



What is the Blood Emergency Readiness Corps (BERC)?

BERC is a group of blood centers across the nation who have committed to joining together to be prepared for disasters that may strike. These blood centers have committed to collecting extra units on a rotating “on call” schedule, to create an available supply of blood for emergency needs.

Why is BERC needed?

In many disasters and critical-need scenarios – like a mass shooting, natural disaster or large-scale car crash – much blood is needed immediately. Most blood centers don’t have enough blood on their shelves to handle these types of disasters and are forced to request blood units from neighboring blood collectors. By creating BERC, blood will be ready and available if needed, without delays or uncertainty.

What if no disaster occurs and the blood isn’t needed?

Since blood is perishable, the units will return to the blood center that collected them, in order to be used for general patient needs. This will ensure that no units are wasted.

What blood centers are participating?

- Blood Assurance, headquartered in Chattanooga, Tennessee
- The Blood Center, headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana
- The Blood Connection, headquartered in Greenville, South Carolina
- Carter BloodCare, headquartered in Dallas-Fort Worth
- Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank, headquartered in Hummelstown
- Coastal Bend, headquartered in Corpus Christi, Texas
- The Community Blood Center, headquartered in Appleton, Wisconsin
- Houchin Community Blood Bank, headquartered in Bakersfield, California
- LIFELINE Blood Services, headquartered in Jackson, Tennessee
- LifeSouth Community Blood Suppliers, headquartered in Gainesville, Florida
- MEDIC Regional Blood Center, headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee
- Oklahoma Blood Institute, headquartered in Oklahoma City
- South Texas Blood & Tissue Center, headquartered in San Antonio
- SunCoast Blood Centers, headquartered in Sarasota, Florida
- We Are Blood, headquartered in Austin, Texas

How will BERC respond to requests made from blood centers that are not a BERC partner?

The founding partners agreed that a call for help would be answered if it met the activation criteria. The blood center that received the units would also be invited to become a BERC partner.

How can donors help?

Donate whenever you’re eligible to do so and bring a friend if you can! Donors can give every 56 days, and blood is urgently needed every day for routine blood needs. The COVID-19

pandemic and our recovery have severely strained the national blood supply, so more donors are needed to meet regular needs and stand prepared for future emergency readiness.

What's different about being a BERC drive?

Only certain drives – those with a consistent history of strong donation rates – are asked to participate in BERC drives. These drives represent the strongest partnerships in our system and will be recognized publicly to show our appreciation.