



# Hospital Services

G U I D E

## Background



The Blood Center was organized by the Harris County Medical Society and began operations Jan. 1, 1975. Since that time, The Blood Center has assumed responsibility for providing the blood and blood components needed by patients in more than 170 health care organizations within a 26-county area surrounding Houston.

**The Blood Center is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.** It holds a license issued by the FDA and is accredited by the AABB under a voluntary inspection program. The Blood Center also is regulated by various state and local agencies that ensure the purity, potency, and safety of the blood supply as well as the quality of the services we provide. Self-inspection and strict internal controls enhance this system of quality assurance.

**The Blood Center participates in the AABB's National Blood Exchange Program.** Affiliated blood banks share their inventories to assist each other in times of short supply. This reduces the potential outdating of blood and ensures efficient usage of the available blood supply. Excess blood and blood components not needed by patients in this region are offered for patients outside of our service area.

**The Blood Center is a partnering member of Blood Centers of America (BCA).** BCA is a national, member-owned, cooperative comprising over 50 members with a deep local commitment to the communities they serve. While each of our member blood centers is independent, they all share a singular focus: providing high-quality blood products for patients in communities both large and small. BCA members provide 50 percent of the nation's blood supply, collecting and distributing of more than 5.4 million blood units annually. The partnership provides The Blood Center with reliable resources to adequately supply our hospitals during unprecedented and uncertain times.

**The Blood Center is classified as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization by the IRS.** It receives no operating funds from any other agency. Income is primarily secured from product and service fees charged to transfusion facilities. Service fees are based primarily on our cost to recruit, collect, test and ship blood and blood components.

**Serving voluntarily without compensation, the Board of Trustees establishes the policies for Blood Center operations.** Although The Blood Center is closely aligned with the Harris County Medical Society, this board is separate from the HCMS. Overall supervision of The Blood Center's activities is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer appointed by the Board of Trustees. Medical supervision and direction for The Blood Center are provided by the Chief Medical Officer, also appointed by the Board of Trustees.

For more information about Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center, please visit [www.giveblood.org](http://www.giveblood.org).

## Service Philosophy



### **Hospital Services has two priority objectives:**

1. Maximize the utilization of every component produced.
2. Maximize the availability of every component produced.

**The first objective** can be achieved if we are successful in establishing a state of equilibrium in which the number of units and the variety of components in our inventory system exactly matches the number of units and the variety of components required by the patients we serve.

**The second objective** can be achieved if we take the necessary steps to ensure the proper quantities of the proper components are in the proper places when they are needed. We will strive to satisfy all reasonable requests made of us.

Our entire organization shares responsibility for the success or failure in meeting our primary objective: from recruitment, through collection, processing, and distribution. Hospital Services' role is to monitor available inventory within the blood banking complex, and to move inventory promptly in response to patient needs.

- Blood and blood components must be available to all hospitals served by The Blood Center based on priority of need.
- The Blood Center must have the authority to redistribute blood and blood components to meet the needs of our service area.
- The Blood Center and the hospitals served must cooperatively determine optimal inventory levels based on reasonable need.

- The hospitals served are responsible for maintaining the area’s blood inventory assigned to them within prescribed quality control guidelines.

The Blood Center maintains inventory control records to facilitate the movement of the blood and blood components. Each hospital served is responsible for providing, upon request, accurate information on the blood inventory assigned to them and for properly completing and maintaining records as appropriate.

## Telephone Numbers

### Main Line

**Headquarters** ..... 713-790-1200  
The Blood Center East Texas ..... 936-560-3054  
The Blood Center of Brazos Valley ..... 979-764-5600

**Hospital Services order line** ..... 713-791-6250 (24 hours)

- Hospital Services Emergency Lines ..... 713-791-9307 or 713-791-9308
- The Blood Center East Texas order line ..... 936-558-4050  
The Blood Center of Brazos Valley order line ..... 979-694-1594

**Online Ordering** can be accessed through the main website at [www.giveblood.org](http://www.giveblood.org) then click “Login > Hospital” at the top right of the homepage.

**Reference Lab/Special Components** ..... 713-791-6286 or 713-791-6284 (24 hours)

**Donor Advocates** ..... 713-791-6608  
Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Business Office** ..... 713-791-6383  
Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. through 5 p.m.

## Personnel Telephone Numbers

**President and CEO**

Nikhil Nayak [nnayak@giveblood.org](mailto:nnayak@giveblood.org) 713-790-1200

**Chief Medical Officer**

Dr. Beth Hartwell [bhartwell@giveblood.org](mailto:bhartwell@giveblood.org) 713-791-6299

**Medical Director**

Dr. Yu Yang [yyang@giveblood.org](mailto:yyang@giveblood.org) 713-791-6694

**Medical Director**

Dr. Daniel Welder [dwelder@giveblood.org](mailto:dwelder@giveblood.org) 713-791-6658

**Chief Financial Officer**

Eric Eaton [eeaton@giveblood.org](mailto:eeaton@giveblood.org) 713-791-6203

**Vice President of Operations, Business Development, Product Management, and Regional Operations**

Marc Lewis [mlewis@giveblood.org](mailto:mlewis@giveblood.org) 713-791-6673

**Director, Product Management**

Ronda Perguson [rperguson@giveblood.org](mailto:rperguson@giveblood.org) 713-791-6344

**Director, Technical Services**

Cheri Jennings [cjennings@giveblood.org](mailto:cjennings@giveblood.org) 713-791-6316

**Director, Business Development**

Steve Ruth [sruth@giveblood.org](mailto:sruth@giveblood.org) 713-791-6202

**Director, Business Operations**

Julie Barbary [jbarbary@giveblood.org](mailto:jbarbary@giveblood.org) 713-791-6261

**Client Services Manager**

Rebecca Pfardrescher [rpfardrescher@giveblood.org](mailto:rpfardrescher@giveblood.org) 713-791-6202

**Operations Manager, Product Management**

Mike Duke [mduke@giveblood.org](mailto:mduke@giveblood.org) 713-791-6214

**Manager, Quality and Compliance – Product Management**

Lisa Torres [ltorres@giveblood.org](mailto:ltorres@giveblood.org) 713-791-6268

## Service Levels, Pricing and Special Components



**The Blood Center offers three different service levels** designed to meet the needs of the hospitals we serve:

- Full Service
- Non-Full Service
- Ad-Hoc Service

For questions regarding any of the three service levels, please contact our Director of Business Development, Steve Ruth, at 713-791-6202.

**For current pricing and service fees**, please see the current Fee Schedule or the contract for your hospital.

**Certain blood components are returnable for credit if:**

- They have been stored as directed on the component's label and consistent with the standards set by the FDA and AABB.
- They have not been entered or modified.
- Product labels have not been defaced.
- The original unit number is securely attached to the unit.
- At least five segments remain on red blood cells.

**Special Order Components** are provided upon request, some requiring 24 to 48 hours of advance notice. For a complete list of special-order products, please see the current Fee Schedule or the contract for your hospital. Please note that some types of special-order components are not returnable for credit, for example: Whole blood and Liquid plasma.

## Laboratory Services



Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center offers a wide variety of lab services staffed by highly trained individuals.

- Consultation and Reference Laboratory
- Clinical Trials
- Quality Control Testing Laboratory
- Rare Donor Program
- National Donor Testing Services

For more information, please visit our website at [Hospital Partners \(giveblood.org\)](http://HospitalPartners.giveblood.org).

## Donor Advocates

**Autologous and Directed Donations** — The Blood Center offers the opportunity for patients to make pre-surgical donations so that they might receive their own blood during or after surgery. Physicians may also direct us to collect blood from donors pre-selected by them. These donations only may be made at The Blood Center's [Neighborhood Donor Centers](#). Please note that charges associated with this program vary by blood component. For more information, please refer to the current fee schedule or the contract for your hospital for current pricing.

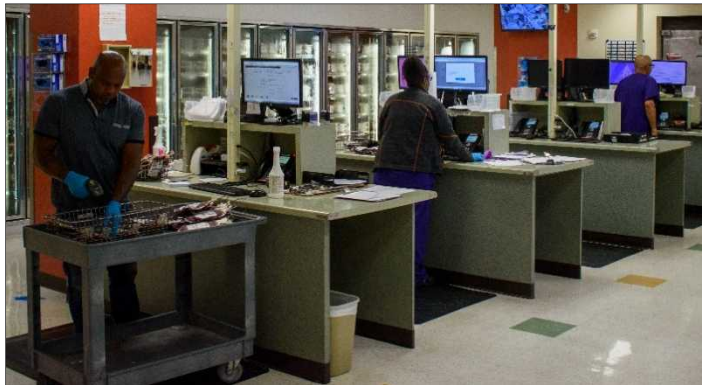
**Therapeutic Phlebotomy** — The Blood Center offers therapeutic phlebotomy services. There is a nominal fee for some procedures to help us recuperate the costs of this service.

For more information on autologous donations, directed donations or therapeutic phlebotomy services, please contact the Donor Advocates department at 713-791-6608 Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Business Operations

**Monthly Invoicing** – Business Operations is responsible for monthly invoicing. For payment questions or concerns, please contact Elaine Gumabong at 713-791-6383.

## Hospital Services



**Placing Blood Orders** — Orders for transfusable products are to be placed with The Blood Center's Hospital Services Department. Hospital Services can be reached 24 hours a day at 713-791-6250. In the unusual event that the 24-hour line is not answered when dialed, please call one of our two emergency lines at 713-791-9307 or 713-791-9308.

**Online Ordering** – As an added convenience, The Blood Center offers online ordering. The system can be accessed if your lab is equipped with internet capability. Utilizing the online ordering system reduces the need for most telephone communication and allows each hospital to receive feedback on the status of their order. You can access the online ordering system by visiting the main page of [www.giveblood.org](http://www.giveblood.org) and clicking “Login > Hospital” at the top right of the homepage.

For questions regarding the online ordering system, please contact Lisa Torres at 713-791-6268 Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Response Time** – The primary determinant of response time is the availability of the specific blood component requested. If the component is routinely stored by The Blood Center, delivery can be completed more quickly than if the component is available only through special request. As deliveries are normally prioritized based on need, response time also is affected by the other requests being made on the blood supply by the hospitals served.

Our goal is to deliver your blood products to you in a safe and timely manner. Events such as weather and traffic may intervene and complicate our delivery process. With many variables involved, Hospital Services staff may be reluctant to estimate a delivery time. However, in situations where delivery time is a critical factor in the provision of health care, it is reasonable for hospital personnel to ask if any unusual circumstances might delay blood delivery beyond normal travel time. Additionally, if Hospital Services staff detect unforeseen complications, hospital personnel have a right to expect appropriate notification.

- **STAT** – Term used to describe a situation for which any unnecessary delay in the provision of services will be, in the opinion of the physician, life-endangering to a particular patient. STAT deliveries are 10 or fewer units of red blood cells or platelets and will be consigned or shipped within 10 minutes of receipt of order. Additional time will be needed for additional products, products that must be located, frozen products, special requests such as antigen negative, CMV, sickle cell, or irradiation. The actual delivery time may vary for each STAT and can be affected by traffic or weather conditions.
- **ASAP** – Any time-sensitive delivery of a product. ASAP delivery times should be agreed upon between The Blood Center staff and ordering hospital.
- **Stock** – An order whose purpose is to increase the hospital inventory to an optimal level. Stock order requests could be affected by product availability. Stock order deliveries within 55 miles of The Blood Center are generally complete within six to eight hours.
- **Trade** – The replacement of a short-dated unit with a fresher unit.

**Paperwork** – Hospital Services has two main types of paperwork:

- Consignment ticket – Prepared as a delivery ticket to show what units are consigned to each hospital.
- Hospital Report of Returned Blood and Blood Components (GC3306) – This form is typically used to document unit returns from the hospital to The Blood Center. It can be a manual form or the online version. This form may also be used to document a temporary consignment (i.e., a transfer from one hospital to another without a stop at The Blood Center), or as a credit request form.

It is expected that all parties will complete the forms in their entirety as well as verify accuracy of all entries at delivery or return.

**Blood Product Transfers within Hospital Systems that have return privileges** – Hospitals may only transport blood products to other hospitals within the same hospital system. Doing so is allowable under the following conditions:

- Packing and Transport Standard Operating Procedures – Any hospital transporting blood products must develop packing and transport standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are sufficient to maintain proper transport conditions (temperature, agitation (platelets), etc.) for each product type in compliance with AABB and FDA regulations. Copies of packing and transport SOPs, along with any related forms and container validations must be submitted and approved by The Blood Center’s Quality Assurance department.
- Traceability and Trackability – The hospital system assumes responsibility for documenting and maintaining storage conditions, traceability, and trackability for each unit transferred in the hospital system. The Blood Center will continue to show final disposition of each unit to the originating hospital.

For accurate billing updates between hospitals, the hospital must send unit information to the Records Coordinator Chynna Sands at the time of unit transfer by email [csands@giveblood.org](mailto:csands@giveblood.org) or call her directly at 713-791-6205.

**Reporting Suspect Units** – Contact Hospital Services for notification and pick-up at 713-791-6250 if you have a suspect unit. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Appearance
- Clots
- Hemolysis
- Fibrin
- Lipemia
- Testing (blood type discrepancy or DAT)
- Bacterial contamination (Verax or Culture Positive)

Units returned for suspect GMP issues are reviewed by Blood Center Product Specialists and may be deemed ineligible for credit based on their findings.

**Specimen Pickups** – Hospital Services provides patient sample pickup for Consultation and Reference. The timeframe for sample pickup is no more than three hours from the pickup notification to sample receipt at the Consultation and Reference laboratory. Time may increase for facilities outside of the Houston Metroplex or in times of inclement weather or excessive traffic conditions.

**Product Temperature Excursions** - Temperature excursions that could affect returnable products should be reported to Product Management immediately. As a reminder, blood and blood products should be stored at the following temperatures:

- Red Blood Cells: 1- 6°C
- Platelets: 20 - 24°C
- Frozen Products: minus 18°C or colder

**Quality Metrics** – Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center can provide quality metrics to guide ordering decisions and satisfy regulatory agencies during inspections. For more information, please contact Steve Ruth at 713-791-6202 or Rebecca Pfardrescher at 713-791-6234.

**Disaster/Emergency** – Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center is prepared for most situations that could potentially require a high number of blood components. If an emergent need arises in our service area, we would immediately:

1. Assess and determine regional blood needs.
2. Evaluate in-house inventory, and if necessary:
  - a. Pickup products at area hospitals and redistribute to hospitals in need.
  - b. Contact the BCA Disaster Task Force for assistance.
  - c. Notify the AABB Interorganizational Task Force on Domestic Disaster and Acts of Terrorism.
  - d. Contact other in-state blood centers for support.
3. If the situation warrants, we may ask hospitals to switch eligible patients to type O positive RBCs and attempt to determine the actual blood type as quickly as possible.

Contact Lisa Torres at 713-791-6268 or [lrunnels@giveblood.org](mailto:lrunnels@giveblood.org) if you would like to receive a copy of the Hospital Services Hurricane Plan.

**Blood Shortages** - Blood shortages may occur in the wake of local and/or national circumstances such as weather events, pandemics, or other naturally occurring or disaster events that prohibit or prevent normal blood donor activity. Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center will employ the following strategies to ensure blood needs continue to be met throughout our service region:

- **Communication** – Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center places a high priority on communication with our hospital partners. As such, hospitals can expect written and/or verbal communication with updates about our inventory, donor activity, obstacles regarding deliveries (flooding, road closures, etc.), and any other pertinent information related to the availability of blood products.
- **Regional Inventory** – Blood Center staff will ask hospitals to provide us with real-time inventory counts to help us better understand the overall inventory disposition, and to aid us in making sure that available inventory is adequately distributed across our service region. In extreme cases, we may request that hospitals take steps to reduce their preferred inventory levels or reduce or cancel elective surgeries.
- **Imports** – as a member of Blood Centers of America (BCA) and America’s Blood Centers (ABC), Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center is part of a nationwide network of

blood providers that can often help during local blood shortages. Accurate reporting of on-hand inventory in the region is critical as we leverage our BCA and ABC memberships to import needed products.

- **Donor Recruitment** - the Marketing department at Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center has many tools to reach out to and invigorate our donor base in times of need. Mobile blood drives and Neighborhood Donor Center operations (locations, operating hours, etc.) may be adjusted to better suit donors and/or the physical condition and accessibility of our service region.

## Host a Blood Drive

Our mission is to partner with the community to help save and sustain lives by providing a safe supply of blood, biotherapies, and related services. To meet the needs of the community, the Blood Center relies on about 1,000 donations each day. Your facility can help save lives in our community by partnering with Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center to host blood drives throughout the year. We challenge our hospital partners to host at least one blood drive per quarter. Hosting at least one blood drive per quarter allows the dedicated donors in your organization to become Commit for Life members and helps us to better serve the community by meeting our annual lifesaving goals.

For more information about hosting blood drives, please contact Rebecca Pfardrescher at [rpfardrescher@givelood.org](mailto:rpfardrescher@givelood.org) for assistance or visit our [website](#).

## Thank You

Thank you for being our valued customer. It is our pleasure to serve you and your patients with the highest quality of products and services. We look forward to building a stronger and everlasting relationship. Our goal is to provide solutions for your facility that will allow for the best patient and hospital outcomes. YOU ARE A VALUED CUSTOMER!