

**United Way of Colquitt County
Special Grant Application**

Amount Requested from United Way of Colquitt County \$2,500

Date: May 28, 2021

Applicant American Red Cross of South-Central Georgia

Address 509 N. Patterson Street Suite 201 Valdosta, GA
 31601

Contact Person Terri Jenkins Telephone 229-300-6094

Request:

On a maximum of two additional pages, describe the proposed need using the following format.

1. Describe your request and how it meets the objective of the grant guidelines.
2. Budget – provide a copy of bids from at least 2 vendors for items needed.
3. When the funds are needed.
4. How this item or project needed meets your agency mission.

Grants are intended as one-time special project grant that enhance the mission of the recipient human-service organization.

Grants that are approved must be completed within 90 days of approval unless other arrangements have been approved.

Amended 4- 2011

Notes and Guidelines:

Requests for less than \$2500 will be decided by the Special Grant Committee and requests for more than \$2500 must go before the United Way Board. Requests should be for "unique" type expenses. This money is not intended for typical allocation expenditures, also not for recurring or regular operating expenses. Requests are not restricted only to capital expenses. The committee will have authority to evaluate the requests and judge the value of the requests against possible future requests. We would like this money to be used and to help as many agencies as possible. We would also like to provide this as a service for our agencies, while recognizing the fund is financed by unrealized shrinkage and therefore the money available will fluctuate.

BLOOD SAVES LIVES

Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood: a child battling sickle cell disease, a neighbor receiving treatment for cancer, a friend who has been in an accident, a mother giving birth, a heart transplant patient and so many others.

For more than 75 years, the American Red Cross has been answering the call for lifesaving blood. Today, we provide 40% of the U.S. blood supply to hospitals and cancer treatment centers — more than any other blood collection organization. Powered by generous supporters, we fulfill the American people's need for the safest possible, most reliable blood supply through voluntary donations. We connect blood donors to recipients in need, shepherding each unit of blood on its careful journey.

- We collect approximately 206 units from 191 donors in Colquitt County annually.
- Skilled technicians then conduct at least 10 tests on each unit collected, including for infectious diseases, to keep the nation's blood supply safe.
- Finally, blood enters our supply chain for on-demand delivery to hospitals such as Miller County Hospital.

Though the need for a plentiful blood supply is evident, the journey of lifesaving blood from donor to recipient is complex and costly. For example, to meet the constant need, the Red Cross holds multiple blood drives monthly in Colquitt County. Behind every blood drive, there are skilled staff, specialized equipment and transportation that cost an average of \$3,900 per blood drive. With so many drives a year, great expenses are incurred, but there is a lifesaving return on investment, as we can ensure people in need—in Colquitt County—have safe and sufficient blood.

The Red Cross is seeking support to help ensure that Colquitt County's blood supply is stable and sustainable, enabling us to fulfill the daily and emergent needs for blood in our community and nationwide. Importantly, as the leading provider of blood in the U.S., it is our duty to remain on the cutting-edge, operating with an eye on the changing landscape of the healthcare and blood collection industries. As such, financial support will help the Red Cross become more resilient in the face of uncertainty. With financial support, we can continue to make the following investments in our program:

- Conduct essential outreach and donor recruitment efforts to meet our blood supply needs in our community.
- Conduct rigorous testing to provide the safest possible blood supply; and
- Maintain and improve our infrastructure needs, such as equipment and vehicles, to help ensure blood is collected and processed as efficiently and effectively as possible and delivered where and when it's needed.

Blood is a critical component to our nation's health care and public health, and the Red Cross Blood Services program plays an integral role. Without it, many medical treatments and procedures would not be possible. People fighting cancer—using nearly 25% of the national blood supply—need blood products to bolster their strength during treatments.

People living with sickle cell disease need regular blood transfusions throughout their life to minimize the complications that come with this disease.

Mothers experiencing complications during childbirth need blood at a moment's notice to live through the experience and go on to raise their children. These needs and many more like them every day make this work so critical. Therefore, the Red Cross faces ongoing urgency to ensure that our blood supply meets patient needs and is resilient in the face of any circumstance.

Furthermore, there is an “emerging crisis for sustainability of the blood system” to which the Red Cross is not immune. Currently, we face challenges to meeting both current and future demand for blood products. For instance, our country's demographics are changing, and our blood donor base must continue to evolve to be as diverse as the patient population, so that all people in Colquitt County and across America receive the best possible blood match. An example of this is the creation of a new campaign to close the Sickle Cell gap. To better serve people with Sickle Cell Disease—a disease that disproportionately affects African Americans. The goal of the new campaign is to cultivate a larger pool of African American donors, as these donors are more likely than other demographic groups to have blood best suited to alleviate the painful symptoms of Sickle Cell Disease. Having a larger pool of African American donors will result in better blood matches and increase the numbers we serve of people with Sickle Cell Disease. Unfortunately, African Americans currently make up less than 4% of blood donors. We are addressing barriers such as lack of trust, fear, transportation challenges, and impacts of COVID that are impacting diverse blood donations. We are addressing this gap through cultivating diverse partnerships, establishing trust, ensuring donation sites are easily accessible, and encouraging community responsibility.

The mission of the American Red Cross is to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors. Our mission charges us to use voluntary blood donations to fulfill the needs of the American people for the safest, most reliable, and most cost-effective blood services. Voluntary gifts of blood and financial support of the Blood Services program enables the Red Cross to keep this promise to the American people.

Funds will be used to support a blood drive in Colquitt County. On average, the Red Cross spends approximately \$3,900 to conduct each of our monthly blood drives. Additionally, the Red Cross incurs significant costs related to testing and distributing blood—including delivering emergency blood within two hours of the request.

If the committee has further questions, please reach out to me at terri.jenkins@redcross.org or 229-300-6094. Thank you for consideration of this special request.

Sincerely,

Terri Jenkins

Executive Director, American Red Cross of South Georgia