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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, NEW YORK BLOOD CENTER LAUNCH GIVEBLOODNYC SWEEPSTAKES TO ENCOURAGE BLOOD DONATIONS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

*Donors earn the chance to win one of 50 prizes; 25K blood donations needed between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor de Blasio today joined the New York Blood Center (NYBC) to unveil GiveBloodNYC, a new campaign this holiday season to encourage New Yorkers to give the gift of life. GiveBloodNYC has a simple goal: to collect 25,000 blood, plasma, and platelet donations throughout the season of giving.

From Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve, New Yorkers will be eligible for one of 50 prizes after they donate blood. Donors are encouraged to post photos of themselves to spread the word at donor centers and blood drive locations with the hashtag #GiveBloodNYC.

“Giving blood makes a difference,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “It’s an easy, meaningful way to give back to your community this holiday season, and I urge New Yorkers to join the fight this month to keep New York City healthy.”

“Throughout this pandemic, the people of this city have stepped up and done what was needed to keep each other healthy,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. “Donating blood is one more way to quite literally give life to our fellow New Yorkers. Schedule appointment today.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a chronic deficit in blood donations needed for patients in the hospitals served by the New York Blood Center. Since March, nearly all high schools, colleges, offices and other community groups have had to cancel their blood drives, which has jeopardized 75 percent of the incoming blood supply. New York Blood Center reports that, as of November 30th, the city is at a 3-day blood supply, down from its ideal 7-day supply. With the city amid another uptick of positive cases, it’s more important than ever that New York has an adequate blood supply to support healthcare facilities.

“Throughout the pandemic, we have experienced a chronic deficit in blood donations. We are launching this campaign with the hopes of getting New Yorkers into our centers and stabilizing the blood supply,” said **Andrea Cefarelli, Senior Executive Director of Recruitment & Marketing for New York Blood Center**. “As the second wave looms, we are grateful to have the support of the City. This winter will not be an easy one, but we have been through difficult times before. When times get tough, New Yorkers always find a way to take care of each other.”

*How You Can Enter*

1. Schedule an appointment at [nybc.org/donate](https://nybc.org/donate) to donate at one of New York Blood Center's NYC locations before December 31.
2. While you are at the donor center, we encourage you to take a selfie of your visit and tag New York Blood Center on social media with the hashtag #GiveBloodNYC.
3. Visit [www.nybc.org/givebloodNYC](https://www.nybc.org/givebloodNYC) to fill out your entry form.

Every Monday, NYBC will announce 10 winners and prizes on social media and their website. Participants who did not win that week will have their entry rolled over to the following weeks, until the contest is over. One entry per person. Please visit [nybc.org/sweepstakes](https://nybc.org/sweepstakes) for the full contest rules.

"I commend the New York Blood Center (NYBC) for its efforts to support our community and especially during this holiday season," said **U.S. Rep. Adriano Espaillat**. "In the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, New Yorkers bravely and selflessly stepped up and donated plasma to help treat patients. I urge constituents throughout my district to participate this holiday season as part of the GiveBloodNYC effort. Giving back and paying it forward is one of the greatest gifts we can give this holiday season in support of our community."

"I encourage everyone who can do safely to donate blood during the GiveBloodNYC campaign. One donation can save three lives," said **U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney**. "With NYC blood banks facing a dangerous shortage, donating today can make a huge impact. As I make this request, I am aware of and working to reverse the antiquated three month deferral policy for MSM who wish to donate blood. Earlier this year, Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez and I were successful in getting the FDA to decrease the 12 month deferral period to three months, but we need to completely get rid of this policy that is not based on current science, stigmatizes the LGBTQIA+ community, and undermines crucial efforts to increase the nation's blood supply as we grapple with the coronavirus crisis."

"The Covid-19 pandemic has left hospitals across the nation short on their supply of blood, which is critical to their ability to properly respond to the pandemic and serve all patients that come through their doors seeking help," said **U.S. Rep. Nydia Velázquez**. "Since many of the blood drives that would normally take place throughout the year are no longer happening, this leaves hospitals in dire straits. To help our neighbors on the front line, as well as those afflicted, donating blood at one of the upcoming drives is a great option. Furthermore, blood donations that contain COVID-19 antibodies are a critical component of treating newly infected patients and researching the virus. I encourage all New Yorkers who are able to come contribute and help save lives with just a moment of your time."

"You can save or at least prolong a precious life," said **Queens Borough President Sharon Lee**. "There is no greater prize. Donate blood, plasma or platelets today."

"Donating blood is safe and critically needed at this time. To those who are able, I encourage you to consider making a donation to help your fellow New Yorkers through this crisis, and enter to win a prize while you're at it," said **Staten Island Borough President James Oddo**.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant shortage in New York's blood donations. We all need to do whatever we can to help boost our blood supply," said **Assembly Member**

**Richard N. Gottfried, Chair of the Assembly Health Committee.** "I encourage New Yorkers to give the gift of life and donate blood by participating in the GiveBloodNYC campaign."

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