to be used on mobile buses (SCU). SCUs will be evaluated by local leadership for adjustments as needed since each SCU may present unique challenges.

Signage to Reduce the Risk of COVID-19

2019 Coronavirus Information sheet

The **2019 Coronavirus Information sheet** will continue to be required. The 2019 Coronavirus Information sheet contains the most current list of COVID-19 risk locations and risk factors to determine if a donor has been potentially exposed to COVID-19 so that they can self-defer. Donors who are at risk should not donate until 28 days after departure from a risk location as defined in the information sheet, diagnosis of COVID-19, or exposure to COVID-19.

The **2019 Coronavirus information sheet** must be:

- Given to all donors prior to registration with all the other pre-donation reading material.
- In each health history booth.

2019 Coronavirus Stop Sign

The **2019 Coronavirus Stop Sign** will continue to be required to assist donors in performing a self-assessment of risk and be able to self-defer before entering the blood drive. However, a new larger more visible laminated color sign is being created to be used with the 2019 Coronavirus stop sign to prominently display the information that we want donors to read prior to entering the blood drive. Donors who are at risk should not donate until 28 days after departure from a risk area, diagnosis of COVID-19, or exposure to COVID-19.

The **2019 Coronavirus stop sign** must be posted at:

- **The entrance(s) to the blood drive** This can be posted as part of the pre-donation donor temperature station or immediately before it.
- **Donor reception/donor check in area.**
Staff will be notified through a separate communication when the laminated stop sign is available. Directions for its use and how it can be ordered and obtained will also be provided.

Enhanced Disinfecting

To help eliminate the virus in the environment in which you work and reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the potential spread of COVID-2019, all staff and volunteers must ensure that donors use hand sanitizer and must clean the surfaces touched by donors. You must clean surfaces touched by donors between each donor throughout the collection site, including refreshment/hospitality areas at all drives and at all times. Follow the directions in 15.4.ref 900, for cleaning tablets and laptops. *The Chargeperson can provide details on the cleaning process.*

New signage for donors is being created instructing them to use hand sanitizers. The new signs must be placed in the following areas: Check-In, Health History and refreshment/hospitality areas. Staff will be notified through a separate communication when the additional signage for donors becomes available. The directions for use and how they can be ordered and obtained will also be provided at that time.

- Hand sanitizer will be placed at Check-In, Health History and Refreshment areas.
- Ask donors to use hand sanitizer prior to touching tablets or laptops and before eating or drinking. Since donors will be sanitizing their hands prior to touching the tablets and laptops they can be cleaned as necessary during the day and must be cleaned at the end of each day.
- Sanitize equipment and surfaces touched by donors **between each donor** using Sani-cloths or Cavi-cide. Follow the manufacturer's directions regarding the appropriate cleaning solution to clean donor tablets and laptops. Equipment that must be cleaned between each donor includes but is not limited to:

- Thermometers, including wire and probe
- Stethoscopes
- Blood Pressure Cuffs and tubing
- Tables and chairs
- Donor Beds
- Handgrips
- Refreshment /hospitality tables and chairs

Donor Deferral (FYI only) Please direct questions to a Collections Team Member

Donors who volunteer that they have

- Been diagnosed with 2019 Coronavirus in the past 28 days must be deferred for 28 days after resolution of symptoms
- Cared for, lived with, or had direct contact with body fluids of a person with 2019 Coronavirus in the past 28 days must be deferred for 28 days after the date of the last exposure
- Traveled to any of the locations in the 2019 Coronavirus information sheet listed as at risk for 2019 Coronavirus must be deferred for 28 days from the last date of departure from the location