

**LifeShare Blood Center has an emergency need for blood.**

**"Hospitals are being forced to make tough decisions right now that could impact the outcome for their patients," said LifeShare Regional Director Elizabeth Cunningham. "Since Thursday, LifeShare has collected 393 units of red blood cells. That's 26% of the blood LifeShare needs to support the transplants, traumas, and other treatments requiring a blood transfusion at our local hospitals."**

**Cunningham said an area resident had waited years on a transplant list for the organ that could save their life. However, when they received the call about a liver, LifeShare was unable to provide the blood needed for the surgery. Fortunately, surgeons were able to go ahead with the operation, as LifeShare worked to relocate blood products.**

**For more than a week, LifeShare has been reaching out to other blood centers for help, but because of the nationwide blood shortage, only a few blood centers were able to provide minimal assistance.**

**LifeShare is operating on extended hours at all of its donor centers. All donor centers will be open this week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 3:p.m. on Saturday. Several mobile drives will also be operating. All mobile locations can be found at LifeShare.org or on the LifeShare app. The donor center in Lake Charles remains closed as the facility is still without water and electricity.**

**"This appeal is going out to everyone, but LifeShare is trying to focus on young donors," Cunningham said. "This is a time of year when we would typically be in our high schools and colleges. Because of COVID-19, many of these blood drives are canceled or are yielding far fewer donors than usual. Most people don't recognize that nearly one-quarter of the blood supply comes from teenagers. Young people are the backbone of the local blood supply," says Cunningham.**

**LifeShare is asking young people to please donate blood. Also, if you're a parent, coach, teacher, or other influencer, please get the word out about this critical need.**

**Businesses and churches that want to help are urged to call LifeShare and schedule a blood drive. LifeShare has been taking extra safety precautions since the outbreak of COVID-19. Thus far, there are no reports of a LifeShare team member or LifeShare donor contracting the virus from interacting with each other during the donation process. Donating blood is as safe as it ever has been.**

**Lifeshare doesn't use the word "emergency" very often. The last emergency appeal was issued more than 15 months ago," Cunningham said.**

**Topics**