



For Immediate Release

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BLOODWORKS NORTHWEST JOINS BLOOD EMERGENCY READINESS CORPS

*First-in-the Nation Alliance Better Ensures Mass Transfusion Readiness
When Mass-Injury Emergencies Strike*

SEATTLE, Wash. (May 18, 2022) – [Bloodworks Northwest](#) has joined 30 blood centers across the nation in forming the [Blood Emergency Readiness Corps \(BERC\)](#). BERC is a first-in-the-nation partnership with community-based blood centers that will better ensure Bloodworks' local blood supply following multiple injury, mass transfusion events (like mass shootings) and position Bloodworks blood donors to provide crisis support outside the Pacific Northwest region through emergency shipments of blood.

Bloodworks Northwest is the sole provider of blood to more than 95% of the hospitals in Western Washington and Oregon. As part of the BERC partnership, Bloodworks commits to storing extra units – approximately 15 units of O negative and O positive blood – on a rotating “on call” schedule to be available for BERC members for immediate emergency need. Bloodworks will be on call for seven days during a three-week rotating schedule beginning in June. If the units are not used, the units will be put back into the local inventory for distribution.

“Bloodworks Northwest stands ready to assist other blood centers if called upon to provide emergency shipments to help communities in need near and far,” said Curt Bailey, President and CEO of Bloodworks Northwest. “This underscores the importance of having a strong inventory of blood available at all times in order to respond immediately when natural or man-made disasters happen in our local community and beyond.”

With regional blood supplies hovering around a 1-2 day supply, would there be enough locally sourced blood if faced with our own mass need event?

“Our community is running dangerously low on the platelets and Type O blood needed to supply local hospitals straining our ability to provide transfusions for every cancer and surgery patient who need them,” said Bailey. “If a mass trauma event were to happen today, we would not have enough blood available to help everyone who needs it. It is vital people donate blood to support everyday needs of patients as well as unforeseen emergencies.”

Before BERC, community blood centers facing a mass need event have relied on the goodwill of other blood centers to send additional units, which is sometimes limited or uncertain. With the country experiencing an ongoing nationwide blood shortage, creating an emergency blood reserve allows Bloodworks and other BERC members to know exactly how much extra blood they can count on. To date, the program activated to support a mass shooting at a grocery store near Memphis, TN, a mass shooting at a school near Detroit, MI, and a mass casualty event brought about by a series of tornadoes throughout the Midwest. The recent shootings last weekend in Buffalo, Texas, and California highlight the need and effectiveness of an emergency reserve system.

In Washington and Oregon, 1,000 donors per day are needed to keep the blood supply at a safe and reliable level, since every two seconds, someone in our region needs blood. It does not take much for the supply to drop: one snowstorm, one tragedy, one heatwave can send it back to an unsafe level.

To donate blood, schedule a local appointment at bloodworksnw.org or 800-398-7888. Same day appointments are available. There is an especially high need for donors heading into Memorial Day.

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 Western Washington and Oregon —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 at bloodworksnw.org.

About BERC

The Blood Emergency Readiness Corps was founded in 2021 to meet the immediate transfusion needs of hospitals and their patients when faced with a large-scale emergency situation that requires blood transfusions. To learn more and see a list of participating blood centers, visit bloodemergencyreadinesscorps.org.

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