



Virtual Blood Drive FAQs

What is a virtual blood drive?

A virtual blood drive is a blood drive that takes place at any Vitalant blood donation center or blood drive, over a day or multiple days, as opposed to a traditional blood drive that takes place in a company conference room or high school gymnasium on a specific day and time. Unlike a traditional mobile blood drive, organizing a virtual blood drive requires far fewer logistics to coordinate and donors can give blood at any convenient Vitalant donation location they choose. As the virtual blood drive coordinator, your primary focus is to ask your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and community members to participate by donating blood. And, we will provide you with tools and resources to help you spread the word.

Why is Vitalant encouraging people to host virtual blood drives?

Vitalant is asking its awesome supporters to host virtual blood drives to help maintain a steady blood supply for patients during the pandemic and beyond. COVID-19 has resulted in thousands of blood drive cancellations around the country, yet the need for blood continues. Virtual blood drives offer groups of all types and sizes a meaningful way to rally around a common cause: donating blood and transforming lives.

What safety measures does Vitalant have in place to protect donors giving blood during the COVID-19 health crisis?

Vitalant continues to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations to ensure donating blood is safe for donors. Please visit [vitalant.org/COVID-FAQs](https://www.vitalant.org/COVID-FAQs) for the most current safety protocols.

Is Vitalant still testing blood donations for COVID-19 antibodies?

Yes, Vitalant is offering antibody testing to help identify members of the community who may be good candidates to donate convalescent plasma. This means that all donors who give blood with Vitalant get to join the COVID Rescue Team. Learn more about the COVID Rescue Team at [vitalant.org/covidrescueteam](https://www.vitalant.org/covidrescueteam).

You can learn more about our efforts to help patients with COVID-19 at [vitalant.org/covidfree](https://www.vitalant.org/covidfree).



What is the COVID Rescue Team?

Vitalant launched the COVID Rescue Team to help patients with COVID-19. You, as a blood drive coordinator and/or virtual blood drive coordinator, are an essential part of that process. You become a COVID Rescue Team Leader because everyone you recruit to your blood drives is tested for COVID antibodies. Determining donors' antibody status allows us to identify prospective convalescent plasma donors, and those donors are providing essential treatment to patients with COVID-19. Thank you for joining the team! Learn more about the COVID Rescue Team at vitalant.org/covidrescueteam.

What do I need to do to host a virtual blood drive?

Becoming a virtual blood drive coordinator is simple. Let your Vitalant representative know you are interested in hosting a virtual blood drive, and they will register your virtual blood drive using your name, organization and email address. You will receive an email with a unique hyperlink to your group's virtual blood drive. Copy and paste this link, along with a personal message, into a new email inviting your co-workers, family, friends and donors to participate in this special effort. Please copy the full link to help ensure proper tracking of those donors who commit to donate. And, don't forget that making a one-to-one ask through a phone call or in-person conversation is still one of the most effective ways to motivate people to get involved.

When your contacts sign up for the virtual blood drive through your hyperlink, they will receive an email invitation to schedule an appointment at a Vitalant donation location near them. Donors must use the same email address both when they sign up for the virtual blood drive and when they schedule their appointment. They will also be prompted by Vitalant staff for this same email address when they donate. Using the same email address at all three contact points allows Vitalant to track participation in your virtual blood drive, such as how many people signed up and how many people donated blood, so we can let you know how many lives you saved.

Who is my Vitalant representative when I host a virtual blood drive?

The donor recruitment representative you work with for your traditional blood drives is the same contact for your virtual blood drives. If you are not sure who that is, or if you're new to the process, please contact getinvolved@vitalant.org.



How do I promote a virtual blood drive, and what kinds of promotional materials are available?

Promoting a virtual blood drive is a lot like promoting a traditional blood drive. The more people you tell, plus how frequently you remind them, equals strong participation! We encourage you to invite past blood donors and new blood donors to the virtual blood drive in multiple ways, including but not limited to:

- Email
- Personalized e-vites
- Digital flyers
- Digital and in-person announcements
- Posts to your organization's intranet and virtual work spaces
- Social media
- Nextdoor
- Text
- One-to one outreach, which is still the most effective way to inspire people to donate blood

Make sure to copy and paste your unique virtual blood drive hyperlink in all your invitations and collateral.

Virtual blood drive coordinators can access an online toolkit of marketing materials and resources at vitalant.org/virtual-blood-drive. Your Vitalant representative is also a ready resource for brainstorming and best practices to engage blood donors.

What if I set up a virtual blood drive and then I want to cancel it?

There's no need to cancel your virtual blood drive; that's part of the flexible format. If your plans change, please contact your Vitalant representative.

Can I invite people outside of my organization to participate?

Absolutely! We encourage you to invite as many of your contacts to participate in the virtual blood drive as you can. The need for blood is constant, and we encourage all members of the community to give blood three times a year.

Vitalant needs to collect as many as 5,500 blood donations a day to meet patient needs around the country. Review the online toolkit, available at vitalant.org/virtual-blood-drive, for suggestions on ways you can increase awareness of your virtual blood drive.



How can I see how many people have signed up for my virtual blood drive?

At this time, virtual blood drives do not populate a schedule in Vitalant's blood drive coordinator portals the same way traditional blood drives do. Your Vitalant representative is the best way for you to know how many people have signed up. Please reach out for updates.

How will I know how many people gave blood, and who gave blood, at my virtual blood drive?

Your Vitalant representative can provide you this information. Please contact them for donation information.

I would like to schedule onsite blood drives *and* host virtual blood drives. How would that work?

Great! Thank you for your commitment to helping patients. The flexible format of Vitalant's virtual blood drives allows donors to select their own convenient donation times and locations. You can host traditional blood drives at the same time. You can even have some fun and make it a competition with satellite offices, organizational teams and neighboring groups to see who can get the most people to give blood.

You can even host a traditional and virtual blood drive in tandem with each other to encourage further-reaching participation. One way of hosting a blood drive is not necessarily better than the other; you have two great options to choose from depending on your bandwidth to reserve rooms, manage logistics and recruit blood donors. Please contact your Vitalant representative to explore your options and they will get the process started.

We need all supporters to continue hosting traditional and virtual blood drives year-round. If you are ready to schedule your next blood drive - or your very first blood drive - please contact your Vitalant representative or visit our Host a Blood Drive page at vitalant.org/Engage/Host-a-Blood-Drive.aspx.

I want to invite my university alumni group with chapters around the country to host virtual blood drives with Vitalant. How would that work?

Alumni chapters, faith-based organizations and civic, social and philanthropic groups are excellent choices for hosting virtual blood drives. Vitalant operates blood donation locations in 28 states, and as long as members of your group donate with Vitalant, we can track their participation through your virtual blood drive no matter where they live. Unfortunately, Vitalant's



blood drive coordinator portal access and functionality will not be available for groups who do not host traditional blood drives.

**I have a friend I would like to refer to Vitalant’s virtual blood drive program.
What should I do?**

Awesome! Please pass their name and contact information to your Vitalant representative, and they will get them connected with the right person.

I would like to do more to help patients in my community.

As a nonprofit blood center, we rely on the generosity of community members like you to support our mission to help patients today and far into the future. Please contact getinvolved@vitalant.org to discuss opportunities for you and/or your organization to get more involved. Thank you!